

POOR LITTLE JOE

Written in 1861

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(Aunt Friendly)

Chapter 1 The Starting Point

“Come in, boys! Come in! Come in, boys, without paying, and hear something worth knowing!” A transparency, with these words painted plainly on it, appeared in a dark alley, in New York City, one cold evening in March, 1851. This was one of those dreary alleys where the poor and the wicked are huddled together, and grow poorer and more wicked as the long days go by. There a well-dressed person was, almost as strange a sight as a Broadway omnibus would be on a western stump road.

As the evening came on, a dim candle was here and there lighted in a wretched dwelling, to flicker in the gusts of air that blew in round the loose casements, but darkness, darkness reigned in many of the houses—those who had no money to buy bread could do without light!

Very, cheerful looked that bright transparency, in that dull, dreary place. The lamp burned clearly in its oil silk box, and the great black letters shone out plainly, as if they were really speaking to the passers-by.

Many boys had stopped, wondered, and then gone their way, too ignorant even to read that urgent invitation. At length a group of lads came frolicking along the street, and one of them who had been better taught than the rest, shouted out, “Come in, boys! Come in! Come in, boys, and hear something worth knowing! That’s what it says? What’s up now? Shall we go in?”

Sam Bolt, the speaker, was the tallest boy in the crowd, and seemed to feel himself well fitted to be its leader, either from his superior strength or from his greater knowledge. A small, slender boy, about ten years old, promptly acted an answer to Sam’s loud question, by pushing open the door, over which the transparency was hung, and stepping into the room to which it led.

A warm fire was burning in a cylinder stove, and the light shone out cheerfully from two large lamps placed on a table at the upper end of the room. This room had once been a shop, as might be plainly seen from the counter, which still ran along one side of it, though it had been moved so as to stand directly against the wall, to serve the purpose of bed, table, or seats, for the poor creatures who had since occupied it for a dwelling.

After undergoing a thorough hoeing and scouring, the shop had been at length made clear enough for its present use. Several benches had been placed across the end of the room nearest the door, and it was plain the invitation had been given in all sincerity, as preparations had been made for those who should accept it.

The fire and light contrasted very pleasantly with the cold and darkness of the lane without, and "little Josey" gave a skip to show his satisfaction, as he entered the room at the head of the troop of boys, who pushed on after him.

"Now, I say, Sam, this looks something like!" said "little Josey," putting his hand on the counter, and giving a side leap, so as to seat himself on this desirable place of observation.

"First rate," said Sam, in his usual loud way, as he easily took his seat beside "little Josey."

Several of the boys who had not yet learned to bear cold and hunger with the indifference of wild beasts, clustered around the stove, and spread out their hands before its cheerful glow. Those hands! Alas! They had been pinched by the frost, doubled up in anger, or slyly put forth to steal, too often, since they lay soft and weak and helpless in their baby days!

Some of the boys ranged themselves along on the counter with Sam and Josey, and they were beginning to make the room ring with the sound of their heels drumming against it, when a disturbance rose among them. One of the roughest of the set began to push against "little Josey," and to tell him to "get down and stand with the rest of the small chaps by the stove."

Josey looked up boldly into the face of the great rude boy and said, "Put me down, if you dare!"

"Yes, if you dare," said Sam, jumping down, with a heavy sound that made the room shake, "Little Josey and I is a pair, we allers goes together!"

The rough boy looked at Sam's broad chest and big hands, and was concluding what to do, when a door opened at the end of the shop, and a tall, slender young man, with a bright, pleasant face, slipped in. The room was now nearly filled with boys, as coarse, rude, and poor-looking as might have been expected from the appearance of the dwellings in the neighborhood.

On those young faces, so marked with poverty and sin, the stranger looked round kindly, as he said, "How are you, boys? I am glad to see so many of you. You don't know me, and I don't know you, but I mean we shall be better acquainted."

Cries of, "Hear him, hear him!" now resounded through the room, mingled with the knocking of many heels against the counter, rude exclamations of astonishment, and shrill whistles.

In the midst of this uproar, "Big Sam," who still stood in the center of the floor, managed to make himself heard. Swinging his arms round him, so as to make an open circle, he screamed, "Hush up, everyone of you, or I'll break your bones for you. Let the chap have a chance—I will have fair play!"

This harangue procured a momentary pause, in which the stranger hastened to say, "Now, boys, *our* meeting will begin—*our* meeting. Eh, Sam? Now, boys, you and I will have a meeting of our own, and we will begin by singing a hymn." The stranger had a strong, rich, musical voice, and now he sung the "Happy Land—

***"There is a Happy Land,
Far, far away,
Where saints in glory stand,***

Bright, bright as day,"

in such a way that most of the boys were glad to listen to him, and their fierce looks kept those quiet who would willingly have made a disturbance.

"Now, boys, let's have it again?" said the stranger, when he had hardly stopped singing, and straight through the hymn he went, several of the boys humming with him as he went on, and "little Josey" actually keeping up a whistling accompaniment all through the last verse.

The stranger left no time for any uproar after the singing, but began immediately to talk to the boys in clear, loud tones, that commanded their attention, as he said—Where is the Happy land, boys? Is it here in this alley?"

A loud contemptuous laugh followed, and there were shouts of, "No! No! Not by a long shot! He's a queer un!" etc.

"Where is the Happy Land?" again asked that clear voice, this time hastening to give its own answer—not in the great beautiful houses, where rich folks live. It isn't being poor or rich that makes a man happy. A bad man in a big house maybe as unhappy as a cross dog in a big kennel or a hungry rat in a great brass kettle!"

"I'd like to try it, anyhow," said a rough voice.

"Hold on till ye hear!" shouted Sam.

While these loud words were spoken, the stranger too was saying something silently in his heart. He was asking his Great Heavenly Friend so to help him to describe His Eternal Home to those poor wicked lads, that they might long to go to it.

When the moment of silence came, the stranger again spoke, and all listened as he told of the "Happy Land," where there shall be no night, where they hunger and thirst no more, where the inhabitant saith not I am sick, where there is no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying, for God hath wiped away all tears, forever.

As he was describing the pure and loving beings who dwell in the "Happy Land," he stopped suddenly, and said, "There are no such beings here. Not a boy here but feels he is not fit for such a place!" Then, in words which only could have been spoken by one who has asked God for help, the stranger told the story of Jesus coming to seek and to save lost sinful creatures, and to help them to do right. Then he bade the boys take courage, and know that each and everyone of them might find help from God to break off his evil ways, and begin to go towards the "Happy Land" for Jesus' sake.

Hardly had he paused when the room was in commotion. Coarse songs were sung, oaths filled the air, and the spirit of wickedness seemed to triumph, even as when the cry of "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!" sounded from the Jewish multitude of old.

Big Sam could no longer command silence, but he helped the better cause in his own way, as he shouted, "To the street! Now for fun, boys!" and away poured the noisy crowd, kicking down the benches as they went and throwing stones at the bright transparency as their parting token.

Was the stranger disheartened? He looked not to see the fruit of his labors. He was working for his Master in heaven, and to that Master he was now praying in his heart, asking a blessing on what had been spoken in His name.

His prayer was broken in upon by the sudden entrance of "big Sam," who, after leading off the boisterous crowd, had dodged round a back alley and returned to the room to warn the stranger to make good his retreat from that evil neighborhood or mischief might be done him.

"I am not afraid," said the stranger, quietly.

"Perhaps you have the right fellows here?" said Sam, pointing to his coat pocket, and putting out his arm, and looking along it, as if to intimate the presence of pistols.

The stranger threw open his coat, and said, "I am not armed, I came as a friend, and friends bring no pistols."

Sam looked on in astonishment, as the stranger proceeded to put out the lamps, and prepare coolly for his departure, buttoning up his overcoat as calmly as if he were at home.

"You're a chap," said Sam at length, with some admiration in his tones, "too good a chap to get what may be cooking for you, so here goes," and Sam took the stranger by shoulders and walked him quickly out of the room, before him, as if he had been a child. Then, holding him fast by the arm, Sam led him along at a pace very like a run. In and out dark alleys they went, through paths unknown to the stranger, and far different from the direct course he had taken in his way to the room where the "boys' meeting" had been held.

The stranger was alone in the darkness, and completely in the power of "Big Sam," in that evil region where a cry of "murder" might have called some to witness the deed, but none to speak of mercy! But his heart failed not! A deadly blow could but admit him suddenly to the "Happy Land" of which he had been speaking and he had nought to fear.

Many a wicked deed had "Big Sam" on his conscience, but this night he was a true friend. When the stranger least expected it, he was forced up a narrow alley, then across a better street, up another alley, then across a better street, up another alley, and left standing astonished mid the gas-lights and brilliant stores of Broadway.

The stranger thought only the eye of the Heavenly Father had followed him in this strange, rapid walk, but he was mistaken. A little figure had been hidden in a doorway to escape the rough crew who poured from the place of meeting. That little figure had followed the stranger through the dark passages, along the narrow alleys, silently and swiftly, as if he had been bound to him by a strong, but invisible cord. Such a cord there was, and "Little Josey" felt it in his poor sinful heart. There was a bond between him and the stranger, which may perhaps be owned in Heaven, as a tie stronger than that which binds the mother to her child or the husband to his dear wife.

By the voice of that stranger, "Little Josey" had been called to forsake his wild ways and he had resolved to obey that call. Henceforward he would lead an honest life, forever separated from his old sins and his old companions!

He would have followed that stranger to the world's end, and asked his help in this new resolution, sure of a welcome and a right hand of friendship. When "Big Sam" released his hold of the stranger, and turned back to the dark alleys that became his own dark, downward path, "Little Josey" crouched beside a door-step to let him pass. Even as Sam sped on, unconscious who was near him, the roll of an

omnibus was heard, and “Little Josey” had only the opportunity to see the stranger quickly enter it, to be swiftly borne away.

