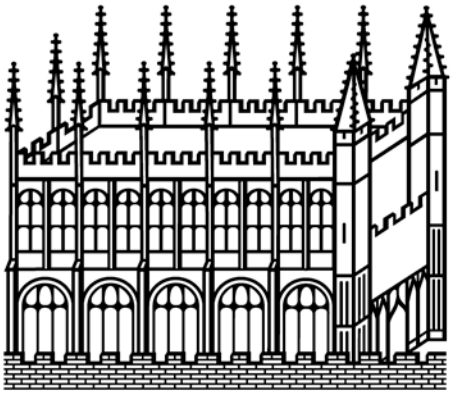
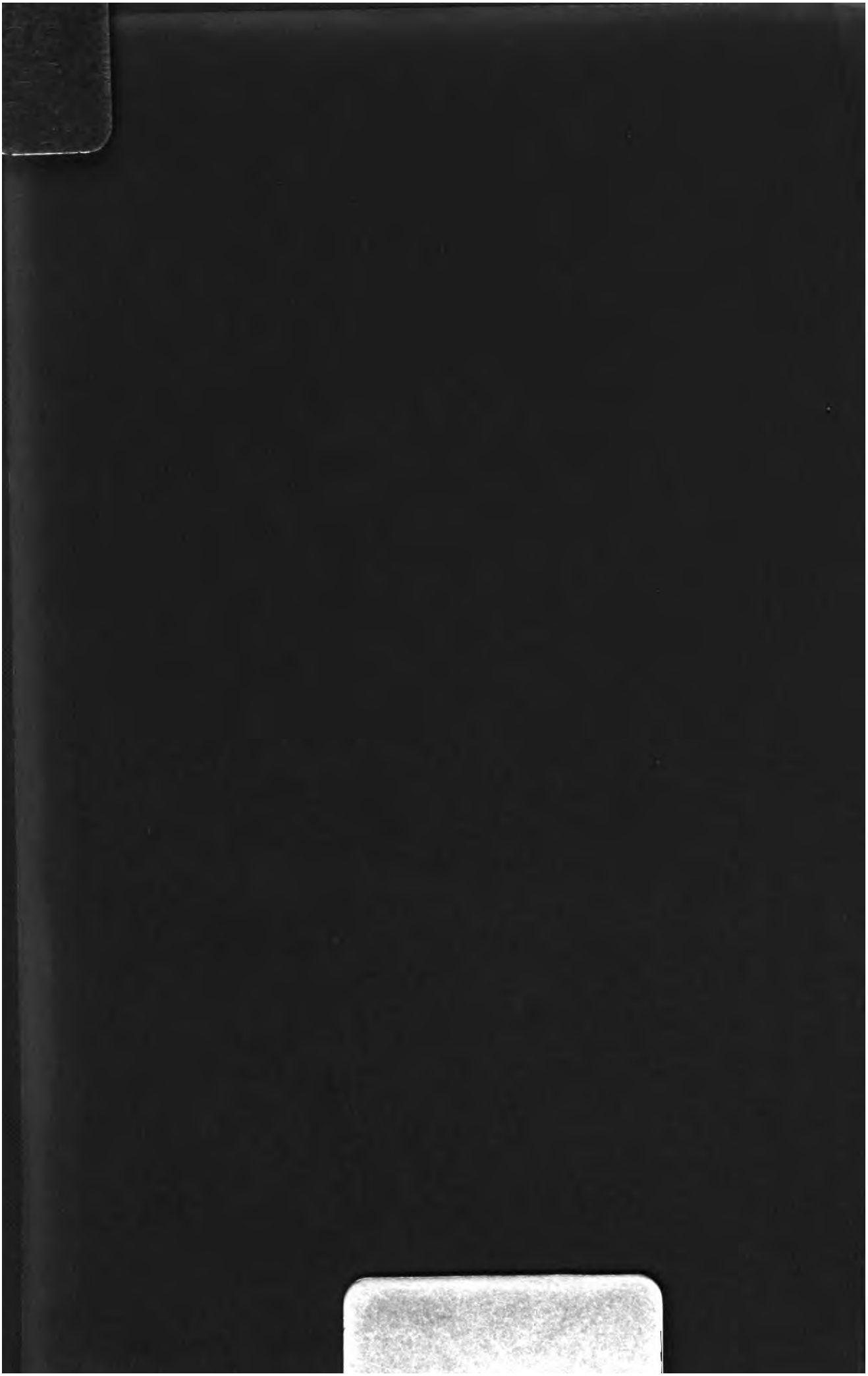


How Jack Got into Trouble



"Toto, standing on his hind-legs, held the little stick under one of his fore-paws like a musket." *See page* 39.

HOW
[illegible] GOT INTO TROUBLE;

OR,

LOST AND FOUND.

BY

THE AUTHOR OF

"*Janet [illegible], or, The Light[illegible]*"

London:
BOOK SOCIETY, 2[illegible], PATERNOSTER ROW;
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CHAPTER VI.

CHAPTER VII.

CHAPTER VIII.

How Jack got into Trouble;

OR, LOST AND FOUND.

CHAPTER I.

THERE have been many Jacks in the world, and many stories written about them. We all know Jack the Giant-killer, and Jack Horner, and Jack and the Beanstalk, and Jack-o'-Lanthorn, and many more; but my Jack, whose story and whose troubles are to be told in this book, was none of these; he was just little Jack Smith, the son of a poor widow who was left with two little children; the eldest, a girl named Annie, and the youngest, a boy a year or two younger, was our friend Jack.

Mrs. Smith lived in a cottage on Risings Common, in the parish of Little Mudford. It was at some distance from the village, on the edge of a wild common, which stretched down to the sea, distant about two miles, on

one side skirting a river, at the mouth of which, on the opposite side, stood the seaport called Mudford.

The widow was an industrious woman who made the best of things; she got work at the farms near, and sometimes at Risings Hall, which was not far off. She always looked neat, and kept her house and her children clean; and though they were some way from the school at Little Mudford, there were no scholars more regular or more punctual than Annie and her brother.

Children do not know much about the troubles of grown-up people. Annie and Jack were healthy and happy, and they did not think how hard their mother had to work to get the plain clothes and food she gave them; and that she often went without what was needful for herself, to save for them and put by for the rent.

Unfortunately, Mrs. Smith had a hard landlord. The cottage did not belong to the Hall where her husband had worked; but to a man at Mudford, who had something to do with the shipping. Owing to her husband's illness and death, Mrs. Smith had got behind with her rent; and though she managed to pay something every half-year, still the debt was there, always dragging her down. She thought,

however, she might pay it up at last, if her landlord would have patience; it would not be so very long before Annie would be ready for some little place, and then the worst would be over.

But the landlord had no patience. He was one of those who need not have wanted money, for he had a good business and made money; but he spent it faster than he made it, and was often hard up; and then he would be harsh, like the cruel servant in the parable, and show no mercy to his debtors,—not even to a poor widow.

