

Speak Tenderly.

WHEN the circle's all complete,

When the room is bright with cheer,

When we meet in no vacant seat,

When we meet our dear faces there—

Then how tender should the tone

Be to those we call our own!

Soon, ah, soon the circle breaks,

Soon the darksome shadows come;

Death, the mighty, often makes

Light give place to grief and gloom;

Oh, let then our actions show

All the tenderness we know!

Soon, ah, soon will memory bring

Every harsh and hasty tone

To the heart with bitter sting,

That will bid us weep and moan.

Ever you're sunned far apart,

Clasp the dear ones to your hearts.

Now, let these, our very own,

Know, indeed, how much we love;

Let us see, by act and tone,

All our words and actions prove.

Oh, let us be true to lay,

Ever we weep o'er lifeless clay!

PILGRIM STREET:

A STORY OF MANCHESTER LIFE.

BY HESBA STRETTON.

CHAPTER XII.

AN UNWELCOME RE-APPEARANCE.

It was a new life that Tom had entered upon. All the old, dark, dreary, solitary life, in which he had neither friend nor father, was ended forever; and now, when he lay down upon his hard flock bed at night, or opened his eyes to the dim light of the corner in the morning, there was a calm, peaceful satisfaction in his heart as he thought of God. What did it matter that he was poor and weakly, stricken into the profound depths of poverty and sickness, when he had the assurance in his own spirit that, feeble and cast down as he was with many old sins in the past, and many temptations in the present, he was still one of God's sons, and the Lord Jesus Christ was as truly his Elder Brother as he was brother to little Phil?

Tom knew very little more than this of the good news which the Saviour of the world came to bring. He knew next to nothing of the many parables and teachings of the Lord, nor of his miracles, and the mighty works which he did; and he had never read of the Epistles, written by the disciples of Christ after his death, for the instruction of those who believed on him through their words. He was a unlearned and simple in the gospel of Christ as the little child who can only totter to his father's knee, and look up into his face, and try to lip the word "Father." This was all the boy could do, but he did it trustfully, and with all his heart. He looked up into the face of God, and his stammering tongue cried: "My Father, which art in heaven!"

What a change it made in him, and in all about him! He loved the Pendleburys with a new affection, and their home was yet more the pleasantest place in the world for him. But he was well enough now to begin to work for his own living again, for he must no longer be burdensome to Nat and Alice, though they put him off for a day or two when he first spoke of leaving them, and returning to his old den of a sleeping-place. But he knew what it would be his duty to do. He asked Banner to bring him his Savings Bank book out of the box of which he had taken the charge, and the first time he was able to leave Pilgrim

Street alone he crawled feebly along the crowded pavement, with his wan and trembling limbs—a very skeleton of famine—as far as the Post Office, where he gave in his book, and a warrant which had been sent to him from the office in London, to enable him to take out all his savings. He thought he should need them all, for he must pay Banner the money he had given out of his own pocket to the servant girl, to make up the sovereign he had stolen; and there was the bad half-crown to be made good to the greengrocer in Shude Hill market; and there was the doctor who had attended him so frequently; and he ought to pay Nat and Alice well for their care and kindness towards him. If there should be anything to spare after all these claims were settled, he must use it to start in business again.

The clerk gave him what seemed almost a handful of glittering coins—seven golden sovereigns and five silver shillings; and there was a clink and tingle in the sound as he gathered them into his hand which would have sounded as sweet as music in his ears only six months ago. But just then came the whisper, whether in his heart or not he scarcely knew, saying, "Our Father!" and the smile that shone upon his poor, pale face had nothing at all to do with the money. The love of money was swallowed up in the love of God.

Tom was retracing his steps slowly and wearily to Pilgrim Street, when he heard Alice's voice, calling behind him, and turning round, he saw her hurrying along to overtake him. She wanted him to lean upon her strong arm homewards, but Tom hesitated. She looked so trim and tidy in her clean print gown, and her black straw bonnet, and her dark shawl; and he was so ragged and tattered—still wearing the clothes in which he had returned to Manchester—that he felt it would be an unsightly thing for him to be seen leaning upon her. But before he could speak, Alice had drawn his hand through her arm, and was walking with slow and steady steps at his side.

"Why, Tom," she asked, cheerfully, "whatever has thee got wrapped up so tight in thy hand? A bank-note, maybe, by the way thee grips it!"