Alone! Alone! Felt “Little Josey,” at that moment. Mother! Home! These he had never known. A wanderer from his boyhood, he had never thought of being lonely, but now he had lost someone—someone he might have loved and leaned upon. Lost was the friend, but not lost were the precious words that had sunk deep into the soul of the poor sinful child.

Beside one of the great warehouses, near which he stood, was a pile of packing boxes. Into the smallest of them crept “Little Josey,” and there he curled himself up, and soon fell asleep, to dream not of sin and sorrow, but of singing in the Happy Land.

Chapter 2 Josey’s Treasure

When little Josey awoke the next morning, it was with the feeling that he was beginning a new life, as truly as the sun was beginning a new day. He was to make his own living—an honest living! That was something worth rising early to commence upon.

Josey was used to cold and hunger, but now there was gnawing within him, a craving for food, that made him think of a house where, for helping on the sinful owners in their ways of wickedness, he had often won a breakfast, but thither he must not go. He was far, too, from those scenes of crime. Thither he never meant to return. He would make an honest living, or die in the attempt.

Anyone who had looked at his broad forehead, his straightforward looking eyes, and his thin, closely-shut mouth, would have seen there was determination there that could not be easily shaken. Josey was cheerful by nature, and as he drew himself out from the retreat where he had passed the night, he began to whistle as cheerily as if he knew exactly what course he was to pursue.

Stifling his hunger a little, by tying tighter about him the strip of an old shawl that filled up the gap between his short old coat and his shorter tattered trousers, he began to walk up Broadway as confidently as if that street of luxury was his accustomed promenade.

On he walked, amused to see the shop windows opened one by one and the rich goods displayed to the morning light. It was a new sight to him, and its beauty made him think of the “Happy Land,” and he wondered if heaven could be anything more beautiful than those grand stores, so full of things more splendid and shining than anything he had ever imagined.

Now a baker came out from his establishment, the very steam of which was enough to tempt a hungry man. The baker put his loaded basket into his already full cart and then stepped back to speak to the clerk in the great front shop.

“Little Josey” knew how to be quick in his movements, as quick almost as Seignior Blitz, when he moves so fast that the eye cannot follow him. He knew that he could snatch a roll and be gone before the baker could turn his head. Did he do it—the poor hungry boy? No! he passed on with a quick, determined step.

Little Josey had felt proud when he had beaten, in a regular fight, a boy half as large again as himself—proud when he had accomplished a theft in a way to win the admiration of his low companions, but there was a new kind of pride in his heart, as he saw the baker drive off, and felt he might look the man in the face, as honest, at least for the moment, as himself. Little Josey had yet to learn that he had a sinful heart, and only God’s grace could keep him in the right path.

After awhile, Josey tired of Broadway, with its endless rows of stores, confusing and astonishing with the richness they displayed. Turning into one of the cross streets, he had not gone far when he was nearly thrown down by the sudden opening of a gate, which was swung violently back, within an inch of his face.

Josey felt ready to do battle with whoever might appear, but for an instant no one passed out. Then, dashing by him, came a dog, holding fast in his flight the bit of raw meat, the loss of which probably occasioned the angry scolding of the cook, who was following close upon his rear. As the dog dashed out, and sped up the street, at a pace that would have suited a fox-hunt, the cook, in her impotent rage, threw after him a broom handle, the force of which he had probably been made to feel, by his unwillingness to trust himself any longer in its neighborhood.

“I wonder if she ever knew what it was to be hungry,” said Josey to himself, as he glanced after the retreating figure of the fat cook, and then followed the dog, to whom his sympathies decidedly turned. Picking up the broom-stick, Josey used it as a leaping-pole, and stopped to see how grandly he could clear the gutter at bound, with such a staunch support.

Josey liked play, for in that all boys are alike, high or low, rich or poor. God shows His great goodness in giving children such a natural fount of joy, that they can laugh merrily, even in the midst of poverty and desolation. Josey had never thought of being unhappy because he was poor, and ragged, and alone in the world. His worst misery had been that which ever comes with sin—the fierce discomfort of sudden anger, the lingering pains of resentment.

As Josey pursued his solitary wanderings, leaping along, and wondering what was to become of him in his new way of life, the time went by, and the streets became more and more thronged. A little group of schoolboys at length attracted Josey’s attention. They seemed so full of glee, so joyous and hopeful, that he felt it was good to be near them.

“Do you believe it has come?” said one of the boys in a tone of doubt.

“I know it has! my mother always keeps her word!” said a frank-faced, manly looking little fellow, who, in his eagerness to get on, was quite in advance of the rest.

They had now reached an express office, and in they hurried. Josey wondered if “it” had come, and he resolved to wait and see. He felt almost sure “that mother” had kept her word.

In a few moments the little group had reappeared and very joyous they all looked. The lad who had spoken so confidently, had in his hands a great round box, which

might have contained an exhibition cheese, from its shape and size. The box was covered with a stout wrapper, and tied up with a strong cord, at which the happy boy was working to get out the knot.

“Stop a minute, fellows,” said he, “we can sit here, on these steps, and get a peep into it now. It will be ‘go to study, young gentlemen,’ as soon as we get back to school.”

They all gladly acceded to the proposal, and little Josey stopped too, though quite in the back-ground, for he wanted to see what was in the box. The string was quickly cut, and the stout wrapper taken off, then all the thumbs and fore fingers in the party were called into requisition to force up the tight-fitting lid. It came off at last, with a sudden jump, and rolled far across the side-walk, towards the gutter. Josey sprang after it, and caught it just as it was on the brink of the foul stream that was beginning to flow in its accustomed channel.

“Here, here it is!” said Josey, triumphantly, taking it back to owner.

“That was well done! I could not move as quick as that if I were to suffer for it,” said the frank-faced boy, as he took the cover from Josey.

There was a general murmur of approbation among the boys, as the contents of the box were displayed. In the center was a frosted cake, round which doughnuts innumerable were arranged, while a layer of candies was packed at the outside edge of the box. Josey’s eyes sparkled at this display and his poor hungry face told its wants. In another moment he was speaking in words not to be mistaken—real, hearty thanks. The happy boy, in his glee at the token from his far-distant but fond and faithful mother, was ready, not only to share with his school companions, but he had a handful of doughnuts for the hungry boy who had smiled to see his joy.

The merry lads soon shut up the box, and putting the paper loosely around it, hurried away, each with a dough-nut in his hand.

Josey sat down on the step they had left vacant, and with their cheerful voices ringing in his ears, he felt as if he still had company. What a good breakfast those country cakes made for poor Josey! How glad that tender mother would have been to know that what she had made for her own dear boy, had given a first honest meal to a poor outcast, resolved to lead a new life.

When Josey’s breakfast was over, he saw, lying at his feet, the strong string which had been about the box. Into his pocket he thrust it, with his two remaining doughnuts, and on he went, as light-hearted as if he knew whither he was going.

Josey had a point in view, towards which he thought he was tending. He was going to the Happy Land! As yet he knew little of the journey, but he had set his face in that direction. The stranger had said, “Let him that stole, steal no more, but rather let him labor, working with his own hands the thing which is good.” These words had sunk deep into heart of little Josey. He felt as if they were addressed directly to him.

To the first part of the command, Josey had resolutely commenced obedience, but how was he to “labor, working with his own hands the thing which was good?” Josey was going over with this question, as he went leaping along, holding fast to his pole, which he had begun to look upon as a kind of companion.

The cold, bleak wind of the night before had softened into a gentle spring breeze, and the sun, after its night’s rest, had awoke in a good humor. Josey felt very

comfortable as he warmed himself in its beams, and it pleased him to see the street grow darker and darker, as the hard frosted mud grew thin and watery. He was sure the winter must be over and the warm weather coming in earnest.

This change, so welcome to Josey, was not as favorable to the more dainty foot passengers, who now began to throng the sidewalks. Ladies crossed the streets on tip-toe and city gentlemen gave skillful leaps to spare their shining boots.

Up and down went the omnibuses in ceaseless procession—to and fro passed lines of carts, and vehicles of all sorts and sizes. Every wheel that passed had its contribution of mud to drop on the crossings, and now came out the little sweepers, to stand in the din and danger, to make clean the paths for others.

“I could do that, if I only had a broom,” thought Josey, as he saw a little ragged girl brushing away, and receiving, now a push and now a penny, from those who went by.

As Josey had this thought, he again turned away from Broadway, to look through a latticed gate that had attracted his attention. The crossings were soon forgotten, as he watched, with eager interest, the motions of skillful gardener within. How wonderful an instrument seemed that curious pruning knife, cutting the branches at a touch, and gleaming in the sunshine at every stroke, as if it laughed at the quick work it was making.

By and by the gardener walked suddenly towards the gate, Josey half-fancied he was to be blamed even for peeping into that pretty enclosure, where the crocuses were already peeping out from the dark ground, to ask if spring had come at last. Yes, spring had come, and they might venture forth, and for little Josey a bit of sunshine was at hand, when he least looked for it.

The gardener, in his quick movements, had no thought of little Josey. He was but gathering up the clippings of his pruning knife, to throw them in the street, as worthless trash. What a treasure that bundle of twigs seemed to little Josey! Not dry, sapless branches, to break at every touch, but young, and strong, and fit for his purpose.

“I will make a broom for myself!” was Josey’s joyous thought, as he gathered the bundle of twigs in his arms, and made his way back to the corner he had just left. There, in a side doorway, little used, he sat down, and busily commenced his work.

