

## LITERATURE, &amp;c.

## The British Magazines.

From the Working Man's Friend.  
THE PYE-STREET BOY.

Long after she had risen in the morning the worn and wearied child slept on; and when at last she roused him, she led him to the fire, and shared with him her humble breakfast. This done, she entrusted her shop to a neighbour's care, and started off to the Refuge and Industrial School, in old Pye-street. The tale she had to tell was no new one, though her earnest Christian spirit was a thing not unobserved; and, effecting her object of entering the boy's name upon the books, she sought some further information concerning his parentage at one of the most decent shops in the street. What the boy had told her, though, for his years, he was one of the most noted thieves of the district, was substantially correct. His grandmother, who kept a 'fence' shop, or place for receiving stolen goods, as well as for the sale of counterfeit coin, was wicked to a proverb; whilst her daughter, the husbandless mother of the lad, was not only the worst drunkard in the district, but one whose cruelty to the child in question had been such as to call forth the reprehension of many who, as a general rule, were callous or indifferent to suffering.

Determined to see for herself the home from which this miserable child had been driven, the cap-maker made her way to the house, and passing the half-open door, through which children went out and in, she beheld a scene more fitted for the pencil than the pen. A large, old, broken-floored kitchen; a window full of dangling rags, miscalled clothes, for sale; a woman, perhaps not twenty-five years old, with deep consumption stamped upon her face, lying huddled on an old bed in one corner, in the still sodden sleep of the over night's gin glass; a far older woman, on whom time and ruthless wickedness had carved a brazen register, sitting smoking behind a slip of counter, on which she leaned with both elbows, in the act of bargaining with such customers as were grouped around it, was what she saw; whilst all was crowned, made up, and finished, as it were, by the amusement of the little sister to whom the wretched outcast lad was bound by the only trait of humanity unruined in him, who, seated, clothed in a sort of old bed-gown, beside a broken rocking chair, was laughing hugely, for one so young, and clapping her tiny hands, because some little customers of her grandmother's, whilst waiting for their turn at the beldam's counter, had hung an old doll by its neck to the topmost rail of the chair, and swinging it to and fro whilst it thus hung, called the play, 'glory.'

Margaret at once passed on to the counter and strove to state the boy's destitution and distress—her intention of saving him from sin by sending him to the neighboring Refuge—and her hope that, as this was the case, the woman would give him nightly shelter. But it was asking mercy of a chained hyena, a Polar bear, a hungry wolf descending to the plains for food; and scared by the fearful language and invectives, and, presently, by the woman's threats of violence, Margaret hurried from the house, only the more impressed that whilst such homes exist—such parents live—such evil natures dishonor the human form—prisons will be filled, and crime still overrun the breadth and length of any land so desecrated.

I shall not linger over the boy's progress at school. There were relapses at first into acts of thefts and vagrancy, but as the weeks went by—as he became gradually interested in what was taught to him—as he began to read himself, and understand what others read—as he began to feel the powerful influence which exists in the uniformity of kindly acts and patient earnestness in those whose duty it is to teach and govern—as he began to take an interest in the work taught to him—his better nature lived and grew again. But this progress had many hindrances. All through this dreary winter and backward spring he was shoeless and half-clad—for the cap-maker was by far too poor to help him—and often shelterless of a night, though he did not tell Margaret how often, for though she had sheltered him in extremity, he knew she liked her poor room to herself; so, on such nights as those, who so relentless, barred their miserable home against him, and this was often—four nights out of every seven—he had to lodge where he could, though now he was known to be a 'Refuge-boy,' and one of whom those who taught spoke hopefully—the more decent neighbors around were not so churlish to him as in his days of well-known theft and vagrancy.

At last, as the spring bordered into summer, the thought struck the cap-maker, that if perhaps she made some few articles of a superior kind, the boy might hawk them about the streets, and in the city markets, after his school hours, and perhaps get purchasers. Performing what she thought, Johnny was entrusted with the basket; and he did his duty so well, as, in a few nights, to have realised unexpected profits. A part of these laid by each week, enough was saved, as the autumn declined towards winter, for him to have a new pair of shoes, and a suit of second-hand clothes, in which, as it was Sunday when they were first put on, he went with Margaret to church. Returning home with her afterwards, for she had grown to love the boy, and to be proud that her sweet Christian charity had sown goodly seed, he set the tea-things for her, and they had tea together, and after this, with the Divine Gospels on the table, they sat and talked.