One evening, when the children were playing in the kitchen, a stout, rough-looking man came into the garden, and walking up to the house, he knocked with his stick on the half-open door; and, as he did so, he pushed his way in, and rapped again on the table, calling out, "Holloa, widow! Where are you?" Then he turned to the children, and said, "Where is your mother? I cannot stand waiting here."

Jack did not answer; he was half-frightened and half-angry; but Annie said that her mother was at the well, and that she would call her; however, Mrs. Smith had seen Mr. Rice, the landlord, come up to the house, and she came in.

"Go out into the garden, children," she said; and they did as they were told, though they wished to stay.

"Who can he be?" whispered Jack.

"I think he is Mr. Rice, our landlord, come for the rent;" was Annie's answer. "How loud he speaks! We can hear what he says. Poor mother!" she added in a frightened voice.

"It is all very fine to talk about paying up," Mr. Rice said; "but you are getting behind, not getting on; and if you cannot pay your way, you and your brats must go to the poor-house; and good enough for you too."

Then Mrs. Smith's low voice was heard. "Sir," she said, "it has been a bad winter with us. The family have not been at the Hall; so I lost my best work, and everything has been dear."

"Always the same story; when will things get cheap? I say," he said, raising his voice, "you must give me what you have now,—every penny; and if you do not pay up at Michaelmas, I shall come next time with the broker. I let you off at Lady Day; so, I say, give me what you have, or it will be the worse for you."

"I have put by a few shillings," poor Mrs. Smith answered. "I was saving up to buy a

pig, and if I cannot do that, I shall have a poor chance for the rent."

"You'll buy a pig fast enough, I dare say," he broke in; "and then you will fat it and spend the money, and try to beg off paying the rent; so bring out your '*few shillings*,' missus, and let us have no more words."

Then there was silence; the widow had gone up to fetch her little store; she brought down six shillings and handed them to Mr. Rice without speaking.

Perhaps he felt ashamed in spite of himself; for he said nothing, but banged out of the house, nearly tumbling over the children.

"Can't you get out of the way, you little vagabonds?" he cried out; and then strode away. They then ran into the house and cried out, "O mother! did he take it all?"

Mrs. Smith was standing trembling all over, looking very white; she sat down and cried bitterly as the two children clung round her.

They seldom saw their mother cry, and she tried to check herself, for they were beginning to cry too; and Jack called out, "The wicked man: why does not God kill him?" "No Jack," Mrs. Smith said; "Do not say that. May God forgive him, and have mercy on me and my poor children!" Then she dried her eyes and held the children close to her, while

she knelt and turned to her heavenly Father for help and strength in her trouble; afterwards, she said the Lord's Prayer very slowly; and as the children repeated it after her, they learned for the first time what it was to forgive those who trespass against us.

The next day, as the children went to school, they talked of what had happened the day before. Annie counted how long it would be before she could go to service, and Jack would be able to work and bring home his wages to his mother.

"But that will take years," Jack said gloomily, as he listened to his sister's calculations, "and we shall be in the workhouse long before then. If we could only get a little money to buy a pig! Farmer Strong has a nice litter. I thought we should have had one of them. The greens are coming on in the hedge, but they will be gone long before we get our pig."

But meanwhile they must go to school; there were no mushrooms nor blackberries at this time of year to make a few pence by; the most they could do was to pick a few sticks when they came from school, against their mother came in from work.

They were home early, and as Mrs. Smith was not come back, they set off wood-picking.

Annie was looking along the hedge-side, but as there was not much there, Jack wandered down to the river, and by slow degrees he made up a little bundle, and scrambled down to get some reeds to bind it.

The river was broad and shallow; at low water, when the tide went back, the wide beds of mud were left almost dry. As Jack went to the edge, he saw an old woman far out on the mud-bank. He had seen her there sometimes before, and had wondered what she was doing. Her gown was gathered up around her, and her legs were bare, and she was stooping down, picking up something and putting it in her basket.

He thought he would go over and see what she was finding. So, taking off his boots and socks, and leaving them by his bundle of sticks on the bank, he ran down and crossed the soft mud carefully till he got near the old woman. Then he watched her and saw she was gathering cockles. He had seen people going into Mudford with baskets of cockles, but he did not know where they found them.

"What are you about, young 'un? This is not work for little chaps like you, who do not know their way about the banks. The water is coming in, and you will be drowned presently if you do not mind what you are about. I

cannot stay much longer, though my basket is not nigh full. Oh, my old bones! They do ache,—that they do."

Jack was a good-natured boy, and he felt sorry for her,—she so cold, and so tired with stooping.

"I can pick some," he said, "and help you fill your basket. I have nothing else to do. Will you have these?" He held out a few cockles he had picked up while they were talking.

"Put them in," she said, pointing to the basket; and Jack, pleased to have something to do, found as many more as he could.

After a little she shouldered her basket which hung on her back by a strap, and said, "We must be off now, for the mud is filling; you follow me, or you will get into trouble."

Jack followed her as she threaded her way over the mud, so as to keep clear of the softer parts which the little currents of water were fast covering. When they got to the bank she sat down to rest, leaning her basket on the top of the bank, and taking out the boots she had left amongst the reeds.

"Shall you sell them?" said Jack, as he looked into the basket.

"It will be a bad job for me if I don't," she answered. "But I could have got a better lot

if I had a handy lad like you to help me; and I would let you have a spare pint or so, if you like to come and work for me."

"I could come," Jack said, "but I could not sell them; I would rather get some halfpence."

The old woman had seen how quickly Jack picked up the cockles, and she thought he might fancy to come and gather them for himself; so she wished to make friends with him.

She pulled out a greasy leather purse and took twopence out of it. "There's for you, then," she said; "and you come and look out for me to-morrow, about this time, and I will give you something, according to what you gather."

Jack thanked her, and ran off full of glee, to take up his bundle of sticks and carry home his pennies.

As he went he began to reckon how much he could earn if he came every day for a month. How soon would he earn enough to buy a pig? It was a long calculation, and he wanted Annie to help him.

When he got back, she was wondering what kept him so long; and was delighted when she saw the money and heard his adventure.

After much consultation it was agreed to keep it a secret, to surprise their mother; and

to hide the money safely, so that if Mr. Rice should come, he would not be able to take it.

"If," Annie said, "we do not get the pig, it will come in for the rent, and we can put it all together with what we get gleaning and mushroom picking, and for blackberries; the servants at the hall bought some last year. They will be ripe before rent-day."

It was not difficult to keep their secret, for Mrs. Smith came in late, and was busy over the fire and getting tea, and she did not talk much.

For the next two days, Jack kept his appointment and worked hard for his old woman, and each time he came back proudly with his pence.

On the third evening he told Annie he was to be quite early next day, for the tide was too late to work in the evening. He was to be at the river-side at six in the morning. This was good news for Annie; she wanted to go with Jack one day and see the curious old woman and the cockles; and she could very well, as it was so early, and both could be back in time for school.

The next day, accordingly, the two children set off together, and were soon at the place where Jack was to meet his friend.