Handle, string, and brush, he had them all to form his first working tool—his first means of laboring with his hands. Josey whistled very cheerfully at his work. He felt as if he were one step nearer the “Happy Land,” and the hymn which told about that blessed region was in his mind, and gave the tune to his rude whistling.

Had it been only chance which had given to little Josey, one by one, the materials he needed? The Great Heavenly Father hears the young ravens when they cry, and noteth every sparrow’s fall—had He not been helping forward poor Little Josey, in this his first effort, to lead an honest, industrious life?

Chapter 3 First Earnings

Josey's broom was a strong one, though not particularly neat in its appearance, and he surveyed it with much satisfaction when it was done. Now he was impatient to begin his labors, and he was right glad to see that the little girl whom he had just noticed, had come to the conclusion that her position was a poor one, and had gone elsewhere to try her success. At her crossing, he took his post.

Josey knew how his broom looked, but he had very little thought of his own appearance, in his outgrown clothes, eked out at the waist by his bit of shawl, and his hat with his short dry curls turned up over the great crown, to make up for the brim being torn off in front—that had had been deemed a treasure by Josey, when he first picked it up from the dust heap of some honest Quaker, because the remains of the broad brim came down over his back, like a fireman's watershed to his cap. To be a fireman had once been the summit of Josey's ambition, but now he had somehow taken the idea that the firemen he knew of were not on their way to the Happy Land, and his ambition had turned in another direction.

Josey had real satisfaction in making *his crossing* (he felt as if he owned every inch of it) look nicely. He found real pleasure in the hard work upon which he had entered. He was laboring, that was a satisfaction, though the profit of his labors were as yet an uncertain sum.

Josey did not work like some of the crossing sweepers, with an eye ever on the passersby, and a hand more held out to ask for money, than laid firmly and skillfully on the broom-handle. Josey had a boy's pleasure in the use of the broom, the result of his own skill, and a boy's satisfaction in the very danger he was in, as he was now almost under the feet of a pair of strong horses, and now darting back, as he was near being crushed between the wheels of two jostling drays.

Josey had worked two whole hours, and not a penny had he received, and he was beginning to think he had not entered upon a very money-making business. Now came on a tall, stout countryman, with a small lady in a white bonnet, clinging to his arm. Josey caught a sight of her new boots and her fresh alpaca traveling dress, and he made the way quickly clean for her to pass.

The countryman seemed to think the poor boy's effort a particular tribute to his lovely bride, and that it deserved to be paid accordingly. Stopping on the corner, he drew out a great red silk purse, the work of that bride a few months ago, and from it he took a bright dime and dropped it into Josey's hand, saying, "Mind ye, my boy, good work deserves good pay. She ought to have the whole world swept for her!"

The little bride clung closer to her proud husband's arm, and wondered why she was so precious, while Josey looked at his treasure in astonished joy. Such a sum as that he had never owned in his life. He "knew the coin," he had seen it in Sam Bott's possession, gotten doubtless by evil practices. Such money was not like his first earnings, his first reward of honest labor.

Josey could have worked all day in remembrance of that piece of good fortune, but at noon he had a penny given him by a passing merchant and another by a young school-girl somewhat later. Josey was perfectly in love with his new business! He could have worked all night, if there had not been a morrow coming for which he must be fresh to begin his duties.

As evening came on, and the old woman who had her orange stand at Josey's corner, began to pack up her treasures, and prepare to go away, Josey thought it must be supper time for him too. The dough-nuts had gone for dinner—what matter? He could *buy* a roll now, like an honest boy, with the fruit of his own labors.

Josey could not be satisfied until he retraced his steps to the very establishment from which he had seen the baker go out in the morning. He felt it a pleasure to make a fair purchase on the spot where he had resisted temptation.

Josey felt as if it were no matter where he slept that night, it was so warm, and he was tired enough almost to dream as he walked. Behind one of the great columns to a church portico he lay down, and without a prayer fell fast asleep. Poor little Josey had never been taught to fold his hands at a mother's knee, and say, "Our Father."

Chapter 4 The Talking Pictures

Poor little weary Josey might have slept till midday on his stone bed, if he had not been roused by a rough voice and a rougher hand. A hearty shake called him to himself, and then he was told to get out of the way of decent folks on a Sunday morning, when people would be coming to church.

Sunday morning! That was a disappointment indeed to little Josey. No money to be made that day. He had not learned to call the "Sabbath a delight." He knew nothing of its holy pleasures, its sweet foretastes of the "Happy Land."

Like the poor dog he had seen the day before, Josey hurried out of the reach of the sexton's strong arm, trailing his broom behind him, as he went. He would have been glad to have found a safe place of deposit for his dear broom for the day, but he dare not part with it lest some dishonest hands should lay hold of it and so leave him bankrupt.

Poor Josey had not learned to lay in Sunday supplies. In the evil region where he had lived, Sunday was like other days, given up to sin, and there was need of remembering the charge given to the Israelites, to lay by a store of manna for the Sabbath.

On Josey's poor darkened mind, the deep impression had been made that he must lead an honest life, not stealing or even begging, if he could earn his daily bread, and now his new principles were to be put sorely to the test.

The shops in the region where he had resolved to live were all closed. He would not return to his old haunts, so, with money in his pocket, he must see the day go by without food. Of this, however, early in the day, Josey thought but little. He had been without his breakfast a hundred times, and he could easily make up his mind to it now that he was on the way to Happy Land, "where they hunger no more, neither thirst, and all tears are forever wiped away."

The sweet music of the bells was a cheering sound, and it soon gave him pleasure to see the groups of children going gladly to the Sunday-schools scattered here and there through the great city, like folds for the lambs on the bleak hill-side.

One little girl particularly attracted Josey's attention. Her sweet face beamed kindly on him, and her blue eyes were full of pity, as she looked at his worn and

ragged clothes, and his face now pale with hunger. Josey had never before had such a glance cast on him, so full of love and sympathy, and after she had passed him, he turned to follow her footsteps, with a vague idea that where she went must be the way to the Happy Land where good people go.

The little girl soon turned into a court, which was thronged with children, all drawing near to a great door, which opened in the rear of a large building. She let the others pass in and then stepped in after them. As she did so, she dropped a little parcel, but she did not see it fall, and the door was immediately shut.

Josey sprang towards the step where lay the little parcel. It was not a book, yet it seemed like one, but so tight closed that Josey could not imagine how it could be undone. Josey wanted to open that great door. He tried it very gently, but it was closed fast.

At that moment a sound of music met his ears, and he stood as if chained to the spot. Young voices were singing, "The Happy Land," in tones so clear and sweet that he felt as if he must be near that blessed region, where sin and sorrow cannot come. The sound of those words, that had sunk so deep into his heart, made poor little Josey resolve anew to seek that better country, trusting to enter in for Jesus' sake.

By and by the music ceased. Then Josey could hear someone asking the great God of heaven to bless all little children, poor or rich, and to keep them safe in the way that leads to the "Happy Land."

Josey listened, eager and awe-struck. He felt that he was one of the little children for whom the speaker was praying, and when that voice of prayer was still, little Josey's heart was full of joy. It seemed to him that the Great and Good God had promised to help him in his journey to the Heavenly Country.

Without knowing it, Josey had really prayed with the speaker—that is, his soul had wanted the things asked for, and believed they would be granted. God had marked that poor ignorant child and accepted his silent prayer.

Alas! Within that room which seemed to little Josey so like the Happy Land, many little children were busy with idle thoughts of play, or foolish thoughts of dress, while that sweet hymn was sung and those words of prayer were said. Precious food was offered to them, but they cast it away, while the poor boy on the doorstep gathered up the crumbs in thankfulness. What will those children say, when their Heavenly Father asks at the Great Day, who was truly worshipping Him that Sunday morning?

Josey longed to enter that place of gathering for the little ones, but after what he had heard. He felt as if it were too holy a place for such as he to tread, and he resolved to wait without, until the little girl should appear to receive her parcel.

Up and down the court walked little Josey, as hour after hour went by. The great church-bell sounded over his head, and throngs of people passed along the streets. Then came a time of quiet—then another flowing on of the crowds, as of a great human river—then a long, long quiet time. Again the bells sounded cheerily, again the streets were thronged, but the door through which the little girl had passed was shut, shut so tight that Josey could not open it, though he pressed against it with all his strength.

The poor child's strength was waning fast. It was four o'clock in the afternoon and not a mouthful had passed his lips. Up and down the court he had wandered, waiting

and watching, longing as much to catch a glimpse of the only face that had ever looked lovingly on him, as to restore the lost parcel to its owner.

Weary and despairing, at last, Josey sat down once more, and took the parcel from his pocket. As he pressed it tight in his hands, it bent, and then such wonders met his eyes, that he soon managed to draw out from the little case the cards it contained. Cards with beautiful pictures on them—so beautiful that little Josey forgot his hunger as he gazed upon them.

He laid them one by one on the flat doorstep and bent down to examine them. In every picture was the majestic form, the same kind, loving face, of one like the Son of Man. Now He was healing the sick, now feeding the multitude on the mountain side, now tenderly clasping the little ones to His bosom, now looking round on a group of friends, with an expression so full of tender compassion, that Josey longed to hear the words He was saying.

“Who is He?” was the question in little Josey’s mind, as one by one he examined the “talking pictures” and laid them down. Slowly and sorrowfully he drew the last from the case, the last—and he was loth to have the pleasure over, even for the first time. That last picture answered his question and filled his eyes with sudden tears. Nailed upon the cross was that being whom he had traced through all the scenes, which showed him as “going about doing good.” It was Jesus. He of whom the stranger had spoken. It was Jesus who died for sinners, that even the most wicked might turn from sin to seek the “Happy Land.”