'It is now nearly a year since you came here,' said Margaret, after they had talked some time, 'and it warms my heart to think how good you are, and how changed. We prayed to Him, and he blessed us as you see.'

'Ay, ma'am,' replied Johnny—for he spoke gentler and better now, 'it was your own kind looks which made me what I am.'

'Not me, or mine,' she said again, 'but the spirit of Him which filled my heart with human charity, and spoke outwardly by my face as I read, and grew to understand; but still my aid would have been weak, my shelter useless, my words probably in vain, but for those at the Refuge and Industrial School, who have been so good to you—who have saved you, made you, taught you to be what you are; and who, as others like them surely will, do more to root up sin, than prisons, laws, or judges. But now we will read that chapter once again.'

She took the book, and with benign countenance read, and read on, till she had read this, when the boy touched her hand, 'For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if you forgive men not their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.'

'They beat me sorely,' he said, 'when I last went home, three weeks ago, to try to see Kitty and tell her to be good; but this makes me forgive them, though I thought to hate them, and never go again.'

'But you must, and that to-night,' replied Margaret, 'for a woman told me this morning that your mother is very bad, her cough being worse since she fell down in the rain, the last night she was drunk, and the parish doctor, whom your grandmother has sent for at last, says she cannot live very long. So you must go and see her; human hearts are not always hard, and words of goodness often bear fruit in most unseemly hours.'

Though evidently reluctant to do so, the lad obeyed her, and, leaving her to read on, went forth into the streets, where, though it was the Sabbath night, the low gin-shops were full of customers, and the sound of drunken revelry and debauch met his ear as he passed many doorways. But all was very still round his grandmother's house, so lifting the latch gently he went in, to find the elder woman asleep upon the bed, as if no creature like her daughter were nigh. As Johnny now beheld her stretched death-like on three chairs before the scrap of miserable fire, while his little sister sat upon the ground, playing with some tawdry rags which had been given to her, all of which was left unruined in his nature, all which reformation had made spring up again: prompted him to kneel down:

'Mother,' he gently whispered, 'I'm come to see you, and to talk to you, and to comfort you.' The haggard woman heard him, but, imbrutified and almost lost to human feeling by her course of sin, she only raised her languid eyes and coughed hoarsely, but did not speak.

The boy touched her, and took her cold, resistless hand in his.

'She's bad, ain't she?' spoke little Kitty, as she sidled up to where he knelt, with a callousness which seemed horrible in a child; 'so precious bad, that the doctor says she won't take gin again. But, I say, Johnny, do you know what I have done since you was here—and Tom Flash, as was here last night, said it was prime—vy, stole a happle off a stall, as a woman didn't see, and drunk a whole half-quarter.'

'But both things are very bad and very wicked for a little child to do,' replied the brother; 'for God saw you take the apple if the woman didn't, and as for gin—'

'Ay! I see don't like it,' replied Kitty, 'but our folks says it's prime to drink it, that's all; but what'll you give me if I don't, eh?'

'Why,' said Johnny, 'I'm going to make you a pair of shoes and give you, if you will strive not to do these things. For I can make shoes; the people who are so kind at school have taught me. And so as I have saved up money enough to buy the leather, I shall come here of an evening and make em, and see mother, and read to her of a God who is very good and merciful, if you'll ask grandmother not to swear and beat me.'

As he spoke, the boy heard his mother cough, and turning, saw her gaze was fixed upon him, so kneeling still more earnestly beside her, he obeyed Margaret's wishes, to tell this mother, if he could, something about the new kind of life he led, of what was taught him of his duty to God and man, and much else of the heavens above us, which is hopeful and consoling, but which I have not space to set down. After he had done, and roused up the fire, and fetched some water for her parching thirst (things he would not have thought of in the old time, before he was humanized by noble teaching in the noble Ragged School), he turned to move away, for he had not only promised Margaret to return, but now within a few days she had hired him a small bed, where he could sleep in decency and comfort; but as he did so, as he moved away, this woman, vicious, cruel, fallen, hard of heart, whose arms he never recollected to have fondled him, whose lips perhaps never had pressed his own, except to breathe a curse, drew down his hand and said 'You'll come again.' This touched him, even he, so new born to a new life, and down there rained such tears, as those which had baptized him first to contrition and to good in the sight of her who, like the Samaritan of old, had poured oil and balm into the stranger's wounds.

