

HOW JOE SYMMS WAS SAVED.

"Grandsir Hardy" and his wife lived in a very small cottage, built by their own hands—for the old lady did her share of the work, lathing and plastering, while he was lifting and placing heavy boards.

The little house had a room below and a chamber above, and was set down in the centre of a barren huckleberry field.

They were what the world vulgarly calls "squatters;" and when they squat in this huckleberry patch they could have bought it for fifty dollars. But a sudden discovery of the value of water power started up a city quite near them, which was daily growing nearer and nearer, till they could say, with many grander folk, "We live *just out of town.*"

Although this creeping city worried the old pair a little lest they might one day be dispossessed of the bit of land, it opened new means of support. Hitherto they had carried berries and eggs to a small town five miles off; now they could walk to the city, sell their produce and return to dinner. And the honest old man also made a contract to supply brush-brooms to sweep the city streets,—which to him was as much as contracts for the Cochituate or Croton water works were to the men that secured them.

They were a simple, pure-hearted pair, living humbly before God, dealing honestly with their fellow-men, and craving the pleasure of doing good to those in need. But they were so far from poor neighbors that they had few calls, and they were ashamed to go to any minister or benevolent society with such small offerings as they could make.

One winter when they had little to take to market, they made a good store of brooms, and being shut up in the house much of the time by the drifted snows, they had leisure to look over

their little worldly affairs, and to lay plans ahead.

Grandsir Hardy announced, one evening, to Betsy—after long and intricate figuring with chalk on a board—that they were worth three hundred and fifty dollars, and hadn't a debt in the world!

Betsy would hardly believe this, having never, as she expressed it, "expected to die rich!" But he satisfied her by going over the chalk sum, frequently saying,—

"Nothe's nothe, seven and eight is fifteen; put down five and carry one," &c., till he convinced her of the fact; although he might as well have explained it in Greek, for all poor Betsy knew of figures!

"Well, if that's so," she said, "don't it stand us in hand to make a will? We've no heirs, your nephew, that's too proud even to buy eggs of us, and who don't need it, if he wasn't! I say, let's make a will next time we go to town, and give it to something good. I want to do one thing, at least, to help somebody."

"Yes," said grandsir, thoughtfully, "we ought to do that, or else give it as we go along."

"But we might be old, and have to go on the town; so let's give when we can now, and save a little for a rainy day." And poor Betsy drew a deep sigh as she added,—

"One of us will be left alone some day!"

"I hope that won't be *me!*" exclaimed grandsir, "for life would be tough puttin' through without you to cheer and comfort me."

"I hope it won't be *me,*" cried Betsy, "that's left; for I do think I'd be the helplesst cretur that ever lived. I hope we'll die in one day, if it's the good Lord's will!"

And so the simple pair talked on, while the pine branches crackled on the hearth, and the wind and sleet beat furiously against the little windows and door of the cottage.

"I heard a call," cried Betsy, springing to her feet.

"It's only the wind a howlin' through them
oaks and oaks above; hear it now a lash-
of the branches!" said the old man.

"There, there 'tis agin! It is surely a hu-
man critter got bewildered in the snow. Do get
the lantern! I'll give all I own to save 'em!"

But before grandsir could get the lantern,
three heavy strokes fell on the door. They
were neither knocks, nor yet blows, but like the
fall of a heavy body against it.

"La, you, Betsy!" cried the old man, "it's that
big, black dog of Lamson's. He always throws
himself agin the door, instead o' scratchin' like
other dogs. May be the butcher's pung has got
stuck in a drift! or may be the poor critter him-
self is after a shelter!"

Before he had finished his speech, grandsir,
remembering that no lantern was needed, had
already opened the door, and now stood speech-
less with wonder.

"Why, who on arth be you?" he cried, at the
same time helping in a young lad, and placing
him before the fire in Betsy's easy chair.

"Why! why! why!" cried the young fellow,
in alarm. "Where am I? Am I dead, or in
prison?"

"Neither one, poor boy!" cried good Betsy;
"you're froze!"

"I guess he's worse than froze, worse than
dead," cried the old man. "He's been a drink-
ing, and only a boy!"