Children who have heard of the saviour, since first their mother’s voice sang of Him beside their cradle, can hardly realize how wonderful, how full of surpassing love seemed our blessed Lord to the poor boy, to whose mind His story was now brought home.

Again and again little Josey looked at each of the pictures, and tried more fully to understand what it meant. And now he turned more tenderly to the last great proof of a Savior’s love.

Words there were below each of the engravings, but little Josey could not read them. No mother had taught him the alphabet at her knee, or sent him almost too-comfortably clad to seek the busy school room.

Josey could not read, but the pictures spoke to him. They taught him a holy lesson that sank deep in his heart. Little ones were pressed to the bosom of Jesus. Such a privilege might be his in the Happy Land. Jesus could give food to the throng on the hill-side—would He forget the hunger pains of one poor child who longed to love Him?

Very precious seemed those talking pictures to poor Josey, and at length he suddenly thought how great must be their loss to the little girl who had dropped them. He fancied her with the tears rolling down her sweet face and he could not bear the thought.

Starting up, he went out of the court for the first time, and saw where the building she had entered joined the great church whose bell had sounded so loud in his ears. Yes, she must have passed through the church, and gone to her home! Josey thought it impossible now to find her and he was half glad that he might hope to consider those dear pictures his own.

On he walked, thinking of Jesus as he went, and trailing behind him his broom, little guessing how strange a sight he was to those little children who looked out from the clean shining windows of the houses that he passed.

In front of one of these tall houses he stopped and leaned against the iron railing, to rest, for he was faint and weary. He glanced up towards the richly-curtained windows, and there he saw what made him start and smile, and raise the little package high in the air.

He could not forget the sweet face that had looked so kindly on him in the morning, and now it was turned towards him with the same expression, which needed no language to make itself understood.

Josey's quick gesture had spoken too, and in another moment the door opened at the head of the flight of stone steps, and the little girl stood there, beckoning.

"Did you find my Sunday cards?" said the little girl, joyously holding out her hand to receive them.

"I found them, and I have been waiting all day by the door where you went in, to give them to you," said Josey.

"Haven't you had any dinner?" said the little girl, pitifully.

"Not a bit, but I forgot it when I saw them," said Josey, pointing at the pictures. "Them almost talks. Them's wondersome sweet."

The little girl looked at the parcel, that had made pleasant so many Sunday hours, then again at the poor ragged boy, whose face had so brightened as he looked at them, and she said suddenly—

"You may keep them! You may have them for your Sunday cards!"

Josey had a hearty supper that night, for the little girl who could give away what she so valued, was not likely to let the "hungry go empty from the door." She herself saw the food placed in his hands, and then she bade him good-bye, with another of those looks that made poor Josey think of the Happy Land.

Josey had not been mistaken in that little face—it told a true story. The little girl was one of the children whom Jesus calls His own. And as day by day she tried to be gentle and unselfish, for the Savior's sake, day by day her face grew more like those that shine forever in the Happy Land. Faces soured by ill-temper, made hateful by every selfishness and discontent, tell even a passing stranger that the children to whom they belong are not our Savior's lambs.

Josey slept on a pile of lumber that night, with only the sky for a covering. That sky was full of stars—a cheerful sight they seemed to the poor boy as he closed his eyes, for he was filled with joy. He felt sure that He who fed the multitude had seen his hunger pains and led that little one to give him food. God had been asked to bless him and already he had received the talking pictures to tell him of the Savior's love.

It was a comfort to Josey to know that for him one voice had been lifted in prayer that day—he knew not that many Christian hearts were praying for him, for all who are trying to follow the Lord Jesus. It should strengthen and comfort every poor, helpless, sinful child, who turns his face towards the Happy Land, to know, that in great churches, by pleasant firesides, in secret closets, true prayer is ever going up for those who wish to be the Savior's little ones.

Chapter 5 Strange Friends

Several weeks had passed since Josey had turned his back on his old sins and his old companions. Meanwhile he had been a faithful worker, receiving sometimes more than he dared expect, and sometimes going supperless to his hard bed on a doorstep or among packing boxes.

Children who have a whole Bible of their own, and who can read in it whenever they will, can hardly imagine how precious Josey's "Sunday pictures" were to the poor outcast. It cheered him for his coming labor to look them over in the early morning light. It repaid him for his day of toil to study them one by one, beside the street lamp ere he lay down to rest. How he longed to read the words printed upon them! He felt sure they must be some sweet message from Jesus to the little ones going towards the Happy Land.

Josey had been faithful to the crossing he had first chosen. There, day after day, he was to be found, broom in hand, and cheerfulness at heart. The passers-by began to know him, and he began to have what are looked upon as "regular customers"—persons who daily gave him a penny, and now and then a smile, as he pleasantly acknowledged their gifts.

Then the old woman at the orange stand seemed quite like a friend, though Josey had but little time to talk with her. She was always ready with a hearty congratulation when he escaped by a sudden movement being grazed by a threatening wheel or trampled upon by a careless horseman. Once, when his neat crossing was made for the moment impassable by the deposit left by a pile of drays, he heard her exclamation of annoyance and was sure she felt for him in this small trouble.

Few children would have thought of finding a friend in Nanny Dibbs, the orange woman. Nanny was old—it was at least seventy years since that brown, wrinkled, bent woman, was a sweet, smooth infant on a mother's knee. Some people thought Nanny's clothes were in fashion at that same remote day, but there they were mistaken. Fashions change faster than most persons would imagine, unless they had kept a set of garments for a score or two of years, which nobody has any business to do, when there are so many of the ragged in this world of ours.

Nanny always wore a clean cambric cap, with a frill, full a finger wide, which stood up round her face as if it were astonished and almost frightened at being so near so many wrinkles. Over the cap was perched a bonnet with a fore-piece like a portico, and a crown like a tower—an excellent, valuable bonnet. Nanny had worn it just twenty-five years, as she was proud to say, every Monday morning, to one of her acquaintances. It is hardly necessary to mention Nanny's brown calico shawl, just like her dress, but it may serve to make out the picture of Josey's friend.

Nanny always had good oranges, and that many a child knew, and many a thirsty passer-by remembered. And when she gathered up her oranges at night, she always had something in a small leather bag, which she thought it worth while to put in her bosom, and fasten there with the largest pin she had picked up on the pavement on the way to her stand.

Nanny was fond of snuff—her old black horn box was quite empty one morning, and after fidgeting for some time, she made up her mind to leave her stand a minute and go to a grocer's on the opposite corner to replenish it. This week had been an unfortunate one for little Josey. It seemed to be hard times with everybody. The "regular customers" did not come that way and nobody else was in the mood for being liberal.

Josey had gone to bed without supper and commenced his labors for the day with an empty stomach. The more regular life he had led of late made hunger harder to bear. Under these circumstances, the juicy oranges looked very tempting, lying there in a golden pile, while Nanny was away. Little Josey was but a poor simple child, now in the "better path." He yielded to the bad impulse—he stepped towards the stand with a stealthy foot and an outstretched arm. Josey had never been taught to pray "lead us not into temptation." He knew not the Savior, "having suffered, being tempted, is able to succor them that are tempted."

His good resolutions were forgotten! Forgotten was the stranger's voice, that had said, "Let him that stole steal no more." Josey had reached the spot from which with a quick movement he could scratch an orange, without being seen too near her stand.

At that moment, a strong rough hand was laid on his shoulder. Trembling as if actually detected in the theft, Josey turned and looked not on Nanny, not on a police officer, but on his old acquaintance, Sam Bott.

"So I have you, my sneak!" said Sam, holding on to Josey with no gentle hand. "I spose you're stuck up now, and hangin on to some folks, and mighty good. Can't speak to bad Sam Bott, I 'spose! Who are your friends, eh?" And Sam gave an expressive grip as he spoke.

"I hain't got no friends!" said Josey, disconsolately.

His late yielding to temptation had done more to put him out of spirits than the idea his words conveyed. Josey was afraid he had lost his Heavenly Friend—afraid he had turned quite away from the Happy Land.

"You hain't, eh!" said Sam, releasing his hold. "Then where did you get this here broom?"

"I made it," said Josey, triumphantly. His broom was his pride, and he had kept it in good repair from the clippings of the trees and gardens at that pruning season.

"Made it, eh!" said Sam, sitting down on the curbstone and pulling Josey to his side. "Do you mean to sweep, sweep all your dirty life?"

"I mean to labor and to steal no more!" said Josey, soberly.

"'Spose I say you shan't, and just put my arm round you, and takes you with me to parts you knows of," said Sam, suiting the action to the word.

Josey turned a look of horror and fright towards his old friend, but he saw in his face an expression that encouraged him to say, "You used to be good to me, Sam, in your way. I might have been done up heaps o' times if you hadn't stood by me. I don't believe you'll do me a bad turn, when I've made a kind of start for the Happy Land 'Spose you wheel round and start too."

Sam gave a long low whistle, which seemed to intimate the absurdity of the thing proposed, and then giving Josey a poke in the stomach with his fore-finger, saying, "Feel empty there, eh? Was goin to take an orange, eh? I knows the moves!"

Josey couldn't stand that, the tears actually came in his eyes, as he said, "I was, Sam, shame to me with all I knows now! You stood by me then better than when you saved my eye from Bill Slinger's big stone, with your own big hand—and I thank you, Sam. I won't give up. I mean to go to the Happy Land, forby I came so near stealin."

"Well, you and I parts company," said Sam, starting up suddenly, and hustling to lose himself in a stream of people pouring down Broadway. The approach of several police officers made Josey understand the movement of his old acquaintance, and in his heart poor little Josey rejoiced that he now feared nothing but sin.