"I wonder which way she comes," Annie said; and as Jack pointed over the common towards the sea, she added "from there?

but there are no houses there except Oldcot; Betsy Redstone lives there."

"I know she does live there, though," Jack answered. "She always goes and comes that way."

"Then she is Betsy!" said Annie, in a tone of alarm. "O Jack, I do not think mother would like us to go with Betsy. People are all afraid of Betsy and her sons; they are such a wild lot; no one likes going down to Oldcot."

"I do not care about people's being afraid of her," Jack said stoutly; "she pays me for picking the cockles, and that is all I care about."

While he was speaking, some one was seen coming over the common; not an old woman, however, but a boy rather bigger than Jack, and with him a brown terrier.

He came up and said, "You are looking out for granny, are you? She will not be here to-day; she is bad."

"Am I to get the cockles then?" Jack asked. "I have no basket. Have you?"

"Not I," said the boy; "I am not going cockle-gathering. I am not such a fool as to work in the mud half the morning for twopence. She wanted me to do it, and I would not without more pay. She sells those cockles for a lot of money, at Mudford, and wanted to pay me twopence!"

Annie looked grave; she did not like this boy, and whispered to Jack, "Let us go back." Jack however answered, "I was glad of the pence, and I could not get them but for her."

"If you were to stand out," said the boy, "we might make her give us something worth having, and we would go shares and have a lark." But as Jack looked doubtful, and made no answer, he went on,—"You can please yourself, and get your halfpence for anything I care;" and calling out to his dog, "Come along, Snap," he walked off whistling.

Jack looked disappointed, though he did not mean to give up earning his pennies to please this boy.

"Never mind," Annie said, "I am glad he is gone. Let us go down to the little copse, and we shall get a good bundle of wood, and see if the strawberries are coming on."

Jack was in some anxiety about his cockle-gathering, till he went to the river and found Betsy there next morning, more rheumatic than ever, and glad to make him of use.

"She seemed to know we had seen Phil, as she called him," Jack said to Annie afterwards; "and she gave me threepence for not minding him. 'A good-for-nothing fellow' she called him."

Annie ran to get the old red sock in which she and Jack kept their treasure.

"Do you know," she said, as she put in the pence, "I heard Mary Parsons say that her mother put her money in the bank, and that it was safer there than keeping it in the house."

"What bank?" Jack asked.

"Well; I suppose any bank that makes a nice, safe hiding place. No one,—no robbers, I mean,—would think of its being in the bank; and mother would not either. I always think mother will see the sock some day, and find out our secret. Let us look in the bank by the thorn, and find a good hole."

At the time when Annie and Jack were children, savings banks were not so common as they are now; and children, who seldom went into a town, knew nothing about banks, or of any way of keeping money except in an old sock or tea-pot, or under the mattress.

After some search, a fitting place was found not far from the foot of a thorn in the hedge, just outside the garden gate. There was a hole well hidden by the brambles, with a large clump of dock-leaves growing over it. The sock could be taken in and out without disturbing the leaves; and for greater security, a stone was placed over the hole.

Tuesday was washing-day, and Annie had to stay from school to help her mother. Jack's cockle-gathering was to be rather later, and he did not think he would have time to come in to breakfast; so he got a piece of bread and said he would go straight to school from the river.

Annie, when her mother was washing, had to go down to the spring to fetch the water, and make up the fire, and help to hang out the clothes. So she was very busy, and did not think of Jack till the dinner hour was past. Her mother asked if he had carried away his dinner, and meant to stay to afternoon school.

"I do not know what Jack is after," she added. "He seems always in a hurry to be off after something, the first thing in the morning. I hope he is not in mischief."

About three o'clock, when Mrs. Smith went out to hang up the counterpane on the hedge, there was Jack at the gate, all over sand and red earth; and a little dog, with a string round his neck, under his arm.

"Why, Jack," his mother said, "wherever have you been? What a figure you are!"

Jack looked rather ashamed.

"I have been rabbiting, mother, along with Phil Redstone, and I am going another day with him; so I am to keep this dog, Brush,

and we shall catch lots of rabbits, and go shares."

"And you have not been at school?"

"I did mean to be in time, mother; I am very sorry;" and Jack got very red as he spoke. "I thought I might catch a rabbit. I want to catch one, and Phil says we shall be quite sure, if we have the ferret; and I must keep Brush, because we must have two dogs; and Phil has Snap, and his granny will not let him keep Brush too."

"I can have no dogs here," Mrs. Smith said; "I have enough to do to put food in your mouths, without feeding dogs. And how did you get along with Phil Redstone? I want you to keep to school, and not be going about with idle boys. I thought I could trust you, Jack."

Jack began to be very much ashamed, and was near crying.

"Well," said his mother, "you have been a good boy till now, and I will say no more about it this time; but you must not go with that boy again. As for the dog, take the string off and let him run home."

"Oh, no, mother; he will not go. Brush likes me." But as Jack spoke, he undid the string, and Brush was no sooner free, than he set off at full speed and was soon out of sight.

Jack had met Phil just after he left the cockle-gathering, and had been easily persuaded to go rabbiting. He knew very well he ought not to go, and at first he meant to go only a little way; but when they were fairly off, and got away to a wild part of the common where Jack had never been before, he forgot all about school, and thought of nothing but the dogs and the rabbits. He was proud to obey Phil's orders, and sit holding Brush at one end of a hole, while Phil and Snap were at work at the other. They did not actually catch a rabbit, though they saw many; and Phil often said it was Jack's fault because he held Brush too long, or loosed him too soon. But Jack took it all in good part, and longed to try again another day and be more skilful.

Phil was going to set some gins at night, and they were to go next day, and if they caught a rabbit, Jack was to have it; for some wire was wanted for the gins, and to get it Phil asked Jack for one of his pennies,—one of those he had just earned.

This was the worst part of it; for when the children were alone, and Annie asked Jack if he wanted to put his money in the bank, he could only produce his one penny. He had to tell all the story, and ended with saying,

"You know, Annie, if I got a rabbit, it would be worth a great deal more than a penny."

"But it is not caught yet," Annie said; "and if it was, I dare say that boy Phil would make some pretence to keep it himself."

Of course Jack would not allow that Annie was right, though he was not without some doubts himself about his new friend. When Phil was angry with the dogs, he said bad words; and when Jack told him what he did with his money, he jeered at him for giving it to his sister, and talked grandly, as if his pence were not worth caring for; but of all this Jack said nothing, and was determined not to lose either the cockle-gathering or the rabbiting.

He was however in danger of losing both, for Mrs. Smith strictly forbade his going out next day till he went to school, and ordered him to come straight back with Annie.

Annie was sorry for the loss of the cockle-gathering, and Jack felt half in disgrace and half-angry; so they set off rather dolefully to school, taking their dinner and staying through the afternoon.

But before afternoon school was over, Annie had an agreeable surprise; and when they started home together, she showed Jack, with a beaming face, a bright silver sixpence.