"Yes," cried the boy, rising to go, "I've been
drinking fire, and it's burning me alive! Let
me out in the snow; snow puts out a blaze.
Don't you see the blaze coming out of my mouth
while I talk?"

He, though but seventeen years old, was wild
from ardent spirits. The old man could scarce-
ly hold him, so bent was he on rushing out in-
to the storm, hoping to quench the fire within.

But those two kind old people, who were al-
ways longing to help somebody, resolved to
keep him and to see how far he had gone astray,
and then to save him if they could.

"I said if it was a dog at the door, I'd befriend
him!" exclaimed Betsy; "and I'll be as good as
my word. What a brute a man must be to sell

spirits to a boy like this! What's law good for,
if it haint the power to protect children from
destruction, I'd like to know?"

She said this, looking very defiantly at poor
grandsir, as if he were either a rumseller or a
wicked law-maker. But he looked very meek,
and said,—

"It's a shame, *that* it is; and God will call
both rumsellers and wicked rulers to account
some day!"

"I'm indignant at 'em! and now I vow, a
lookin' at this ere work o' theirs, that I'll never
sell an egg or a berry to 'Merican Eagle,' nor to
any tavern, nor any other rumseller! They
sha'n't be kept alive by *my* eggs" cried Betsy.

They worked over the poor boy with herb
teas and other simple medicines, for hours, till
he became more quiet. Then the good woman
spread a buffalo robe on the floor and made
him a bed, as they dared not leave him in the
little room up stairs alone.

"I'll lie down and go to sleep," he said, "if
you'll promise not to speak of this at my moth-
er's grave! She couldn't lie there if she knew
it. Before she went, she said,—

"I don't fear poverty for you, dear Joe; I
only fear sin! AND THIS IS SIN!" he cried,
with a look of anguish! "It biteth like a serpent
and stingeth like an adder! O sin, leave me,
and let me lie down in my mother's grave, away
from the eye of my mother's God! She said
God would shield me, and He hasn't. I broke
away from Him. Isn't there some place to hide
in, here?"

These touching words brought tears to the
good woman's eyes, and she said,—

"Maybe God sent this child here for us to save.
And if He did, we must do it, no matter what it
costs."

The poor boy's sad story was soon told in the
morning. Left an orphan by the recent death
of his mother, he went to seek his fortune in the
city. He spent all his money before he found a
place; and the place he did find at last was one
of the gates that lead to ruin. He went into
the bar-room of a tavern, as an assistant.

He had then never tasted spirits. The rough fellows who frequented the place soon found it out, and resolved "to have sport out of the greeny." They bet upon him, that they could hire him to drink. This failing, they coaxed him to be a man, and just take one glass!" Then they conquered, and urged him to take another and another, till he became perfectly furious, and was sick for days.

The inhuman creatures were not satisfied yet, and made a second attempt on the night of this fearful storm. He drank to avoid being made sport of; and then he sang and talked for their amusement. And still they pressed him to drink, till he became as wild as a maniac.

Then he went a step too far for their pleasure. He struck them and threw bottles through the windows. He set beer-casks running, and dashed the tumblers and decanters, till the men became exasperated, and three or four of them put their great energies at the noble work of turning their poor victim out in the storm, live or die,—they cared not which.

So does drinking and making drunkards burden the heart!

When the poor, erring boy was able to listen, and sir Hardy talked kindly to him of his sin against God, and its consequences to himself, reminding him of his mother and her holy lessons.

He found his heart soft and deeply humbled by the sin of yielding to entreaties of the wicked. Then the old people offered him a home and share in their work, and hinted that if he was a good boy and could be happy with them, they would make him their son.

The boy, Joe Symms, had not formed a love for spirits; and only the homeless can know how thankful he was for this kind offer. He burst into tears and said,—

"If my mother could hear this, she'd thank you in heaven. I will stay and be as faithful and kind as if I were your own son. But never send me to the 'Eagle' on any business, for I'm afraid of the sight of the place."