Sam was hardly out of sight, when little Josey began to wonder that he had not asked him a question that had been much in his mind of late. He longed to know whether the stranger, who had spoken such precious words, had again appeared among Josey's old associates. Sometimes, Josey had even thought of hazarding a visit to his former haunts, in the hope of hearing again that voice, which had had power so to change his course of life, but he well knew the danger of such an attempt, and the effort that would be made to detain him among sinful companions, and sink him deeper in guilt. He dared not trust himself in the midst of temptation, even to hear counsel that might guide him on his way to the Happy Land.

Poor Josey would have only been made sorrowful by Sam's answer, if his confusion at the time of their meeting had not prevented his asking the question over which he had so pondered. The bright transparency had not again appeared in that dark alley. It was knocked down and defaced on the evening of the meeting, the lamps had been stolen, the windows had been broken, the benches taken for firewood, and a deep threat uttered against the life of the stranger if he should again dare to raise his voice to check the sins to which the whole neighborhood was given up.

Sam Bott had ferreted out the stranger's name and place of abode, and given him warning not to venture to attempt such a meeting again, if he would not risk his life. The stranger obeyed the warning, and sadly thought his effort for those poor outcasts had been all in vain. He little knew that on that evening of discouragement a treasure had been won, in comparison with which the whole world was a worthless bubble, to burst and be gone forever. He little knew that to one human soul the message of mercy had come, with its power, to call from darkness unto light, from the ways of sin to the paths of holiness and eternal life.

Chapter 6 Nanny's Learning

When Nanny Dibb returned to her stand, after a few moments' absence, it was easy for her practical eye to see that not an orange was missing from the well-ordered pile. Josey rose in her estimation, from the safety in which the goods had remained under his eyes, and she turned on him that day a more favorable eye than ever before.

Josey, for his part, felt so truly sorry that he had been so far tempted as to have resolved upon the theft from which he now shrunk with horror, that he was inclined to do all in his power for the old woman.

Nanny was an industrious creature, and blue yarn stockings grew in her hands from seaming to heel, from heel to toe, in a way that astonished little Josey. He wondered how such thick warm stockings would feel on a cold winter morning. He was not quite sure they would be pleasant. His poor little toes would certainly have been of a different opinion, if they had ever tried the experiment.

Once, that day, Nanny dropped her ball, and Josey had an opportunity of picking it up before it rolled into the gutter. At another time, by a judicious warning, he put her on her guard against a boy, who was slyly preparing to pocket an orange without giving Nanny anything to put in her leather bag to pay for it.

For a few days this state of things went on between Nanny and Josey, and they began to feel quite well-acquainted. Nanny let Josey help her pack up her stores before going home for the night. He was proud to be so trusted and would have offered to help her carry them home—but somehow he felt more shy about that than he would have once done about knocking down a strange boy who had chanced to displease him.

Nanny had begun to feel on such good terms with Josey, that one morning she ventured to ask him to do her a favor. She placed in Josey's hand a whole copper cent, without fear of his running off with the treasure, and said, "Just stop that screamin' boy, won't ye, and get a Herald for me. They says the ship as my Jerry is in was spoke off somewhere in the seas, and I'd like to know it for sure. Quick now or he'll be yelling up a block further on."

Josey stood up his broom by the stand, and started on after the newspaper boy, and soon came back with the much-coveted paper.

Nanny put on her spectacles with the heavy horn rims, and did not look the more attractive for this addition to her charms. Josey was beginning to have a high opinion of Nanny, but his respect rose wonderfully, now that he found she was a scholar. He drew near her and looked on as she cast her eyes over the paper, as if the power of getting at its contents was a kind of trick to be caught by close observation.

Nanny at last found the paragraph for which she was looking, and exclaimed, "My sines! The Dolfun, sure enough! Spoke off Cape Horn, all right on board! Wal, that's worth knowin! I wish they'd made partikler mention o' Jerry. They would, ha' told though, if anything was contrairy with him. Wal, that is news!"

Josey felt glad, too, that Jerry was all right, though he had no idea who Jerry was or why Nanny cried so much about him. The fact was, the old woman was so much pleased herself, that Josey could not help being pleased too. Nanny was in wonderful good humor that day, and actually gave Josey a piece of bread, when she took her dinner out of a brown paper, at noon.

Josey had had his thinking cap on a good deal that morning. The idea had struck him, that if Nanny Dibb could read a newspaper, perhaps she could tell him the words on his dear cards, those wonderful words which he had looked at so many times with longing eyes.

At length, Josey mustered courage to ask the favor of her. Taking his treasure out of his pocket, he sided up to the old woman, and said, pointing to the printing below the picture, "It's likely you knows what them letters says, maybe you'd tell me."

Nanny pulled out her spectacles and looked at the picture for a moment, without speaking, then turning a sudden piercing glance on Josey, she said, "How came you by this. The like o' you don't come naturally by such?"

"She, she gin em to me, and my dinner too. A'nt they spry?" and Josey displayed his cards one after another on the stand.

Nanny looked at them admiringly and seemed quite satisfied with Josey's explanation of the way they had come into his possession. His words had been worth nothing to her, but she had seen enough of the world to read truth in Josey's face, as he spoke.

"The printin, Nanny, eh?" said Josey, after waiting for her to exercise her powers, until his patience would hold out no longer.

"Yes, yes," said Nanny, taking up the card on which the miracle of the feeding of the five thousand, was represented. If Josey had been a scholar himself, he would not have been favorably impressed by the spelling process, through which Nanny went before she was able to read slowly but distinctly, the words, "He feedeth the hungry." "They that wait upon the Lord, shall not lack any good thing."

"Agin! Agin! Said Josey in a sharp quick tone that made Nanny look over her spectacles in surprise. Josey was receiving a message from his Heavenly Master and he wanted to take it in with his whole soul.

Nanny read it twice more for him and then he was able to repeat it after her without a mistake.

"This, now!" he said, eagerly, as he handed her the one on which the crucifixion was represented.

"Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow His steps," said Nanny, after a long long time of preparation.

Nanny was not called upon to read this passage a second time. Josey repeated it again and again without a mistake, and so slowly and thoughtfully, that Nanny gave him another look of wonder and surprise.

A customer now interrupted Nanny, and the reading came to an end for that day, but not so the impression it had made. Those blessed words were, in the ears of poor little Josey, like sweet music. They were to him as the voice of Jesus, breathing comfort into his soul.

At different times, when Nanny was in a good humor and not too much occupied, Josey gathered the precious sentences on all his cards. To him the message came, "Suffer little children to come unto Me and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven." For him were spoken those parting words of our Savior, "Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid!" and these words seemed to little Josey to give a strength in which he could meet temptation, and go on surely and certainly to the Happy Land.

There was but one more lesson for little Josey on his dear cards, and on that he pondered much. "He went about doing good," were the words of Scripture that were quoted, and this seemed to explain to poor Josey in some measure how he was to

follow *His* steps, who had left him an example. He could not heal the sick or raise the dead, but even in his darkened mind, there was some idea of the law of kindness, some perception of what it is to love one's neighbor, and to this he now felt pledged.

Ah! Those children who have all the precious Word of God, and who read it but seldom, and lightly prize its holy teachings, should blush with shame and resolve to do better, when they think how highly valued, how full of power, were these few words of Scripture that made up all the Bible for poor little Josey.

At morning, he repeated them ere he went to his work, through the day they lingered in his mind, at night they were in his thoughts as he lay down in his loneliness to dream of Jesus, saying, "Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

Chapter 7 Over the Shoemaker's Shop

Nanny Dibb seemed daily more and more interested in Josey. Perhaps it was because she was the only person he had on whom to practice his new resolution of trying to follow Him who "went about doing," and the little kind offices he had managed to show her, had won upon her heart. Perhaps the cards, whose teaching he so greatly prized, had spoken to her their lesson of truth.

Whatever might have been the cause, it was plain that Nanny would have been quite lonely, if Josey had chosen to take up his post at another crossing. It is strange that he did not, for his business was now far from good, the weather was getting fine, and nobody now cared much for Josey or his broom, except to wish them both out of the way.

But for the sweet comfort that now made all trials seem light, poor little Josey would have found it hard to endure the pinching hunger to which he was now often subjected. "*He* feedeth the hungry," he often murmured to himself, and so patiently waited for the supplies that were sure to come in the end, and to be gratefully received by poor Josey as a mark that he was remembered by one who "went about doing good."

Nanny began to have her own suspicions about Josey's way of life. His ragged, dirty, out-grown clothes told the story, if it had not been written on his pale and thin, though cheerful face.

"Where do you sleep, Josey?" asked Nanny, one day, in her most searching way.

"Almost anywhere, these nights" said Josey, with a laugh.

Nanny was silent a minute, and then she put a still closer question, "What do you eat for your supper, Josey?"

"Somethin or nothin, as times is!" said Josey, with another laugh.

Nanny Dibb said no more, but she kept bowing her head slowly till her cap ruffles were all in tremble. It seemed as if she were saying to herself, "I told you so, Nanny Dibb, and you might just as well have believed me without asking." At any rate, Nanny did not ask another question that day.

When evening came, and Josey had helped Nanny pack, as was now the regular custom, she said to him, "Help me with these 'ere, won't you, that's a lad?"

Josey cheerfully lent a hand and was pleased to carry some of Nanny's heavy load for her. On they went in silence, though every now and then Nanny's head bobbed, and her cap ruffles trembled, as they had in the morning.

Through back streets they went, and turned at last into an alley, not a very nice looking place, especially for passing such a bright evening in. Wedged in between two tall buildings was a very narrow two story house, green with age, and threatening to fall as it leaned heavily on one side.