"Aye, Alice," answered Tom, "and more than a bank-note. It's seven pound five shillings—all my savings afore I went to Liverpool. Mr. Banner knows all about it."

"Seven pound!" repeated Alice, in a tone of wonder; "why, it's a fortune, Tom! Seven pound five shillings! However, in all the world, did thee save all that money?"

There was time enough to tell Alice all about it, and what he intended to do with it, before they came in sight of the corner of Pilgrim Street. At this corner there stood a strong-limbed but elderly man, with grizzled hair, a face well marked with many lines and wrinkles, and with cunning eyes, which were looking keenly and eagerly about him. He was dressed in a coarse but decent suit of clothes, and over his shoulders hung a carpenter's satchel. But neither Alice nor Tom noticed him, so engrossed were they in their own conversation, until he seized Tom by the shoulder, and spoke in a voice which was loud and rough.

"Tom Haslam!" he said. "Thou'rt Tom Haslam!"

Tom started, as if awakened from a pleasant dream by some sudden shock, and, with a feeling of terror, he raised his eyes to the stranger's face. His remembrance of it was dim, but still he could recollect it, with a shivering dread creeping through all his frame. He gripped Alice's arm, and leaned heavily upon it—for the little strength he had was forsaking him—and his feeble fingers loosed their hold of the little packet of money in

his hand, and it fell to the pavement, while white lips muttered the word "Father!"

"Aye, lad, father, sure enough," said the man stooping to pick up the packet. "But, lad, what's this? Money, Tom! See thee, now, money, and plenty of it! Is it thine, lad?"

Haslam turned the coins about, and clinked them together, while Tom was struggling to regain his breath and his voice; for at first the hoarse seemed to whirl before his eyes, and the sun spun round in the misty sky. Alice was holding him up, or he felt as he should sink down upon the ground at his father's feet. But at last he was strong enough to loose his grasp of her, and to press his hand beseechingly upon his father's arm.

"It's my savings; but it's not mine," he gasped. "I owe it all. Part to Mr. Banner, the policeman."

At the word policeman, the man looked somewhat frightened, and Tom went on more readily.

"He made up a sovereign for me out of his pocket," he said, "and I must pay it back; and there's a bad half-crown to be made good; and I must pay Mr. Pendlebury for being ill at home. You must give the money back to my father."

"Not I," said Haslam, putting it into his pocket. "Not till thou's made a better tale out, my Tom. I don't pick up money like dirt to do thee promise thee. But who's this lass with thee? A decent lass, too!"

"I'm Alice Pendlebury," she answered, "our house is close by, if thee likes to step in to talk to Tom. All the neighbours will be coming out if we stand talking here. This way, please."

Tom followed Alice with tottering steps, and sank down exhausted into a chair as soon as he entered the house, while his father stood in the doorway turning over the money, and gazing at it with delight. Alice was a little afraid of her father, for she knew he had been in gaol for many years; but she invited him civilly to come in, and set a chair for him near to Tom.

"Well, my lad," said Haslam, "art glad to see thy father again, eh? How thou's grown, but thin as a whipping post. Thou has been well dealt with than me. Better follow in my steps, Tom. It's not such a bad do, after all's said and done, to get eight year's board and lodging for nothing."

But though Haslam laughed loudly, his face was dark and wrathful, and his mirth was flat and spiritless. Tom's eyes were fastened upon him, and he could not turn them away. He had so dreaded the release of his father, that now that calamity had suddenly befallen him he had no power either to think or to speak. Alice was very quiet; and at length Haslam, growing uneasy under Tom's fascinating gaze, broke in with an oath—

"I'm thy father, as what else I am," he said, "and thou'lt have to own me, and obey me, or see which is the strongest. Speak out, lad, glad I'm let loose!"

"No," murmured Tom, almost in spite of himself; and Haslam laughed again, more loudly and harshly than before.

"A good son," he cried; "a very good son! A lesson or two to teach thee. And where's the other boy, little Phil?"

Alice was about to answer, for Tom's quivering lips seemed speechless, when, with a great effort, she sprang from her seat, and laid her hand upon her father's arm, and as soon as she could command her voice he met his father's angry frown with a steady gaze.

"Phil's safe and well, with good friends,