A patchwork quilt had been finished in the school, and the young ladies had come in, and had been so pleased with it that they had given sixpence each to the four best workers. "And I was one of the four," Annie said; "so here it is, and we will put it in our treasure; and so you see, going to school is better than going rabbiting."

Jack was glad to see the sixpence, but he thought Annie need not have said that about rabbiting; and she did not seem sorry he could not go to look at the gins; there might be a rabbit there at that moment; nor did she care properly about his having lost Brush.

They walked on together, Annie talking and laughing, and Jack following in silence; but making up his mind, as soon as he got home, to set off down to Oldcot, and, at all events, make out if Brush had gone back. His mother had not forbid his doing that.

When they got near the cottage, Annie ran on to see if her mother was come in; but the door was shut and the padlock on it. So she looked for the door-key under the thatch where it was always left; and having climbed on the window-sill and got it down, she went in to light the fire and put the kettle on. When this was done, and her cloak and hat hung up, she went out to call Jack to put the sixpence

in the bank; she called and looked about, but Jack did not appear. She thought it very unkind of him not to come and see the sixpence put in, but if he did not like to come, she could not wait till her mother would be home; so she sat down in front of the hole, and carefully putting aside the leaves and moving the stone, she pulled out the sock.

She emptied the pennies into her lap that she might put the sixpence quite down to the toe, and was going to put them in again, when she thought she heard a footstep.

She hastily pushed in the money, and hiding the sock in her lap, she turned to look who was coming. She saw no one, and was turning again to the hole, when there was a rustle in the bushes, and Phil Redstone jumped out from the hedge just beyond the thorn.

He said, "I want your brother; where is he?" Annie felt afraid of Phil, and did not like being alone with him; but she answered civilly that she did not know where Jack was, but that he could not be far off.

"I want to know if he is coming with me to see about a ferret. And where is my dog?" was Phil's next question.

Annie looked out, hoping she might see her mother or Jack; and to her great joy, her mother was coming towards the house. So

she plucked up courage, and said, "The dog ran off; and there is mother coming; so you can ask her about it."

Now the truth was that Brush was not very honestly come by. Phil had picked him up in Mudford, and decoyed him away; and he was afraid of being found out, and wanted to keep the little dog out of the way, so that he should not be found at Oldcot if any one came to look for him.

"Why did he loose the dog?" Phil said; "I told him to keep him tied up."

"Mother did not wish it to stay," Annie answered. "There she is, and she will tell you."

But Phil did not wish to face Mrs. Smith; so he said, "Asking will not bring the dog back. But I shall have something else to think of, for father is home and I shall be going off with him." So saying, he ran off before Mrs. Smith came up.

Jack meanwhile was on his way to Oldcot. He was a little afraid of meeting Phil, and a little afraid of going to Oldcot; but Brush had been entrusted to him, and he felt troubled at having let him go, and wanted to know if Phil had got him back; and though Oldcot was an out-of-the-way place, and had a bad name, Jack was not a cowardly boy, and he would not

let his fears stop him, though the evening was closing in and it would be dark before he got back.

Betsy Redstone was a widow; her husband had been a sailor, and since his death she lived on in the lonely cottage,—Oldcot, as it was called, making a home for her two sons when they were on shore.

The eldest, Phil's father, had lost his wife when Phil was a baby, and the child was reared by its grandmother. The Redstones were wild, rough fellows, fishermen by trade, but known to live more by smuggling than by fishing. We hear little of smuggling now, but in old times there was too much of it. Hundreds made their living by smuggling into this country all sorts of foreign goods; but especially wine and spirits, which could not be brought in openly without paying a heavy duty; and all along the coast there were men constantly on the watch to prevent such things being landed secretly.

The smugglers had hiding-places where they could run in their boats and land goods in the night, and keep them concealed till they could be safely carried away and sold.

Oldcot was one of these landing-places. The cliffs formed a small harbour, almost hidden from sight, and far from any road or dwelling

on the land; and there the Redstones and their comrades were often in hiding, and went and came without being seen by day. Betsy, therefore, was not sorry that people avoided the place, and encouraged the stories of hob-goblins and ghosts which were supposed to haunt it.

It looked lonely enough when Jack got there. The cottage, of which only the chimney was seen from above, stood on a little bit of green at the foot of the low sand-cliff which bounded the shore; it lay now in deep shadow, and there was no sound except the dashing of the breakers on the beach. Some steep steps led down to the plot of ground on which the cot stood. The door and windows were shut, but Jack thought he saw the glimmer of the fire through the window, and when he went near the door, he heard men's voices inside. He did not like to knock; he began to wish he had not come. As he stood doubting what to do, he heard a shrill bark from Snap, no doubt, inside. The door opened and Granny Redstone looked out.

"What are you come for?" she said; "I told you I should not be at the river this week. You may come next Monday, in the evening." She was closing the door, when Jack said quickly, "Is Brush come back?"

"I know nothing about the dogs," she answered gruffly. "Boys are trouble enough, without dogs; and I shall be glad when Phil is off. You will not get any good from being about with him, and he is not here; so be off."

She drew her hand in and shut the door; and Jack lost no time in *being off*, and was soon up the steps and on his way home; and very glad was he when he was over the wild part of the common and within sight of home.

He found Annie and his mother at supper, and heard of Phil's visit. Annie said that he seemed angry about the little dog, and she was glad he was gone. Mrs. Smith too was glad to hear that Phil was going to sea with his father, and would be out of Jack's way.

Nothing more was heard of Phil, and for some days there was no more cockle-gathering, and nothing to add to the treasure; but one sunny morning, after a shower of rain, Annie spied some newly-sprung mushrooms, and they both set to work to gather them and hunt for more, even at the risk of being late for school. They got a nice little basketful, which their mother agreed to carry up to the Hall, where she was going to work.

The next evening, Mrs. Dickers, the housekeeper at the Hall, walked down to speak to

Mrs. Smith about some needlework; and she brought back the basket and a handful of pence for the children.

Jack hung back, as he was rather shy; so she put the money into Annie's hand, saying, "You must divide it with your brother."

Annie took the money with a curtsey; and Jack pulled his hair, not having his hat on, and muttered, "Thank you, ma'am;" and while Mrs. Dickers sat down to have her talk with the widow, the two children ran off to the bank, eager to add the new prize to their treasure.

Annie knelt down, and pushing aside the leaves, she moved away the stone and put her hand into the hole, but drew it out again quickly.

"Why don't you bring out the sock, Annie?" Jack said; "what is the matter with you?"

She did not speak, but jumped up and got very red.

"O Jack, it is gone! it is not there. Oh! where can it be?" she exclaimed.

Jack, in dismay, put his hand in; he broke away the earth, he pushed his hand quite in among the roots; there was no doubt about it, sock and money were gone.

Annie forgot her secret, thinking only of her loss; and rushed back to the cottage, her face

streaming with tears, and her arms stretched out, crying, "O mother, mother; it is gone!"

Jack ran after her, but, seeing Mrs. Dickers, he stopped on the door sill, trying not to cry.