The lower story was occupied as a shoemaker's shop. Through it Nanny passed, beckoning Josey to follow her, as she made her way among the clippings of leather that strewed the floor. The smell of the shop seemed to have rushed up the narrow stairway to try to lose itself somewhere, at least, so it seemed to Josey, when they reached the small upper room, where Nanny sat down, saying, "Here we be now! A'nt I done up!"

Josey was turning to go away, when Nanny took him firmly by the arm, and sat him down in a chair, and then said to him, "Now, Josey, it a'nt in me to see you a going to your bed nobody knows where, when I could tuck you up here, just as lieve as not. There's the bunk, in the big closet, Jerry allers slep there, and you may just as well. I'll lodge ye, but you must find yourself, do you hear?" said Nanny, folding her hands significantly over her leather bag, at the same moment.

Josey was overcome with astonishment, and for a few moments he could not answer, then he said, gratefully,

"You be spry, Nanny, you be—and I thanks ye, I a'nt used to it. Why, I never had no place in partickler."

"Wal, now, here's yer place," said Nanny, opening a large closet, in which was a wide shelf, covered with old carpet. "Nobody a'nt slept there since Jerry went. I kinder left it, thinking maybe he'd be comin back—but he's been spoke, and it a'nt likely now, so you may just as well turn in for good, and call that yer ony tony bed."

Nanny now rolled out a great wash-tub into the middle of the floor, and then telling Josey to go down to the pump for water, she prepared to make a fire in her tiny stove and to get tea.

While Nanny boiled her tiny tea-kettle, she kept Josey bringing up water to put into the wash-tub, and he could not help wondering what was to be done. Josey would have brought water all night, if Nanny had asked him, for his heart was full of gratitude to the old woman, and he was glad of some substantial way of showing it, but that did not seem to be her wish.

"Massy, child! That's heaps!" she said to him, at length, and then motioned to him to take a seat on a box, near the door.

Nanny took down her small cup and saucer, brought out a loaf of bread from the corner cupboard, and prepared to take her meal, in silence. "I lodge you, and you find yourself, mind," said Nannie, as she went on trying to eat. "Why don't you go out and buy your supper, child."

"I took a spry dinner, Nanny, uncommon spry," said Josey, cheerfully. "I don't go by reglar meals. I don't take none to night."

Nanny made no answer, and tried to go on with her frugal supper. At length she jumped up suddenly, and taking down another cup and saucer, she said, "Hot tea,

a'nt bad! Try it, Josey." Nanny poured out a cup of her favorite beverage, and handed it to the tired boy.

Very refreshing he found it, and he did not refuse the piece of bread that Nanny stretched out to him in her wrinkled hand, saying at the same time, "Take it child, take it—but mind, this is just a beginning. I lodge you, and ye finds yourself, that's the bargain."

Josey had certainly no fault to find with a bargain where all the advantage was on one side and he said so, in his own way, and that seemed to put Nanny's mind quite at ease.

After this strange meal was over, Nanny laid out a queer little calico short-gown on her own low bed, and then said quickly to Josey, "I am goin down stairs, a spell, you strip you, and scrub you in that ere tub, make yerself shine. Then put on that ere gown, and leave every rag of yer clothes on the floor, on that ere piece of paper." Nanny spread down the newspaper she had empowered Josey to buy some days before, and then laying beside him a towel coarse enough to take off any skin not as tough as **her's**, she threw a piece of brown soap into Josey's lap, and went down.

Josey felt as if taking a bath was rather a dangerous experiment. He had never done such a thing in his life, but Nanny's orders were explicit, and he did not feel inclined to disobey. When Josey's bath was over, and he was ensconced on his strange bed, wrapped in the calico gown, and covered with a small counterpane, he felt so deliciously comfortable, that he could not go to sleep for thinking of his pleasant sensations.

Soon Nanny came up stairs, followed by the shoemaker. Nanny did not cast one glance into the closet, the door of which was left ajar, so that Josey could see what was going on in the room. She and the shoemaker lifted the tub to the small window, and poured out its contents, making thereby a sudden waterfall that must have astonished the dwellers in that back alley. Then Nanny did up Josey's clothes in a bundle, and giving them to the shoemaker, said, "Off with 'em to the rag man, maybe they'll fetch a penny or two!"

Poor Josey! His heart misgave him when he saw his only suit carried off, right before his eyes—not even his fireman's hat was spared. What was he to do in the morning? Josey would have remonstrated, and even risen to do battle for his valuables, but he was too comfortable, too sleepy even to call out from his retreat, and he was actually dreaming when the shoemaker shut the door, and Nanny was left to herself.

Nanny made sure that Josey was really asleep, by performing various maneuvers before his eyes with the candle, and then she began to look over the treasures in the great chest, in one corner of the room. We have not time to mention all the odd things that Nanny pulled out in the course of her search, in what had been her storehouse for a score of years.

At length she came upon the bundle for which she was looking, and from it she drew triumphantly a pair of duck pantaloons, about large enough for a slender lad of fifteen. Now, it is very likely that Nanny had never heard how Rowland Hill made a pair of shoes in a minute, by cutting off the tops to a pair of boots, but she hit on the same way of providing Josey with trousers, in a hurry.

A few clips of her long sharp shears made the legs of the right length for her little lodger, and then she surveyed the result with as much satisfaction as a city surgeon would look at a successful amputation in a hospital—and perhaps a little more. A poor sufferer's leg could be of no use to anybody. While Nanny muttered as she picked up the pieces she had cut off, "There, there's the most the makins to another pair," and with this pleasing reflection, she restored them to the bundle from whence they had been drawn.

It was but the work of a few moments for Nanny to put on with strong stitches, strings at the waist, to tie the curious trousers over Josey's shoulder, so that his arms could come out at what had once been the pocket holes, and then the garment was done. Another rummaging in the chest brought to light a couple of small blue striped shirts, and by the same easy process the sleeves were made of a suitable length for Josey, and then a nice pair of aprons was ready for him.

Nanny was pleased with her work, that was plain. It was long since she had anybody to think of, or care about, and she had been growing hard and selfish.

As she sat working for Josey, she felt more and more interest in him. She had not been so happy for four whole years, not since her grandson, her dear Jerry, had run away to sea without once telling her he thought of going. His clothes had been locked up in the big chest, and there Nanny had kept them, always hoping he would return to wear them, and help her in her little trade, as before. Jerry had come back, a tall strong fellow, a real sailor, glad to see his grandmother, but just as glad to sail away in the Dolphin, when his earnings were spent, and his pockets had begun to feel empty.

God has made every human heart so that it can only be happy, when it loves and cares for someone else, and Nanny Dibb had been providing herself with a great source of pleasure when she took home little Josey, though she did it for his sake, not her own.

Jerry's Sunday straw hat was drawn out from the closet and laid with Josey's new suit, and then Nanny was ready to go to bed herself more cheerful and contented than she had been for many a day.

Chapter 8 Nanny's Book

Josey was wonderfully pleased with his new suit, and he actually strutted a little as he walked with Nannie the next morning to his position at the crossing. He was almost glad that there was no mud that day, as he was able to keep his clothes clean, especially as one of his "regular customers" gave him a sixpence and a compliment on looking so tidy.

It was a new feeling for Josey to be going home when night again came on, a feeling of comfort and respectability, that seemed to him almost too good to be true. It was no dream—the dark shoemaker's shop was passed through, the little stairway mounted, and Josey was again free to eat the roll he had bought, while Nanny prepared her own supper and ate it in silence, without looking at little Josey, perched on the box.

That night, Nanny went to the chest, before little Josey, (she was beginning to have more confidence in him,) and took out a book rolled up in a clean old apron.

"The readin on the pictures you set so much by, is took from this," said Nanny, holding out the book to Josey. "This ere's a Bible."

Josey took the book reverently in his hand—the stranger had named it as the Word of God, the best guide to the Happy Land. Oh! How Josey longed to read it! He felt it a privilege even to see it with his eyes, though those eyes could not make out its sacred contents.

"You've read it all through," said Josey, looking inquiringly and respectfully at Nanny.

"Can't say I have, I a'nt much fond of larnin," said Nanny, a little confused. "A sailor preacher man give it to Jerry, his first trip to Livpool, over the sea, in the old country. My boy brought it home a present to me. He never took to his book. More pity, such a likely lad as him!"

"Would you read some, eh, Nanny," said Josey, very eagerly.

"The sailor preacher man," Nanny had spoken of, had marked many passages in the book, hoping that the eye of some poor lost wanderer might fall on them, and so be drawn to seek the Happy Land. Several of these passages Nanny hit upon, but the one that interested little Josey the most, was the one where our Savior teaches His disciples to pray. "When ye pray, say, Our Father," &c.

This was exactly what Josey wanted, to know how to pray. He got Nanny to read the words over and over, till he, the poor out-cast, could say the Lord's Prayer, which goes up from so many Christian lips each night and morning.

Josey felt very solemn that night, when he knelt down in his little closet, and spoke for the first time to the great God of Heaven. He would not have dared to say, "Our Father," but at the command of Jesus, that blessed one who bears our sins and brings us near to God.

Who, among the happy children, guarded by loving parents, can think what it was to poor little Josey, to know that he had a Father, great, loving, and merciful, to whom he might pray, sure of being heard and answered?

Verily, God careth for the poor and destitute, for them He is a "strong rock," and a "safe tower."

Day by day little Josey heard more and more of the holy book, and his paths to the Happy Land seemed to grow plain and bright before him, as he listened to the sacred words. Nanny's thoughts had been ever taken up with earning her daily bread, or laying up treasure on earth. She had never thought much about where she was going, when she lay down in the grave.

When she saw little Josey, so young, yet so eager to be in the way to the Happy Land, she began to wish to turn her tottering footsteps towards a Heavenly Home.

"Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners," this was the comfort of little Josey, when he would have otherwise given up in despair, because he was too weak, too sinful to walk always in the right way.

"Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." These words brought a gleam of hope to Nanny's mind, when, after looking back on her long, worthless, God-

forgetting life, she felt ready to sink, as she thought of her unworthiness to dwell among the angels.

With Jesus for his friend, little Josey might go hopefully onward. For Jesus' sake, Old Nanny, might yet be forgiven and accepted.

Chapter 9 Sam Bott

Josey had been several weeks at his new home, and Nanny had grown quite fond of him. In spite of her oft repeated resolution to "let him *find* himself," she could not see him go supperless to bed. Josey made but little money now, and Nanny, with a sigh, put out his tea-cup beside her's, as a regular thing.

Josey was greatly dissatisfied with this state of affairs. This did not seem to him to be following the command, "rather let him labor."

"Nanny," said Josey, one morning, "Nanny, 'spose I take a basket of these 'ere oranges, and sell 'em in the cars, as the chaps tells me they do? Eh, Nanny?"

Nanny gave Josey a searching look, to see if he meant any mischief, and then answered, quickly, "You'll never find yerself, this way, perhaps you'd best try?"

That day, Josey was fitted out with a big basket of oranges, and after many injunctions from Nanny, to mind the change, and keep out of bad company, he set off.

He had to walk two miles before he came to the cars, where he meant to sell his oranges.

He was tired out when he got there, and gladly sat down by the road-side to rest. When he began to offer his oranges, nobody seemed to be in the mood for buying. At length, a lady bought several, and took out a little book from her traveling-bag and gave it to him. Then an old gentleman made a purchase, then another, and another—so that when the day was done, he had only a few oranges left in his basket.

Josey had other trials that day than anxiety for customers. He found himself thrown among a set of rough, wicked boys, who seemed inclined to treat him as an enemy for coming with his basket where they were accustomed to supply the passengers with apples and oranges. Once poor Josey was provoked so far as to forget his new principles and his better feelings. He put down his basket, and was just raising his arm to strike the hardest blow his little fist could give, when there was a cry of "make way there," and a crowd of the roughest sort of men came hurrying along the sidewalk.

In the midst of the crowd were several police officers, forcing along a tall, stout young man, whom Josey too easily recognized as his old acquaintance, Sam Bott.

Josey struggled through the crowd, and got near enough to Sam to speak. Josey looked pitifully and kindly at Sam, and said, "O Sam, I'm so sorry!"

Sam's hard, bad face, softened at the sight of little Josey, and he tried to put out his hand, as he answered—"not ashamed of Sam, here. You've got the pluck. Get to the Happy Land, if you can, Josey. I am a gone feller!"

The police officers now forced Sam away and Josey learned the sad truth from the crowd. In a drunken frolic, the night before, Sam had stabbed one of his wicked companions. His attempt to escape had been in vain, and now he was on his way to prison, to pass his days within its dark walls, with the awful crime upon his soul.

Josey shuddered at the thought that he had, a few moments before, lifted his hand to strike a blow—been, himself, on the way to murder.

Sam had been the only friend Josey had known in his days of wickedness and he followed the poor criminal with thoughts of real pity. But for the stranger's voice of warning, he, too, might have ended his days in a dungeon, instead of going cheerfully on to the Happy Land.

Nanny had reached home that evening long before Josey appeared, and she was beginning to be really uneasy, when he came in, tired and sorrowful after the fatigues of the day. He could not forget Sam. How comfortable seemed his humble home, when he thought of the place of shame to which his old acquaintance had been hurried! How welcome was Nanny's eager face looking down the stairway, to ask if that was little Josey!

A home, a friend, these were blessings indeed, but more precious still were the words of holy comfort that Nanny read from the blessed book that night.

"Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

"God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him, should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Chapter 10 Nanny's Donkey

Nanny was much pleased with Josey's success in selling her oranges, and day after day he set off with his basket, and returned at evening with money in his bag, and weariness in his little body, from the crown of his head to the sole of his feet. Nanny knew that the carrying of that heavy basket, so far, and so long, was too much for the poor boy. She did not wonder that he grew pale, but she could not make up her mind to throw him again out of employment. "He *must find* himself," she said to herself, again and again, but she could not be satisfied.

The particular bobbing of her head, to which she was inclined when she was thoughtful, now came on with unusual violence, and continued without interruption for several days. Then followed a long, close conference with the shoemaker. Then a diligent mending and putting in order of the various articles of wearing apparel, which had been by degrees taken from the chest and adapted to Josey's use. It was plain some plan was on foot, but what, Josey could not imagine.

One morning, when Josey was ready for his usual start, Nanny took him roughly by the shoulder, which was her way when she was particularly interested about anything.

Josey understood the sign, and looking up at her, said, "What's up, Nanny?"

The old woman led him downstairs, and pointed to a small establishment standing before the door, saying, "That ere's my donkey, that ere's my little cart, as Jerry used to drive. Get in and see if you can get the better of the creeter."

Josey wanted no second invitation. Into the little cart he leaped, and drove triumphantly down the lane, but when he wanted to turn back to come up to the door again, a difficulty presented itself—the donkey was of a different mind. Now, Nanny bent on Josey one of her eager, scrutinizing glances. He little heeded it, for he was taken up with the business of the moment.

The little donkey seemed all made up of obstinacy. He braced himself back, so that all four legs slanted together, as truly as lines on the first page of a writing-book. It was in vain that Josey jumped out and pulled at the bridle.

A heavy stick lay near him, perhaps it was there by accident, perhaps it was put there for the occasion. Josey reached out his hand to take it. “A righteous man regardeth the life of his beast, but the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel,” were the words of the Holy Book, and at this moment they came to the mind of little Josey and stayed his angry arm.

Patting the obstinate creature gently, and talking soothingly to him, Josey was rejoiced to see his legs relax their stiffness, and in a few moments he yielded to Josey’s gentle coaxing, and let himself be turned back to the door he had first left.

“He’s the boy for my money!” said Nanny, triumphantly, to the shoemaker, and at a wink from the old woman, the man now went away with the cart. Up stairs again Nanny conducted Josey, with great ceremony, and then seating him on his accustomed box, she proceeded to open to him her plan.

It cost the old woman much to say how Jerry used to drive that same little cart round with oranges, and how she lost a whole quarter’s hiring out the donkey, while she was waiting for the lad to come home, after his running away to sea. The donkey, she said, had since been in bad hands—she had never felt right about him—now she had taken him home where he belonged. She wanted Josey to start right off with a load, and go through the country, never coming back while the oranges lasted.

The old woman spoke as if her mind was bent on the money he would make, or the advantage it would be to the donkey to get a good nibble by the road-side, and have somebody to mind him who would not beat the skin off from him. Not one word did she say about the pale face of little Josey, tired with carrying his great basket—not one word of the good it would do him to smell the green fields and breathe the pure country air. Nanny did not do herself justice, that time.

When Nanny had got through her very particular directions to little Josey, as to the road he must take, and how he must manage, she took up the little bundle of his clothes, and put them in his hand, saying, “Keep clean, child, keep clean—that’s just next to being honest.” That Nanny thought cleanliness a great virtue, nobody that knew her could doubt, and Josey had already learned that a “clean heart leads to clean hands,” in the matter-of-fact sense of the words, as well as to hands free from guilt.

Josey was delighted at the idea of the excursion, and he felt brimful of joy and gratitude until he looked at Nanny. The old woman was actually wiping a tear out of the corner of her eye, at parting with the child she had befriended.

“Wait till ye see me comin up the lane with an empty cart and a full pocket,” said Josey, trying to cheer Nanny by touching on her weak point, the love of gain, but it was in vain.

Josey jumped down from his driver's seat on the cross-board, and going up to Nanny, whispered, "You've got somebody left, Nanny!" and he pointed up between the tall old houses, to the clear sky above.

Yes, the Heavenly Friend watched over that dark narrow alley, as tenderly as over the wide squares, with their fountains and their surrounding palaces of wealth.

"Ay, ay, Josey, *He's* there, but will He mind me?" said the old woman, "I'm affeered you'll get to the Happy Land before me, for by I'm a'most worn out."

"In here don't wear out," said Josey, pointing to his heart. "*He* knows what's goin on there—He knows how to set things to rights. Read the Book, Nanny—that'll bring you to."

"Ay, ay, Josey," said Nanny again, "how you hit it. You go, child, I'll read the Book, but you've got it in here, somehow, a way I can't quite take it in. I'll read the Book. Go! Go, child!"

Josey waved his great straw hat in the air, and away he drove down the alley, with a prayer in his heart for poor Nanny, and bright hopes for his own future.

Chapter 11 Among the Fields

Even before little Josey had left the bounds of the great city, his store of rich, ripe fruit was diminished. There was something so peculiar in the appearance of his whole establishment, that many a passer-by was induced to hail him, and his bright face and cheerful voice almost always made a purchaser out of anybody that fell into conversation with him.

Josey began to be afraid he should sell all his oranges in the city and so lose his country trip altogether. This thought made Josey inclined to take no notice of those persons who stopped to speak to him, but he remembered how displeased Nanny would be at his losing an opportunity for a sale, and he resolved to be faithful to her and his duty, even if he should lose the pleasure he had thought in store for him.

Josey need not have been troubled. There was no likelihood of his little cart being emptied in such a hurry. It held too much for that, as he soon found out. The little orange-seller was delighted when the stones of the paved streets ceased to sound under the wheels and he was at last in the open country. He felt so free and joyous, that he could not resist the impulse to stand up in his cart, and shout with all his might, a shout as glad and free from care as if Josey had never known weariness or want.

