

I'll Do What I Can.

"I'll do what I can," said a bright-eyed girl;
And she gathered a fresh bouquet
Of the sweetest buds and flowers, and placed
In the room where her sick mother lay;
And at night when the angel of sleep came
round
He tucked under Mary's head a pillow of down.

"I'll do what I can," said a thoughtful boy,
And he brought out the rake and hoe;
Cleaned out the potatoes, the beets, and the
peas,
And the onions row by row;
And the showers came on, and the bright
warm sun,
And finished the work which the boy had
begun.

"I'll do what I can," said a wayside flower,
"I'm a tiny thing, to be sure;
But my cup is as deep as some others I know,
And the dew that I hold is pure.
So I'll catch what I can for the bee that comes
nigh,
And scent the rough gale as it passes me by."

"I'll do what I can," the streamlet said,
"As it ran on its pebbly side;
I'll scatter life on every side,
And bring up the flow'ret gay.
I'll sing to the mountain, the meadow, the
vale,
Give drink to the thirsty, and strength to the
frail."

"I'll do what I can," said a big bumble-bee,
As he viewed his bountiful store,
Which was stored in the trunk of a large
apple tree.
"I'll work all I can, and more—
I'll sting every boy that comes under this tree
To steal the nice fruit from my owner and me."

So they did what they could, each one in its
way,
And the world was the happier by it,
And if any of you, dearest children, doubt
What I say, I ask you to try it;
And you'll find that through life 'tis an excel-
lent plan,
In every condition to do what you can.

In Prison and Out.

By the Author of "The Man Trap."

CHAPTER XV.—AN HOUR TOO SOON.

It was a constant marvel to Euclid how Victoria grew stronger and brighter. Presently her pallid cheeks gained a faint tinge of red, and looked fuller and rounder; her eyes were happier, and her step less languid. She had no long, solitary hours now. Even when she was alone in her room, she could call Mrs. Linnett or Bess to her at any moment. Unknown to Euclid, Mr. Dudley provided more nourishing food for her than she had ever had in her life; and she was thriving upon it, as well as upon Mrs. Linnett's motherly care. It was like a new life to Victoria.

She learned to read and write with astonishing rapidity, leaving Bess far behind, and filling Euclid's old heart with fatherly pride in her. He could not keep himself from boasting of his daughter's learning to the saleswomen from whom he bought his cresses. His purchases in the market were of more importance now, as he had to keep the shop supplied with fresh fruit and vegetables; and, as Mrs. Linnett reckoned his services as worth a shilling a week to her, he felt well paid for his trouble. "The winter's woe was past" in very truth. He had lost his hoarded savings, and would never get them back; but what were they to Victoria's returning health, and the sight of her dear face as it greeted him evening after evening, looking out for him to come home, over the lower half of Mrs. Linnett's shop-door?

The only sorrow that sat by their fireside was the thought of David in prison. Bess was always talking of him, and of the day when he would be discharged. They counted the days till that would come. Old Euclid knew it as well as Bess; and Mr. Dudley pondered over the matter as much as they did. What was to be done with David when he came out of prison? How could the grievous wrong that had been done to him be set right? Could it ever be set right in this world?

"Davy'll be out next week," said Bess one evening; when they were all gathered round Mrs. Linnett's fire. Bess was sorely troubled. She could never forsake David; that was impossible. But would Euclid and Victoria and Mrs. Linnett be willing to let her go away with him in his disgrace, and lose sight of her forevermore? She knew too well into what a gulf of misery and degradation she must fall

with David, and a strange horror crept over her as she thought of it; but none the less was she ready to go away with him from this pleasant and sure shelter, rather than be guilty of deserting him in his dire distress. No, never could she forsake Davy!

"There's a verse you read last night, Mrs. Linnett," said old Euclid, "as has been runnin' in my head all day. I've not got the words quite true, I know, ma'am; but it's somethink like this: 'God doesn't want one of these little young ones to be lost.' Somethink o' that sort it is."

"Ay, I know," answered Mrs. Linnett. "It is not the will of your Father in heaven that one of these little ones should perish." Jesus Christ said it: it's his words."

"It's like him," said Euclid with a smile on his gray face. "It seems as if he was always a sayin' somethink beautiful. And just afore that there was somethink about a sheep going astray, and gettin' lost on the mountains, and how he'd rejoice over it when it was found again; and then he says it's the same with the little ones: they shan't perish either. Poor Davy! he's gone astray; and he's no more than a young lamb as doesn't know the right way. What are we to do to set him right again, so he shouldn't perish? If it's God's will, it must be done, I reckon."

"Where should Davy go but here?" asked Mrs. Linnett, in a hearty, cheery voice, which made the downcast heart of poor Bess leap for joy. "If you and he 'ud sleep together in my bed, Bess shall have the cleset, and I'll sleep with Victoria. We shall shake down somehow. And Captain Upjohn, my old shipmate, says he'll take him to Sweden, and he'll be away six weeks or more, and his hair'll be grown, and he'll look all right when he gets back. Maybe he'll take to a seafaring life, and that he'll get on well, I know."