Then all the story came out about the cockle-gathering, and the hidden treasure that was being laid up against rent-day, "that you might not go to the workhouse, mother," Annie said. "Jack and I did long to get some money for you; and if Jack did go rabbiting, he would have put it all in the bank,—that he would; and my counterpane money, and all!" and her tears broke forth afresh.

All the party went to see the hole, but they could make out nothing. There had been nothing moved; all was as usual when they first came, the children said; and it could not have been a bird or an animal, or the stone would not have been put back.

Good-natured Mrs. Dickers was heartily sorry for the children; but she could not help smiling at their simplicity in thinking that the hedge-bank was the bank where people kept their money. Mrs. Smith had guessed her children had some little secret, but would not spoil their pleasure by asking about it. "Poor things!" she said with a sigh; "their earnings won't make much difference."

She thought of Phil's visit after the loss of the little dog; but he was gone, and it was no use putting suspicion into the children's heads. There was nothing to be done; and Mrs. Dickers, after calling the children "good little dears," and promising them some cake the next time they came to the Hall, said, "Good-bye;" and left them lamenting and wondering over their loss, with only the comfort that the mushroom money was safe.

Good, as we all know, sometimes comes out of evil. The housekeeper had been so pleased with the children that she told the story to Lady Townshend, her mistress, who sent word to say that she should like the widow Smith to come to the Hall, and bring the children with her.

The next day, as Annie and Jack followed their mother along the lane that led to Risings Hall, they wondered why Lady Townshend had sent for them.

"She may scold us," Jack said, "for putting our money in the bank instead of giving it to mother. I wish we never had!"

But Annie did not think this likely. Mrs. Dickers had not scolded them, but had thought them good for having saved their pence, and was sorry for them losing their treasure.

"I know what I wish," Jack said; "that

is, that she would give me some work;—that is what I want."

When they got to the Hall, Mrs. Smith was asked to sit down while Mrs. Dickers took the children up to Lady Townshend.

Neither of them had ever been farther than the servants' hall in the great house, and Annie was so delighted with going up the grand staircase, and seeing the pictures, that she forgot her fears and looked about and pointed out what she admired in a whisper to Jack; but he did not like going at all, and scarcely looked round even at the gold clock which played a tune when it struck twelve just as they passed.

The children had never seen Lady Townshend, for the family was not often at the Hall. She was a tall, grand-looking lady, in a beautiful silk gown that swept the ground; and when she came into the drawing-room, where they were standing, Annie felt almost as shy as Jack.

"And these are the good children," she said, "who tried to help their mother. You must tell me all about it."

She spoke in such a kind, gentle voice, that Annie's fears vanished, and she was ready to answer all Lady Townshend's questions, though she gave Jack a jog now and then to try to

make him speak in his turn. When she came to their going to the bank and not finding the money, she was near crying again; but she stopped when she saw Lady Townshend take out a netted silk purse, and that golden guineas were shining in it.

She took out two of them.

"Will you give them to your mother?" she said; "I think this will pay the half-year's rent. And now, you shall go down, and Mrs. Dickers will take care of you, and give you some dinner before you go home."

Annie smiled and curtsied her thanks; but Jack stood silent, looking at the guinea in his hand.

"What is it, my little man?" said Lady Townshend kindly. "Is it not enough? It is yours to give to your mother."

"It is not mine, because I did not earn it," Jack said bluntly. "I would sooner have earned it."

Lady Townshend smiled, and said, "But you may earn something still, and help your mother for next year's rent. You can give this for me this time, and we will see about the earning."

Lady Townshend was as good as her word; for she was so pleased with Jack's wish to work for his mother, that, before the family

left the Hall, she had spoken to the gardener, and settled that Jack should come out of school-hours and on half-holidays, to work under him. He was to have two shillings a week, which seemed to Jack quite a fortune; and he would learn to work besides.

He was a happy boy when he first set off to work under old Master Towell, and happier still when he brought his first week's wages to his mother.

Jack went on very steadily; and as he was quick, and willing to learn, and obedient, and respectful in his manner, the old gardener was well pleased with him, though he sometimes gave him cross words.

By-and-by Towell got to find Jack very useful, and wished to have him taken on regularly as gardener's boy; and though his mother would have liked to keep him to school a little longer, it was so great a thing for him to have so good a place, that she was thankful he should get it.

CHAPTER II.

THERE is nothing now to tell about Jack's history for some time to come. All through the autumn he kept on at school, working in the morning and evening and on odd days at the Hall; in the spring he was taken into regular work. Mrs. Smith still kept Annie on at school, to make a good needlewoman of her; and though the family had left the Hall, she got plenty of work, and was able to keep clear of debt.

Meanwhile, Jack did not forget his old friend Betsy Redstone. He used to run down to the river when he had a spare hour before or after his work; and if he saw her on the mud, he would go out and help her to fill her basket, and would run off before she could offer him any pay.

He had not seen anything of Phil, who was still away with his father; Betsy said she wished he would stay and work for her, like Jack did for his mother; but he never would stick to anything, or come to any good.

Jack was a happy boy, and a general favourite. He was always ready to do a good turn for any one, without looking for any reward; and he was truth-telling and trustworthy.

One day, the old gardener's son, who had been paying his father a visit, was so well pleased with Jack that he made him a large kite. The kite was a great beauty, with a long tail of pink and blue paper; and Jack looked forward anxiously to flying it. So one Saturday evening he thought he would go home by the common, where he should be clear of trees, and be able to give it a good trial.

It was a capital evening for it; just breeze enough, and not too much; and the wind set right over the common towards the sea. Jack had a famous run; the kite mounted high, its tail streaming gaily behind it. Jack followed, his eyes fixed on the kite, till he was carried over to the wild part of the common called the warren, where he had long ago gone rabbiting with Phil Redstone; and as it was full of rabbit holes, and Jack, with his head in the air, took no care of his feet, it was not long before he was caught in one of the holes, and came to the ground head foremost, with a jerk that broke the string of his kite. He started up and tried to catch the end, but it was

already out of his reach. Probably it caught in a gorse-bush; for after a minute or two he saw the kite waver and fall at some distance to the ground.

He could not quite make out where it fell, but he went on till he thought he must be near the place, and set to work to search for it amongst the sand-hills. It was a troublesome hunt, as there were so many little dips in the broken ground, where, if the kite lay flat, he might not see it; so he mounted on a knoll, where he could see a good way round. He had no sooner got on it than a little dog jumped up beside him and began to bark, and in another minute, a head was popped up from behind one of the sand-hills, and Jack saw his old acquaintance Phil Redstone. Phil was very much grown, and looked tanned and sailor-like, but there was no doubt about him; and when he saw Jack, he came up to him with a "Holloa, old fellow! is that you? What are you about here?"

Jack explained the loss of his kite.

"It came down yonder, close over my head," Phil said; and Jack, jumping down, followed him and soon picked up the kite, a little torn by having fallen on a gorse-bush. Jack thought it could be mended.