The green fields looked so very beautiful to him, that he longed to lie down on the fresh grass, and gaze up into clear, wide arching sky, so blue and bright above him. The little donkey seemed to partake of Josey's pleasure, and snuffed up the fresh air, and threw its ears backward and forward, as if country sounds were as agreeable to him as country sights. The green grass by the roadside looked too tempting at last for the donkey's philosophy, and he came to the conclusion he would not go one step further without a good meal, such as he had not tasted for many a day.

Josey remembered Nanny's particular mention of the advantage the trip was to be to the poor beast and he gladly indulged him in his whim. Under a road-side apple-

tree, little Josey sat down, while the donkey poked its nose into the depths of the tufts of rank grass with such gusto, that Josey felt as if he should like to try the flavor of grass too.

Pretty soon Josey forgot all about cart, oranges, and donkey. His eyes were wandering far away over the landscape, now to the blue hills, softly sloping to the sky, and losing their tops in the haze of the horizon. Now he was noting some comfortable old homestead, which had stood full fifty years among its orchards, and now over the meadows he glanced, almost bewildered by the beauty of the scene, until he looked up to the broad sweep of the sky, and was reminded of Him who "in the beginning made the heaven and the earth."

"Lord, how wonderful are all thy works! Lord, what is man that thou art mindful of him, or the son of man that thou regardest him!" Such were the thoughts of the poor boy, as he found himself for the first time in the midst of the beauty that God has scattered with a free, loving hand.

Josey might have wondered and enjoyed longer than he ought, had he not been roused from his reverie by something biting him on the shoulder. He turned and saw the face of the donkey nearer to his own than some persons would have thought agreeable. Josey was pleased with the familiarity of the creature, and rubbed its nose in a way that seemed very grateful to its feelings, for it gave vent to a hearty bray of pleasure, that made little Josey laugh, though it might have been quite painful to ears polite.

Josey felt that the donkey had done him a good office, to remind him to be up and at his duty. So away they started over the pleasant road, in the most cheerful mood imaginable. Many an orange Josey sold that day to thirsty market-men, on the way to the city, to laborers at work in the field, and to rosy farm-house children, dropping the pennies into his hand with shy side-long glances, while they timidly took their purchases and ran away to eat and watch till the little donkey-cart should be out of sight.

One stout motherly woman pitied Josey's pale cheeks, and gave him a draught of cool milk, that seemed to refresh him from the mended toes of his well-worn shoes to the crown of his curly head. At another time, a group of laborers under a tree, at noon, made him sit down with them, and eat of the abundance a little brown-cheeked girl had brought out in a basket for their dinner.

Josey was charmed with country life, everybody seemed so free and kindly, food was so good, so abundant, and the clear streams by the way had a taste no city water ever knew.

That night Josey lodged in an empty corncrib, by the permission of the owner. Beside his wagon he lay down, while the donkey was safe in a shed, hard by. Josey could not thank the farmer enough for his kindness in the morning. He had such a sweet, refreshing sleep, and such pleasant dreams, in his strange resting-place.

The next day, Josey passed through a little country town, where a small dealer in groceries bought oranges from him by the dozen, and good housewives chose such specimens of the fruit as had the peel fair and firm, to dry, for flavoring pies in the winter.

Nobody spoke to Josey of the Happy Land, though it was more than ever in his thoughts. He felt that he could imagine better than before what that blessed region would be. Indeed he could almost have believed himself at last at the heavenly home, had he not felt in his heart that there was still left the temptation to sin, which shall not mar the joy of heaven.

Josey wondered how old Nanny was getting on without him. He was afraid she might miss him. How he wished, as evening came on, he could hear her read from the Holy Book! This could not be, so Josey repeated to himself all the sweet verses of Scripture that he could remember, and he did not even notice that he was far away from any house, and the first stars were beginning to twinkle in the sky.

The donkey was sure the day was done, and it was time for him to rest. So stock still he suddenly stood in the road and it was in vain for Josey to try to move him. Josey got down, took him by the bridle, coaxed and fondled, thinking, if there they must encamp for the night, they might at least move away to some quiet fence corner, where they could be safe from the great wagons that now and then came along the road.

Josey was patting and persuading, but making no head-way, when he heard the sound of a horse's hoofs approaching. In another moment, the rider had easily swung himself from his horse, and was at his side, inquiring pleasantly if he could be of any assistance in the difficulty.

Josey looked up suddenly into the stranger's face, then a brightness unspeakable overspread his own pale features. "Oh, sir! Oh, sir!" he cried, "The Happy Land!"

Josey could say no more, his tears flowed fast, and his little heart beat as if it would burst. For this, Josey had watched hour after hour the throng of busy human beings hurrying to and fro in the streets of the great city. For this, he had gone from car to car, scanning the face of every passenger, to turn away in disappointment. Of such a meeting he had dreamed, for such a meeting he had hoped and prayed, and now the sudden joy was almost too much for him.

In astonishment the stranger looked at the poor boy, who kissed his hand and wept, but could only murmur, "The Happy Land! The Happy Land!" as his explanation.

"Old Peck alley! Old Peck alley! Don't you remember?" said Josey, at length, with a tremendous effort. "I was there, I was! I a'nt stole no more, I am a going to the Happy Land!"

Now was the stranger's time of rejoicing, a joy too pure for earth. His labor of love had not been in vain. This poor boy's soul, through his effort, had been brought from death unto life! Little Josey was no longer a lone wanderer to the Happy Land! He had found a true friend, a safe guide, a blessed teacher.

Not by the road-side slept Josey that night. The donkey's obstinacy gave way, when it could move on beside the stranger's horse, and go towards the stranger's home.

Side by side they rode on, little Josey and the stranger, and short indeed seemed the mile over which they passed, as they talked of the Savior who ever liveth and loveth, and of the heavenly home He has prepared for all who truly seek Him.

Josey looked not at the lights which glimmered cheerfully from the cottage windows, as they entered a little village, but into the stranger's face he gazed, to see more plainly those features that had lingered in his mind, as the sweetest memory of his strange, strange life.

A young wife was waiting for her husband at the door of the simple rectory. She called him her "dear Edward," and she met him with a loving embrace, which little Josey felt sure he well-deserved.

For the little orange-seller, too, she had a welcome—gentle, tender, and winning. Very precious was that poor lad to the wife of the young clergyman, he was the first fruits of her husband's ministry, the first soul he had won for Christ.

It was little to Josey that he slept that night in a room, exquisite in its neatness, and perfect in its homely comfort. He thought not of his little weary body. His soul was too glad, too grateful for any thought, save the deep, unspeakable feeling of, "Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord."

Chapter 12 Conclusion

Edward Martyn, the young clergy man to whom little Josey owed all, would gladly have given the poor boy a home, under his own loving, watchful eye. To this proposal Josey gave a prompt refusal. He had Nanny's interest to care for, Nanny's life to make happy, and his faithful friend could not but approve of his decision.

Through the pleasant summer days, through the cool autumn weather, Josey and his little donkey-cart made constant trips from Nanny's home to the rectory at Mr. Martyn's, selling his oranges by the way, and making friends at the cottages and farm-houses along the road. Where he sold his oranges, there he scattered the good books with which Mr. Martyn supplied him, with a liberal hand.

The pure lessons of piety he learned at the rectory, he bore back to his humble city home, and Nanny's old eyes brightened at his returns, as much for the new and holy teaching he had to impart, as for the pleasure of seeing again the poor child who was now only second in her affections to Jerry himself.

But for Mr. Martyn, friendless indeed little Josey would have been left, as the winter came on, for then Nanny was seen no more at her orange stand—no more did the shoe maker, at her wish, lay in fresh stores for Josey's country excursions.

Nanny's last sickness had come. The homeless child whom she had cared for, was now her nurse and her comforter. In her dying ear he whispered of the Happy Land, and her glazing eye brightened at the mention of that blessed region, where repentant sinners are made welcome, through the blood of Jesus. Now laying her hands in blessing on Josey's sorrowing head, now praying for her Jerry, far away on the sea, poor Nanny grew weaker and weaker, and at length dropped silently away, and little Josey was left weeping and alone.

The only mourner at that quiet death-bed, thought much of the new region on which the soul of Nanny had entered. On her—sanctified, purified, saved—he loved to dwell, but to her earthly goods he gave not a thought. For the wanderer, Jerry, the

honest shoemaker took charge of Nanny's all—her store of golden earnings, her time-worn furniture, the poor donkey which had so long been her pet.

When Nanny was laid in her narrow home, little Josey gathered up his few garments, and with his small bundle in his hand, he set out on foot for the dwelling of his only living friend. Long the journey seemed to the child, for his heart was sad at the parting with his dear old Nanny, but he was not left to walk on in weariness and alone.

Now, kind farmers, who knew him well, gave him a ride. Now an old market-man seated him at his side and was the happier for his company.

At length, little Josey stood at the rectory door. Into that pleasant home he was received with an affection that made him dry his tears, and such words of comfort were poured into his ears, that he fully realized that Nanny had but entered the Happy Land a short, short time before him, while he was left on earth to "labor, working with his hands the thing that was good."

To labor for one he loved was an easy task for little Josey, and even the garden where he worked, the horse which he cared for, the chickens that he fed, became dear to him. Ever as the evening came on, it was his reward to have his lesson from the sweet young wife, those lessons through which he was to learn to read the best, the blessed Book.

When the stars were in the sky, then the rector read holy, comforting words from the big family Bible, while Josey listened with joy. Then came the hour of prayer, when the Heavenly King was spoken to as a dear friend, and "poor little Josey" might say, "Our Father," with those whom he loved best in the world.

Josey had his own faults to struggle with, his old bad habits to overcome, but he was cheerful by nature, and had moreover a hope within him, which made glad his pilgrimage, even the hope of an Eternal Home in the Happy Land.

THE END

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