"Oh, if mother only knew!" cried Bess.

The day before David's release from jail was a great day in Mrs. Linnett's little house. Bess scrubbed every floor, and rubbed every article of furniture, as if they could not be bright enough to give David a welcome. All the while she was thinking of the many things she would have to tell him,—of Roger's theft, and Blackett's hatred; and of Mr. Dudley and Mrs. Linnett, and this new happy home in which she found herself. Mrs. Linnett, who dearly loved a little festival, was making wonderful preparations for a dinner far beyond a common meal to-morrow; and Victoria was helping her to wash currants and stone raisins for a pudding. None of them spoke much of the coming event, though their hearts were full of it; for, lying beneath the gladness, there ran a strong under-current of grief for the past, and of vague dread of the future.

"I wish Jesus Christ was only here now!" cried Bess, flinging her arms round Mrs. Linnett's neck, and sobbing on her shoulder. "I'd go and tell him every word about Davy, and ask him if he thought him bad enough to be sent to jail. If he was livin' anywhere in London, I'd crawl to him on my hands and knees, if I couldn't walk, and tell him all about it."

"He knows all about it, Bess," answered Mrs. Linnett, "and he'll make it up to him in some way. Only I wonder, I do wonder, as Christian folks can let it be! If the Queen 'ud only think about it, or the grand Lords and the Commons, as the newspapers speak about, they'd never let it be, I know. They'd find some other way to punish children. But we'll try and make Davy forget it when he comes home."

Mr. Dudley had found out the usual hour for the discharge of prisoners, and it was settled that Euclid and Bess should be waiting for him when the outer door of the jail was opened. Bess was awake long before it was time to get up in the morning. It was an April day, six full calendar months since David had left home in the autumn to go begging for his mother. Euclid had time to make his early round, and sell his cresses for the workmen's breakfast; and he had resolved to make the rest of the day a holiday. Bess met him as he had just finished his sales, and then they turned their steps in the direction of the city prison. They were both happier and gayer than they had been since David went away; but Bess was especially glad. For, after all, in spite of the sorrow which cast so deep a shadow over her life, still David was coming back to her, and he was her own. He belonged to her, and she belonged to him. And Davy had always been so good to her.

They reached the prison a few minutes before the appointed hour, and paced up and down under its gloomy walls, blackened with dust and smoke, and towering high above the bent old man and half-grown girl who trod half timidly under their shadow. The heavy gates were shut close, and no sound was to be heard beyond them. The porter's closely-barred window and thick door seemed to forbid them to knock there and make any inquiry; but they had none to make.

They continued to pace to and fro patiently, with the meek and quiet patience of most of the honest and decent poor, not expecting any notice to be taken of them, or wishing to give any trouble. To and fro, to and fro, until the nearest church-clock, and the jail-clock within the walls, struck an hour behind the time, and still the prisoners were not set free. Again the weary footsteps trod beneath the gloomy shadows, and both Euclid and Bess fell into an almost unbroken and anxious silence. How was it that David was still kept in prison?

At length the door of the porter's lodge was opened; and a warder came out, having it instantly and jealously closed after him. Old Euclid summoned courage enough to address him.

"Sir," he said respectfully, "is there anything gone wrong inside the jail?"

"Why do you want to know?" inquired the warder, with a sharp glance at them both.

"What are you hanging about here for?" "We are waiting for this lassie's brother,—David Fell," he answered; whilst Bessie gazed up eagerly, yet timidly, into the warder's face. "His time's up to-day, and we've been looking for him to take him home with us."

"Why, the prisoners have been gone this two hours," replied the warder. "We let them out an hour earlier than usual; for we've some great visitors coming to see the jail, and we wanted to get on with business. They didn't make any objections, not one of 'em, I can tell you. You make haste home, and you'll find him there."

But Euclid and Bess knew that they could not find David at Mrs. Linnett's, and they retraced their homeward path sadly and heavily. If he had thought of going to any home, it must be to that old, unhappy place, where his mother had died the day after his second conviction; and thither neither Euclid nor Bess dared go, for fear of Blackett. It was six weeks since they had secretly quitted it, and not a soul among their old neighbours knew where they had found a new roof to shelter them. They had trusted no one with that precious secret.

Yet Bess could not bear the thought of losing David. They must not lose him. Alas! they guessed too well where he must be. But how could they get to him, and let him know what friends and what a home were waiting to welcome him?

The feast was ready by the time they reached home; but none of them had a heart for it. Mrs. Linnett, however, took a cheerful view of the misfortune, and assured them Mr. Dudley would know how to find David without bringing any danger to Euclid. Mr. Dudley looked in during the evening, and, upon hearing the news, started off at once in search of David. He was almost as anxious to find the lad, and take him home, as Bess herself could have been.

David had been at the old house: that was quickly and easily learned. He had knocked at two doors, and been driven away from them both as a thief and a jail-bird; but nobody could tell where he had gone to. At last Mr. Dudley made an inquiry at Blackett's own door; but all he could learn was, that Blackett himself had left his old lodgings for good that very day, and had taken care not to leave his address.