Joe was as good as his word. He proved a

faithful son, and the joy and comfort of their old age. In less than two years they had paid for the huckleberry patch, cleared and planted it, and added a room to the cottage.

Joe's next step was to put up a little barn and buy a horse, so that he could plough, and market to some purpose. He shunned evil company as he would have shunned vipers, and was always content at home, reading and ciphering, when work was over.

His gratitude to the old people grew stronger as he realized more and more from what they had saved him; and when, after years of love between them, they went to their graves, he was a real mourner.

The place, now a valuable vegetable farm, was left to him, and he is trying to carry out the work of his benefactors for others. If ever he sees a young man who has been led astray, and fallen into temptation, he remembers that dreadful night, when driven forth into the storm, God led his unsteady steps to that humble door, and through those good people, answered his mother's dying prayer, and saved him from both poverty and sin.

Most people would have felt they had done their whole duty to an intoxicated youth, when they had sheltered him a night, and would send him off next morning without one effort to save him. But these good people, in their kindness

to this young wanderer, saved a soul from death, and entertained, unawares, one who was to be the solace of their age and the sole mourner at their grave.



FROST PICTURES.

Pictures on the window,
Painted by Jack Frost,
Coming at the midnight,
With the noon are lost.
Here a row of fir trees,
Standing straight and tall;
There a rapid river,
And a waterfall.

Here a branch of coral
From the briny sea;
There a weary traveller,
Resting 'neath a tree.
Here a grand old iceberg
Floating slowly on;
There the mighty forest
Of the torrid zone.

Here a swamp all tangled,
Rushes, ferns and brake;
There a rugged mountain,
Here a little lake.
Thus a breath, the lightest
Floating on the air,
Jack Frost catches quickly,
And imprints it there.

And thus you are painting,
Little children, too,
On your life's fair window
Always something new.
But your little pictures
Will not pass away,
Like those Jack Frost's fingers
Paint each winter day.

O, they will be lasting
As God's book of truth,
Whether made by Willie,
Johnnie, May or Ruth;
And your little pictures,
Each its story tells
Of the good or evil
Which within you dwells.

Each kind word or action
Is a picture bright;
Every duty mastered
Is lovely in the light;
But each thought of anger,
Every word of strife,
Blemishes the picture,
Stains the glass of life.

A KIND AND GENTLE VOICE.

There is no power of love so hard to get and keep as a kind voice. A kind hand is deaf and dumb. It may be rough in flesh and blood, yet do the

additions to geographical text-books beyond the Atlantic, where publishers seem to grudge neither pages nor pictures, and compares them with the one or two good and many bad, but all contracted and ill-

work of a soft heart and do it with a soft touch. But there is no one thing that love so much needs as a sweet voice to tell what it means and feels; and it is hard to get and keep it in the right tone. One must start in youth, and be on the watch night and day, at work and play, to get and keep a voice that shall speak at all times the thoughts of a kind heart. It is often in youth that one gets a voice or a tone that is sharp, and it sticks to him through life, and stirs up ill-will and grief, and falls like a drop of gall on the sweet joys of home. Watch it day by day as a pearl of great price, for it will be worth more to you in days to come than the best pearl hid in the sea. A kind voice is to the heart what light is to the eye. It is a light that sings as well as shines.
—*Elihu Burritt.*

BE STRONG.

Be strong to hope, O heart!
Though day is bright,
The stars can only shine
In the dark night.
Be strong to hope, O heart!
Look to the light.

Do the work that's nearest,
Though 'tis dull at whiles,
Helping when you meet them
Lame dogs over stiles.

—*C. Kingsley.*

NO TRADE.

One of the first principles of economy is never to buy what you can get along without. Whoever has learned this may be said to have started on the road to wealth.

An agent was exhibiting a new-fangled wagon-jack near the market, and a colored man who was there with his horse and wagon seemed much pleased with it until he found that the price was a dollar.

"Dat settles me," he said, as he climbed into his vehicle.

"But it's worth the money," persisted the agent.

"Ize got a cheaper thing, sah."

"What is it?"

"Why, my ole woman kin hold up de eand of dis wagin while I grease de axes, an' it doan' cost me a cent."