"Or you can can get another at Mudford

fair next week," Phil suggested. "I suppose you are going."

Jack had never thought of going; his mother, up to this time, had never let her children go.

"You have a new dog," Jack said, as the little dog who had barked at him began sniffing at the kite.

"Got him in Guernsey," was Phil's answer. "I gave half a crown for him to a French sailor. He is a regular beauty; and there never was such a one for tricks."

Jack was eager to see his tricks, and Phil was ready enough to show them, for his time hung heavy on his hands. He and Toto were on the out-look, he said, and could not go away. Jack did not understand why they were to look out, but did not like to ask questions.

Toto was a pretty little dog,—white, with one brown spot on his back; very small, with a smooth, soft skin.

Phil soon found a nice patch of smooth grass, and sitting down on a mound in front of it, he made Toto go through his tricks. He gave him a little stick, which Toto, standing on his hind legs, held under one of his fore-paws like a musket; and when Phil said "March!" he walked round the little plot of

grass, and came down on his four legs, when Phil said "Halt!"

"But he has not on his coat and cocked hat," Phil explained. "When first I had him he only knew the words in French; but that did not do when he got to England; so now he has learnt them in English, for he is as sharp as a needle. Come, Toto; jump!" Phil then, stooping down, put one arm a-kimbo, and rested one foot against his other knee; while Toto jumped in and out under his arm, and through between his legs. The little dog then smoked a pipe, or at least held one in his mouth. He would also fall down as if dead, and never stir until Phil said, "Up with you; the watch is coming." Toto would then start up and run as for his life round the grass plot, and then come for his reward. Phil took some gingerbread out of his pocket and gave him a bit.

Jack was in ecstasies. "Let me give him some cake," he exclaimed. But Phil said that he must have it only when he did his tricks right.

Something now seemed to strike Phil. He told Jack that he was teaching Toto a trick he had learnt of a gipsy boy; and he wanted some one at hand to help. It was a trick with

cards, but he had not got the cards with him. Jack was eager to help, and said he would go home with Phil. He had nothing to do till bedtime.

Phil however said that he could not go away, as he had orders to stay there; but he thought that if Jack could come next day down to Oldcot, they could practise the new trick and go over the others. Toto was not quite perfect, and he wanted to show him at the fair. He often made a lot of money by showing him off. "So, if you come and help me to-morrow, we can go together to the fair, and we shall go shares," he concluded.

"To-morrow?" Jack said, and stopped. "To-morrow, you know, is Sunday."

"That's just it," Phil answered; "so you will not have to go to work. You be sharp, and come down early; get down to the cot by six, and I'll be on the look-out for you, and we can cross over to Mudford. The boat is lying there, and I know a fellow at the Ring of Bells who will let me have a pack of old cards, for ours are pretty well in pieces; and we can take Toto with us. Only do not be after six, or the water won't serve for crossing. Now I must be off, for I hear my signal. Come along, Toto."

Jack stood silent. He might have said he

could not come, but he did not; and while he was thinking about it, Phil jumped up the nearest hillock and was soon out of sight amongst the sand-hills.

Jack took up his kite, gathered up the tail, and then set off slowly home, untangling the knots in the string as he went.

His thoughts too were rather in a tangle, but he did not try to undo the knots in them. He was a good boy, industrious and honest, and he loved his mother dearly, but he could not resist temptation. If anything took his fancy, he forgot everything else, or let it give way to his wishes.

Every time he thought of Toto, and of the crossing in the boat to Mudford, and going on unknown adventures with Phil, it seemed more pleasant to him and less wrong. Why should he not go? Other boys had a Sunday holiday; why should not he? Harry Osborne, the stable-boy at the Hall, often had a Sunday out, and went to Mudford for all day; and Joe White, at the farm, went out sometimes, and got Jack to mind the cattle for him that he might not have to be in early. It was only missing church once. And they were not going to do any harm; only to teach the dog. What fun it would be!

It was great fun to think of, and by the

time Jack got home he had made up his mind it would not be at all wrong to do it; but, somehow, when he went into the kitchen and sat down to his supper with his mother and Annie, he did not care to talk about his scheme, and was rather silent.

Annie, however, soon began to ask him where he had been, and if he had flown the kite; and thus brought out all the history of his run on the common, and his meeting with Phil and Toto. Once started in giving an account of Toto, Jack could not stop; and Annie was a willing listener. Then came something about showing off the dog, and his tricks at Mudford fair; and Mrs. Smith, who had not up to this point paid much attention to the children's talk, now began to listen.

"Jack," she said, "you are not making a scheme for going to the fair; are you? Boys like you get no good at fairs, and I do not want you to go."

Jack did not speak out his thoughts as he generally did to his mother, but said, doubtfully, "Phil is going, mother."

He wondered what his mother would think of his going next day with Phil,—would she object? But just then she took up the candle and said it was bedtime; and lighting Jack to the lumber-room in the roof, where he slept,

she said "good-night," leaving him to get to bed by moonlight.

Jack looked out of the little window to see what the night was like. The moon was clear, and there was a fresh dewy feel in the air, and not a cloud to be seen; all promised a fine day. He knelt down to say his prayers before he got into bed; but though he said the words, he was thinking of Toto, and that he would not tell Phil he had never seen a pack of cards, because Phil would laugh at him; then he tumbled into bed and, after tossing about for some time, fell asleep.

On Sunday morning, Annie was always up betimes. She liked to fetch the water, light the fire, and put everything straight before breakfast, that her mother might take a good sleep on Sunday mornings, and that she might be ready to set off in good time for Little Mudford with Jack. Mrs. Smith and her children always went to the old parish church there, though it was a long walk. There were no Sunday-schools in those days, but there was catechising sometimes, for half an hour or so before service; and sometimes the singers would come to practise a new anthem, to which Annie and Jack dearly loved to listen. So they usually started directly after their break-

fast, and Mrs. Smith followed at her leisure in time for church.

On this particular morning, when Annie woke, she fancied by the light on the floor that she had slept longer than usual, and so she jumped up quickly and opened the lattice to see if it was a fine day. When she looked out, she was surprised to see Jack away on the common; he was already some way off, and when she called, he did not look round but ran on. She thought he must have heard and did not want to be stopped, and wondered where he could be going.

The morning work was soon got through. Annie had puzzled over and over again where Jack could be gone, and whether he would be back in time to start with her. Then, when she was quite ready, and it was time to go, she went to get her prayer-book and Bible. She then remembered that she had put her Bible in the pocket of Jack's Sunday jacket that he might carry it for her, and saw that as he had the jacket on, she must go without her book.

Annie was always for starting too soon, Jack used to say; perhaps therefore he had gone out of the way for fun and would overtake her on the road. At all events, she would not let him make her too late by any of his tricks; so at the proper time she set off alone.

Mrs. Smith was in hopes Jack might come in before she followed Annie, or that she should see him at church; so after waiting as long as she could, she locked the house up and went on alone, but she saw nothing of Jack.