Thus asked by those sad lips, the boy went night by night, sometimes accompanied by Margaret, and read to her of Him who helps the stricken and who saves the penitent; and when at such times as she had fallen into that lethargic state which often accompanies the

latter stages of consumption, he sat down and worked at Kitty's little shoes, for Margaret had bought him a piece of leather, and a cobbler she knew had lent the boy a last, an awl, and some bristles. Thus was it wonderful (and showing that in the principle of good there is a divine prolificness men scarcely dream of), as the weeks went by, and as the beldam's fury, oaths, and jests were moderated in the presence of her dying child, to see the lad beside the bed or the chairs, as the case might be, reading devoutly to her; whilst often those as ragged and as criminal as he once was, lingered and stood round to listen; and listening once, in many cases came again.

At last, as the weeks wore on, and the cold of winter grew severer, the sinking woman became confined wholly to that wretched bed within the corner; and the good clergyman who came to read to her, Margaret, who came to nurse her when she could, and the parish doctor, knew and told her she was dying. On this very morning, and when Johnny was in school, some gentlemen came in to see the boys, and as one passed the form on which he sat, he stopped and asked the schoolmaster about Johnny; for his healthy and intelligent appearance had attracted the gentleman's notice.

'Why, sir, though once the very worst boy we had in the school, he is now amongst the best and most honest, and has no equal for his patient industry.'

'Indeed! at what can he work?'

'Why, sir, he's in the shoemaking class; but though he can make and cut out a shoe very well, still he does not take to the trade as some do, as he has a taste for mechanics, or at least carpenter's work.'

'Indeed! (for this gentleman was laconic.) Well, if he will continue to be a good boy, I will think of him, and that speedily.'

The same evening, as Johnny was leaving school, the master drew him aside. 'That gentleman was Mr —, the great upholsterer, of —; and as his enquiries from your friend Margaret have fully satisfied him, you are to enter into his service on Monday next, and have daily food and four shillings a week, which will be increased to six at the end of three months, if you prove a good and industrious boy, and continue to attend our evening school.'

Johnny's delight may be imagined, and his first thought was to hasten to his dying mother. He found her alone and the house, a rare circumstance, still; so at once he knelt down and whispered his joy and good fortune to her, and spoke of hope and life as the young only speak.

'No, Johnny, sich ain't for me,' spoke, lowly, the woman. 'I've bin too bad to wish to live; and now there is heaven open for me, because the good parson says there is hope for those who are repentant, I wish to go there, and do and be what I didn't and wasn't on earth. But, oh! with my last breath, I ask you to save little Kitty; teach her to work and fear God, and not to be what I've bin; and don't let her, nohow, come here, but pay and keep her with Margaret, for mother be too bad for one so young, though you can come now and then to say good words to her, to which she may listen when I've gone. And now, Johnny, forgive me all my wickedness, my hardness, and my cruelty, and I've think I shall die happy.'

With his arms about her neck, the lad sobbed out such forgiveness as angels might record; and when, some half hour after, Margaret and the doctor unwound them, for they were stiff and nearly rigid, the penitent, and we trust, the forgiven, Magdalen was dead.

Even on these long winter evenings whilst I write, the fire burns brightly in the poor cap-maker's little room in Westminster; and she at work, and poor lads often coming in who, since those readings to the dying, have reformed and gone to school, Johnny sits beside it, and, with little Kitty on his knee, tells her what grand work he now begins to do, for he can use the turning lathe and make a chair, and ends by saying that if she continues to be a good girl and mind, Margaret, and dutiful at school, he will make 'a new and prime little pair of shoes for her, before God garlands the earth again with beautiful summer flowers.'

And thus:—

This illustration of one small, frail, human creature, saved from sin; one capable of excellence rescued from the streets; one pair of hands made skilful in sweet labor, instead of wronging by the act of theft; a future citizen made useful to the State, instead of costing much, and sowing curses wherever he may tread; another blot struck out from what is pure and perfect in our social compact; a being saved who possibly may hold within himself the germs of greatness, or put in motion great truths whose destiny and influence may be as limitless as the universe itself; and, last and worthiest of all, one more immortal soul saved to God and heaven,—is but another instance, taken from a thousand, of what RAGGED SCHOOLS have done, and yet will do, for this dear, much-loved land of ours!

Therefore:—

To make the plea the stronger—you who, rich and powerful, live within the shadow of those walls where good and great laws have been, and by God's grace will long be made; you who dwell near that shrine consecrated by the dust of genius; who would have the State strengthened and purified in its wide foundation, and be the pride of many great historians yet to come; you who are parents and citizens, and lovers of your country; hold forth the hand of charity, and, in the time advancing onward, help the salvation of new Pye-street boys.

