

## "RED DAVE";

Or, "What wilt Thou have me to do?"

*(From the Family Friend.)*

## CHAPTER V.

The two doctors stood beside little Willie's bed, as the setting sun sent its last rays of glory into his room.

The child seemed fast asleep; his open Bible lay beside him—the one that had been his mother's; for he had been reading in it ere he broke the blood-vessel which was the fatal sign.

No sound was in the room; Miss Joyce was utterly worn out, and was lying down on the sofa at the foot of the bed, for Dr. Meadows said Willie might continue unconscious for hours. Dr. Joyce had given no opinion, but the little hands were clasped tightly within his own.

At last there was a movement, and the father pressed a morsel of refreshing ice between Willie's lips.

He opened his eyes. "Father!" said he, "I can't see—is it night?"

A sob burst from the strong man's lips.

"Don't cry, papa," and the little hands felt for his face, "I'm so safe—Davie told me about Jesus—I'm so glad Jesus has got me tight."

"Don't talk, darling," said Dr. Meadows; "it will make you cough."

"I won't talk much; I want papa. Kiss me, papa—kiss me good-night."

"Try to sleep again, Willie," said his aunt.

"Yes, auntie, when I've said my hymn." And then the little fellow turned his face towards the window, though he could see the sunset sky no longer, and said his evening hymn—

Jesus, tender Shepherd, hear me,  
Bless Thy little lamb to-night;  
Through the darkness be Thou near me,  
Keep me safe till morning light.

When Dr. Meadows left the house, his partner had locked himself into that room alone, and Miss Joyce was in the deep sleep of sorrow.

Davie was standing at the gate, watching eagerly for news of Willie.

"I didn't let him hear my voice, sir, I've been waiting outside all the time; is Master Willie any better sir?"

And the doctor said gently, "Yes, Davie; Jesus has taken away all his pain."

## CHAPTER VI.

## "FATHER!"

Stern and harder than ever seemed Dr. Joyce during the few days that a little flower-strewn coffin lay at Sunnyside; he scarcely spoke to any one; but his partner was most anxious about him, for he scarcely ate or slept, and Dr. Meadows knew that un-

less he gave way to his grief his life was in danger.

He did not attend the funeral service—a critical case at some distance demanded his attendance. The good clergyman, however, sought him that evening, where he knew he would surely find him, and pressed his hand in silent sympathy.

Dr. Joyce pointed to the new-made grave.

"For ten years, sir," said he "I have planned and schemed and saved for the future of my only child; and this is the end."

"Nay," said the clergyman, earnestly, "but rather the beginning. The strongest man living has powers less wonderful, the happiest heart on earth is less happy than little Willie now. For when we see our Lord, we shall be like Him, as He is."

Dr. Joyce made no reply; he turned slowly away and went up to his room where one little bed stood empty beside his own.

The next day he lay helpless with brain fever, and for a time hung between life and death; his kind sister nursed him ceaselessly, and even when he regained his senses, he was weak as a little child, and needed constant attendance. They were discussing one day the plan of getting an attendant to help Miss Joyce, when the doctor beckoned his partner to him, saying, "Let Davie look after me."

So Davie came to the sick-room; and trod softly and carefully, and ministered to the doctor's comfort as tenderly as his kind little heart prompted him; though when he saw Willie's bed his chest heaved and he could not speak, which Dr. Joyce noticed though he said nothing.

By this time Davie could spell out a text here and there, and often, when the doctor seemed asleep, he coned over his Sunday lesson, word by word, till it sank into his memory, and into the heart, too, of the listening man.

And one day, when the patient had been left alone, and Davie was bringing in some chicken broth as quietly as a mouse, the boy's heart gave a bound of joy—for he and Willie had prayed for this—the Bible, hers and his, was open in the doctor's hands, and Davie heard him murmur in a broken, faltering voice—

"Bless, I to the fountain fly;  
Wash me, Saviour, or I die."

Meanwhile, Jarvis was steadily making progress towards recovery. Dr. Meadows promised, if he tried to live honestly, to set him up in a good station as shoe-black, for his leg would never be quite well, so he could do no active work.

Jarvis was so full of jokes that nobody could find out whether he really meant to do better or not; but every one could see that he was really fond of Davie, and

when the boy could no longer visit him, because of living at Sunnyside, he became very despondent, and declared he was going to die, and should be lost for ever.