The service over, she and Annie set off homewards; neither of them spoke. Mrs. Smith was very much vexed about Jack, but she did not wish to encourage Annie in blaming him, which she was rather ready to do; they must first know what had happened.

When they had walked some way, they met a cart coming down the hill towards them. It was a lonely road, and they seldom met anything, especially on Sunday. It was not a farm cart, but a light sort of a trap carrying several people, as they saw when it got near. There was a woman, three or four men, and a boy. Two of the men were in the dress of the coast-guard. Annie pulled her mother's sleeve as the cart went by.

"Did you see them, mother?" she said. "Where can they be going? and on Sunday too!"

"I saw two of the coast guard," Mrs. Smith said. "They have to go on their business at at all times."

"But I meant Phil, mother. And Granny Redstone's bonnet; I did not see her face,

but I am sure it was her bonnet. So Jack is not with Phil."

"I am glad he is not," Mrs. Smith answered. "I was sorry to hear Phil was come back, and that Jack had been with him. There must have been some smuggling business, and the coast-guard will want them as witnesses."

They hurried on, for she began to feel anxious about Jack, and had a good scolding and no dinner in store for him, unless he had some very good excuse for his absence.

But though Jack got no share of the Sunday dinner, neither did he get the scolding. He was not at the cottage when they got back, and the afternoon went by without any sign of him.

It was Mrs. Smith's habit to go to the evening service in summer, but on this day she felt she could not rest without trying to hear some tidings of her boy. Perhaps, as Annie had seen him going that way in the morning, he might be at Oldcot. He was always grateful to Betsy, and if he found the old woman in any trouble, he might have stayed. After all, they were not sure she was in the cart. Many old women wore black bonnets. The best thing to do then was to go to the cottage; there was time enough before dark, and as Mrs. Smith did not like to

leave Annie at home alone, she took her with her.

They had no heart to talk, but walked along as quickly as they could. When they got near, they saw the chimney of the cot above the bank, but no smoke was coming from it, and there was no sign of any one stirring when they got down to the house. The door however was ajar, and Mrs. Smith knocked once or twice, and called; but getting no answer, she pushed it open. As she did so, it fell on the floor with a great crash, and she started back half-frightened. She saw then that the lock had been broken, and the door wrenched off the hinges, so that it was only set up leaning against the post. Inside there were signs of a scuffle; a table was knocked over and a broken cutlass lay on the floor. Mrs. Smith ran hastily up the steps that led to the upper rooms. There all was confusion. The bed was unmade, and the chest of drawers seemed to have been set against the door and shoved aside.

"There is no one here. What is the matter, child?" said Mrs. Smith, as Annie seized her arm.

A poor little black kitten, mewing piteously, had made Annie start, and give a little scream, by jumping on her shoulder, and it now rubbed

its head against her chin. Annie was ashamed of her fears. "Poor little thing," she said; "I will take you away!" She tried to take it, but as she followed her mother down the ladder, it crept nimbly into the rafters over head. She put up her hand to take it down, and then saw that the kitten's little white paw was caught in something that was sticking in between the beams, which seemed to have been used as shelves, for all sorts of odds and ends were stuck in amongst them. She drew out the paw gently, and with it came a little red sock! Annie started; her mother was gone down, so she clutched the sock and ran after her, carrying the kitten.

"O mother! mother!" she exclaimed; "it is our sock. I always said that wicked Phil had taken our money, but Jack never would believe me."

Mrs. Smith paid little heed, for she was getting terribly frightened about Jack. There had clearly been fighting, and Betty must, as Annie thought, have been in the cart, and have been carried away with some of her sons and Phil. There was no good in staying, and Mrs. Smith did not know what to do next. As she walked back over the common, she determined, instead of going straight home, to cut across to the road to the Hall, and see if at the lodge,

where the Towells lived, they had heard anything; the servants at the Hall generally knew what was going on.

At the lodge she was welcomed by the old gardener and his wife, but they knew nothing of Jack, nor of the Redstones, nor of the coast-guard. But Towell would not be alarmed. "Now missus," he said, "don't go and put yourself out. Boys is boys, and Jack's been off after some bit of fun; so you go home, and you'll find him safe in bed and sound asleep, or pretending, so that he shan't hear no words about it."

Perhaps Mrs. Smith took a little comfort from Towell's confidence, but she would not go back without asking at the Hall, Towell having told her that the groom had been into Mudford, and would know more than he did. There she learnt that, at Mudford, the groom had seen the coast-guard men, with their cart and their prisoners. He heard there had been a fight at Oldcot. Job Redstone, Phil's uncle, had wounded one of the officers; the eldest Redstone, Phil's father, was not there, or had got away; and Phil and his grandmother were taken to be examined before the magistrates. The servants were at supper, and they would make Mrs. Smith and Annie sit down and take something, though they were but little

inclined for eating. The result was that Mrs. Smith only got more and more uneasy; for the servants showed their concern about Jack by bringing out all sorts of tragic and wonderful stories of boys who had been lost and never heard of again; and of fights with the coast-guard, and peaceful fishermen who had been attacked by mistake for smugglers, and of blood shed and lives lost. It was meant in kindness, however; and when Mrs. Smith got up to go, the laundrymaid insisted on going home to pass the night with her. They promised too that one of the men should go into Mudford early next day, and let Mrs. Smith know what he heard.

There was still the hope that Jack might have got home while his mother was out; but this was at an end when they reached the cottage,—the door was still shut, the key was in the thatch, and no one had been in.

Annie began to cry. If Jack would only come back, she would never be cross to him again,—no, not if he teased her ever so bad.

The next day things were no better. The groom had learnt nothing about Jack in Mudford. He had got leave to speak to the Redstones. Betsy was so bad that she had been taken to the infirmary; while Job and Phil had passed the night in the lock-up house. Job

Redstone said he had not seen the Widow Smith's boy these twelve months. Phil declared he knew nothing about him,—how should he? He seemed very close, as if he thought they were trying to catch him up. One of the coast-guard said that they had gone to the cot and found Betsy, who said she was alone; then they found Job and the boy upstairs, and had a fight before they could get them away; they were sure no one else was there. Smuggled goods were found, and more were known to be stowed away, but they did not know where. A guard had been sent down to the cot last night to watch for the elder Redstone.

The news of Jack's disappearance soon got abroad about the neighbourhood. Every one wondered and asked questions and called to "talk it over," till poor Mrs. Smith was quite bewildered. Every one had some suggestion to make and some gossip to repeat; and she would have gone on many a bootless errand had it not been for the kindness of the servants at the Hall, who were always ready to make inquiries for her on any reasonable chance of finding her boy.

Some days passed in this way, till it was no longer any good to watch and hope that, at any minute, Jack might appear. Mrs. Smith went up again to her work at the Hall, and

sent Annie to school. When she was hard at work it was not so bad, but when they were at home together in the evening and sat down quietly, it seemed as if her heart would break. There was no sound now of the children's merry chatter; all the little cares that Jack had given her seemed to leave a blank that nothing could fill up. The more she thought the less she knew what to think. People talked as if he might have run off and gone to sea, but Jack knew nothing of the sea. He never cared for the water, or to go about with the fishermen, as some boys did; and he was very happy at home and fond of his good place. Perhaps she had been too proud of him. Annie did what she could to cheer her mother, but she often felt that talking only teased her; and she would slip out in the twilight into the garden and amuse herself with the little kitten, which was now her only playfellow.