(To be continued.)

A GLANCE AT CHINA.

"AN inn on a main road in a large village on a market-day is reached. You have your animals to feed in the court, and you enter the best guest-room. The door is closed. Soon voices are heard outside. The miniature menagerie, the living orang-outang, is inside. The door is pushed open, and the gazers gaze. One man, braver than the rest, enters. Another man enters, and another, and another, until alas! your room is filled. You decide to forbear. You will show yourself friendly. Now the show begins. One man, the tiger-trainer, feels you shoes, and makes a suggestion. Another man, the snake-charmer, lifts up your coat, and investigates the close-fitting under apparel, a strange phenomenon to a Chinaman. A third takes off your hat and looks for a tail. The exhibition is now interesting. Conversation is brisk. The specimen,—ah! strange to say,—it too can talk. They now praise your language. They ply you with questions. They seem about as ignorant of Europe as some Europeans seem of China. 'Does your country have any sun?' 'Is Jesus your king there?' 'Is England as large as this province?' 'Did opium come from there?' 'Do you till the soil?' 'Do you have rice?' The circus now begins to close. The spectators move. One leaves, all leave, and you now finish your meal."

BE THOROUGH.

"I NEVER do a thing thoroughly," Mary said the other day. She had just been competing for a prize. "I only read my essay once after I wrote it," she said.

She was naturally far more gifted than Alice, who was her principal competitor. Alice wrote and rewrote her article, and then corrected it again and again.

The day came. Alice read her composition in a clear, distinct voice, without hesitation or lack of expression. It was condensed and well written. Mary's was long and uninteresting. Alice won the prize. One remembered and the other forgot that "Genius is an immense capacity for taking pains." One by patient, persistent effort obtained what the other relied upon her natural talent to win for her.

Whatever you do, whether you learn a lesson, or take a message, or dust a room, or read a book, do it thoroughly. Have a high standard for everything. Not alone because only thus can you win honour and distinction; but because this is the only honest, right, Christian way to use the gifts God has bestowed upon you. To be honest before him we must be thorough!

JUNIOR LEAGUE.

VARIETY.

Too much emphasis cannot be placed on variety in conducting the exercises of the League. In singing let the boys sing the stanza and the girls join them in the chorus, and vice-versa; try this for two stanzas, and on the third stanza ask all to sing.

Apply this method also in reciting the Beatitudes and Commandments. It is better to sing three hymns, two stanzas of each, for opening the League, than one hymn of five or six stanzas. Try reciting by rows. Constantly vary your way of doing things; avoid humdrum, ratty, and monotonous ways.

Enlist the boys and girls in the work as much as possible. Let "Russell" and "Sammie" distribute the singing books; "Charlie, will you erase the blackboard?" "Ruth, you take up the collection to-day;" "Fred, die, get two more chairs and seat those strangers." If you make the little people feel that they are necessary and helpful you have got them fastened to the League.

ANOTHER METHOD.

Write or print on medium-sized cards the abbreviations of the Bible books, Genesis, Leviticus, Matthew, Daniel, etc. Put them into a box and let each member of the League draw one out. If there are more than sixty-six in the League, then girls first, afterwards boys. After all have drawn, call for the full name of the book, the pupil answering, "J-n-o—John," "I-s-a—Isaiah." If any cannot answer submit it to the League. The exercise will be made still more effective by requiring the pupil to name the division of the Bible to which the book belongs, as, "E-p-h—Ephesians, Pauline Epistles," "D-a-n—Daniel, Minor Prophets.

A LESSON IN CHRISTIAN ETHICS.

How many will try and attend church next Sunday? Hands up! Exod. 20. 8. Sit with your parents or friends. Our behaviour. Hab. 2. 20.

How many will try and bring a new Junior next week? Hands up! John 1. 41, 42.

Do not put on wraps or rubbers during the singing of the doxology. Remain silent for a moment after the benediction. 1 Cor. 14. 40.

Do not sit at the end of the pew nearest the aisle, blocking the way of admission to others. Always rise to admit others, if you prefer the end sitting. Offer your Bible and hymn-book to strangers. 1 Peter 3. 8.

Take part reverently, thoughtfully, and prayerfully in all the services. Psa. 22. 22.

TEN SUPPLEMENTAL LESSONS AND HINTS.

1. Commit choice hymns to memory.
2. Always kneel during prayer; pray for the children, their parents, homes, school, church, and associates.
3. Give an occasional talk on Christian ethics.
4. Do not let the meeting last more than one hour, unless for very special reasons.
5. Always be cheerful; bid the League "Good afternoon" just at dismissal, to which they will respond, "Good afternoon."
6. Memorize Psalms 1, 23, and 100.
7. Occasionally use a Responsive Service, for example, one of those in the Epworth Hymnal, for opening or closing.
8. Organize a League choir. Practise new pieces. Often the superintendent will be glad to have the choir lead the Sunday-school music.
9. Give an occasional lesson in musical notation.
10. Chant the Gloria Patri and Lord's Prayer.