From Chambers's Edinburgh Journal.  
ADVENTURE WITH AN ALPINE BEAR,

My first adventure with a bear occurred when I was about eight years old. It was in summer, when our people lead their flocks to the upper pastures, which the melted snow leaves uncovered. My parents had gone to a mountain chalet, leaving me in the valley under the charge of a servant. One day I made my escape and set out to meet them. I walked on, eating the bread and cheese given me for breakfast, when, as I was passing through a wood, I saw lying asleep across my path an animal which I took for a huge brown dog. I felt frightened; but the wish to rejoin my parents, who had been detained from home longer than they expected, prevailed, and on I went, gliding as silently as possible past the unknown beast. Despite, however, the little noise I made, the creature roused himself and came towards me. Wishing to propitiate him, I threw down a bit of bread: he smelt it, swallowed it with apparent pleasure, and stretched out his head as if asking for more. I ventured to caress him, which he suffered me to do, although uttering a sort of protesting growl. Throwing my breakfast behind me bit by bit, in order to occupy the attention of my strange companion, whose presence was anything but agreeable, I reached at length the boundary of our farm. There he ceased to follow me. I entered the chalet, where, to my great joy, I found my father, and told him my adventure. He immediately seized his gun, sallied forth, and returning at night after a fruitless chase, told me that my morning's acquaintance was no other than a bear, from whom I had had an almost most miraculous escape.

Twelve years passed on without my renewing my acquaintance with the ursine tribe. I assisted my father in managing his farm, and spent my leisure time in reading, taking particular pleasure in narratives of travel and adventure.

It happened one day that a neighbor named Raymond, a practised hunter of bears and chamois, asked me to accompany him on a mountain expedition. I gladly consented, and we set out, each carrying a carbine on his shoulder, and a small sharp hatchet fastened in his belt.

It was a beautiful autumn day. Towards five o'clock in the evening, having shot only a few birds, we began to think of returning. As we were passing through a thick wood, Raymond, who was grumbling at our want of success, recollected that there lay at a short distance a sort of little meadow where chamois often went to feed. At that hour there was not much chance of meeting them, but Raymond determined to make the trial.—Placing me in ambush, he directed me to watch narrowly, and if he did not return at the end of half an hour, to descend the mountain. I saw him plunge into the wood, and then stoop down and creep warily along.

When I found myself alone, my first movement was to inspect the post assigned to me, in order to guard against surprise. Twilight already darkened the tops of the fir trees, although it was scarcely six o'clock. The fatigues of the day had abated not only my strength, but my courage. I instinctively sought for a fir tree, less denuded of the lower branches than they commonly are, to serve as an asylum in case of necessity. I then took up my position beneath it, slung my carbine and waited patiently. The shadows of evening were fast darkening, although the setting sun still glided the western horizon. The appointed half hour had expired without my seeing anything, and I began to think of returning. Just as I was about to unslung my carbine, and leave my solitary position; I heard a rustling noise, too loud to be caused by the passage of a chamois. 'It is probably Raymond,' I said to myself, and was going to meet him, when it struck me that the approaching tread, crashing through the withered branches, was too slow and heavy for that of my comrade. I retreated to my tree, and another moment revealed the new comer.—It was an enormous bear, with fiery eyes, who came on with lowered head, not having yet perceived me. Almost mechanically I took aim, and fired at him; the shot, I believe, carried off one of his ears; and with a terrific roar he bounded towards me. Throwing away my carbine, I climbed the tree, and when the infuriated creature raised his fore-paws against the trunk, I was seated on a strong branch about ten feet above him. With the courage of despair I drew my hatchet, and waited to see what he would do. For a few moments he continued standing on his hind legs against the tree, devouring me with his fierce eyes, and snorting with a loud noise; then he began to climb. When he came near, I raised my hatchet and struck.—I did so with too much precipitation, for the blow merely cut one of his fore-paws without severing it. Down he dropped, but too slightly wounded to abandon the pursuit.—For some time remained, as it were, undecided, sending forth furious howlings which resounded through the woods. At length, after having once more begun to climb, he stopped, seemed to change his mind, and descended. Then I saw him snuffing the earth round the fir tree, and finally he fell to work in good earnest.

Even to this moment I shudder at the recollections of what he undertook: it was nothing else than uprooting the tree with his snout and paws, in order to bring it down.—For a bear, the idea was not a bad one, and I presently learned that whenever this animal fails, it is not for want of perseverance. Happily the tree I had chosen was thick, firmly-erected, and capable of resisting the enemy's