In this state of mind he continued a long time; nothing seemed to give him hope, till one day the good Christian lady, who revenged his burglary by visiting his sick-bed, knelt down in the ward, and besought the Lord to have mercy upon that poor dark soul, and when she arose, Jarvis said, "He loves me, me—ain't it wonderful?"

His kind friends did not lose sight of him again; the doctor got him to attend a night-school, and at last succeeded in getting him to sign the pledge; and now, in all the shoeblack regiment, it would be difficult to find one more civil, honest, and obliging than Ben Jarvis; for he is "on the Lord's side," and the Lord has strengthened him to resist temptation in whatever form it may come to him.

One day when Dr. Joyce was getting better he called Davie to his side, and said, "Davie, I hear you want to become a doctor."

"Yes, sir, please, sir! and I'm a-learning how to make some sort of pills."

"But it will want plenty of money to make you a clever doctor."

"Will it, sir?" and Davie's face grew clouded; "then I can't get to be one, sir; I'd have liked to make folks' pains better, but it don't matter. Perhaps I'll drive a tram."

"But, Davie, do you know I owe you something? I don't mean for attending to me now, or for your work for my child—God bless you for all you did for him—but I hear you were put in prison unjustly, and I must try to make that up to you."

"You do know I'm not a thief now, sir?" said Davie, flushing red.

"Yes, my boy; poor little fellow! I suppose Dr. Meadows has not told you what I want to do for you?"

"Yes, sir," said Davie simply; "he told me you was a-going to get me my next pair of boots."

"Not your next only, but many more pairs, I hope. Since he did not tell you, listen to me. I am very lonely, Davie, and there is none to succeed me in my name or in my profession. Will you come to me as Davie Joyce, and be my son? I will do all for you that I hoped to have done for my angel boy."

Davie opened his eyes, frowning redder still.

"I—I can't leave Doctor Meadows," said he; "I likes my room over the stable, and that ere baby will be wanting me back again now."

"You are frightened I shall keep you by force, I see," said the doctor, with a sad smile; "but,

hard as I seem, I will not adopt you against your own will. Remember, though, that instead of service you would get a first-class education, and instead of bread and cheese, plenty of good food, and your room over the stable would be changed for Sunnyside. I have learnt to love you, lad, and I know this is what my Willie would have liked.

"I'd like to please him," said Davie, hesitating; "but I does love Dr. Meadows; please mayn't I talk to him about it?"

Dr. Joyce nodded. "You may go now," said he; "and you may take a week to decide."

But Davie did not need a week to make up his mind. Dr. Meadows saw that money and comfort could not tempt Davie away from his service; but he appealed, and not in vain, to the boy's sense of self-sacrifice.

"I have a wife and children," said he; "Miss Joyce is going to live with her sister, and Dr. Joyce has nobody to love him, and take care of him. It makes me very sad sometimes to see that lonely, broken-hearted look in his eyes; I think this may be the call of Jesus to you, to bless and brighten that desolate life."

Davie had not thought of it in this manner before, and his eyes grew very radiant with a light caught from above.

"For Jesus' sake." This thought entirely altered the case; for a few minutes the little fellow knelt down in his garret above the stable, and asked that the Lord would lead him aright, and then he went to say "good-bye" to the b. by.

"But I shall see you many a time," said he; "so don't fret after Davie," which did not seem at all likely to be the case, since Miss Daisy was quietly intent on the contemplation of her wee pink toes, which had just been bared for Slumberland.

In the calm of the evening, Davie again left Mereham for Sunnyside; the moon glided quietly out from between the clouds, and as he looked up to the silver light, he thought of little Willie safe at home in the painless laud.

The gas was not burning in Dr. Joyce's room; he lay in the dark, wondering whether Davie would return to him at the end of the week or no, and thinking, too, of his dear ones whom God had called above.

Just then, when the tears rose to his eyes, and his heart grew sad and heavy, a boy's step sounded up the stairs, a boy's hand touched his own, and a loving voice said earnestly, "I've come to stay with you, father!"

THE END.

"THE daily use of beer shortens life from ten to fifteen years."—*Dr. Davis.*