One evening, as she was sitting on the bench outside the door, and rolling up a little ball to make a plaything for Tiny, she saw the figure of a boy passing the hedge to come up to the gate.

She threw down the kitten and screamed out, "Jack! O Jack! is it you?" and Mrs. Smith, hearing her voice, ran out; they rushed to the gate, but at the gate they found, not Jack,

but Phil. Phil was looking very pale and shabby; not at all like himself, for he used to have rather a jaunty look. Neither Mrs. Smith nor Annie spoke; they certainly were not glad to see Phil, and they did not look so. After standing silent at the gate for a minute, he said, "Is Jack home?"

"Then you do not know where he is?" Mrs. Smith said.

"Oh, tell us!" Annie cried out. "You do know; I know you do."

"I say I do not know," answered Phil; "I said so before to that fellow who came to ask me. I thought he might be back here. Has my dog come here?"

Annie was going to speak angrily, but her mother stopped her. "We have seen nothing of your dog," she said, "nor of my poor boy since that Sunday morning when he went away early over the common, and we thought he might have gone to you."

She stopped, and Phil making no answer, she said, "Good evening."

He said, "Good evening," and turned to go. As he turned, the evening light fell on his pale, weary-looking, haggard face, and Mrs. Smith's heart smote her. "Where are you going?" she said in a kinder tone.

"I don't know," was Phil's answer, and he

muttered something like "anywhere." His lips quivered and his eyes clouded over.

"You had best come in and have a bit of supper before you go on," Mrs. Smith said. He seemed to doubt a little, but followed her into the house. A brown loaf and some tea-cups were on the table, and he sat down with a wistful look at the bread; he was soon devouring a good hunch, and Mrs. Smith cut some slices of cold bacon and put them before him.

"I had not eaten a mouthful all day," he said, when he had got nearly through his piece of bread; "nor no great deal yesterday."

Mrs. Smith inquired where he had been; and he said that after they had been up two or three times before the magistrates, and they had asked him a great many questions to try and make out where his father was, he was dismissed. His Uncle Job was taken to prison, and was to be tried at the assizes for some old affair he and father had been in; and granny was too ill to leave the infirmary. So Phil had gone to some of his father's haunts to try and find him, but he learnt nothing; no one knew anything about him or his mates. He had gone to a place he named, many miles down the coast, where there was a man who sometimes put people over to Jersey; but his

father had not been there. Last night he had slept out under a hedge, and it had rained hard, and he had the shivers. When he woke, he did not think at first he could walk, he was so stiff; but he wanted to come back to Oldcot, and had got along so far.

All this was in answer to Mrs. Smith's questions; and he looked so bad that she did not like to turn him out, with another wet night coming on. When she told him there was no one at Oldcot, and that he had better stay the night, he said, "I did not mean to come on you. I think I can get along now; thank you for my supper."

He got up, but he sat down again, and rested his elbows on the table, and his head on his hands; he was quite done up, and Mrs. Smith again urged him to stay over the night, and start fresh in the morning.

"I should like to have seen Jack," he said after a pause, "and know what he had been about, and what has become of Toto."

"But why should Jack know anything of your dog, if he was not with you?" Mrs. Smith asked rather suspiciously. "Are you telling the truth?"

"I will tell you all I know, and I will tell you no lies," Phil said. "For you have been kinder to me than I looked for; and then if

you like to turn me out, you can. Jack fell in with me, and we were about together that Saturday evening with the dog. We were to go out next morning early and cross to Mudford in the boat. Jack was to come over near to Oldcot, and I was to be on the look-out for him. Well, in the night, or at dawn, came those rascally coast-guards, and granny put me and uncle away, and they were as near as could be going off without finding us; but uncle knocked down a loose bit of wood in the roof, and so they found us out. They had hard work to prevent uncle getting away, for he had arms, and he punished one of the men severely. When they got him, they pinioned him, and then tied my hands and put us in the cart. One of them then went back to fetch granny, and the other to bring out the horse they had put in the shed; then I saw Jack coming. When he was near enough, I made him a sign and he came up. Toto had run out to meet him, and I told him he must run as fast as he could to a place he knew of, and directed him how to find father and bid him be off, for the dogs were after him. Jack was very sharp; he was off before the men came up, and I sent Toto with him, for he knew the way."

Here Phil paused. He then said, "And that

is all I know. Father was not caught, nor the long sharper who was with him. That we know, and that is all; and I suppose you will not tell on me, though it could not do much harm now if you did. I tell you because of what you have done for me, and that you should not think Jack is lost right out. Most likely they got out to sea, and took him along with them."

Mrs. Smith felt as if Phil was speaking the truth. "Now you had best get to bed," she said; "I must give you something hot. You are not fit to go anywhere now; but if you get a good sleep you may be all right to-morrow, and then you will see what is best to do."

CHAPTER III.

UT where was Jack? We must go back to that Sunday morning when he woke at early dawn, and got up and dressed long before the hour of his appointed meeting. Jack had never got up before on a Sunday morning without the feeling that it *was* Sunday; and he would look out his books and get ready for church, with no other pleasure in view than a holiday from his work, and plenty of time to eat his Sunday dinner, and perhaps, have a little nutting with Annie in the evening; so that, however eager for his expedition with Phil, he was not altogether easy in his conscience. But the pleasant morning air drove away his scruples as he started on his way to Oldcot. He did hear Annie call, but he thought that she might not be calling him; at any rate he could not stop, so on he went.

As he was very early, he was not surprised that he did not see Phil when he got to the place where they were to meet, and turn down

to the cove where the boat lay for crossing the river. He sat down on a grassy mound which overlooked the path from Oldcot, and took out a piece of string he was knotting for the end of the kite's tail; but as he felt for the string in his jacket pocket, he came on Annie's Bible. Here was a bad job! He had carried away Annie's book, and in it were all her markers ready for church; there was also the bit of paper on which she had written the last Sunday's text for the parson, and which she had scolded Jack for not writing too. There it was: "Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God."

When he read it, he felt very uncomfortable. It was not then too late to go back; but Phil was expecting him, and it would be only for this once. He jumped up and ran towards Oldcot, instead of waiting for Phil. Phil, as we know, was not on his way to meet him, but was sitting in the cart with his hands tied and fastened, so that he could not get away.

The cart was standing near the steps that went down to the cot, where a rough cart-track, a few paces farther on, led down to the shore. The men had taken out the horse and led him down to tie him up below, as it was an awkward place to drag the cart over.

When Jack got near, Phil spoke to him, as he had told Mrs. Smith, bidding him run as quick as he could to the Warren, just where they had found the kite. Near there were the ruins of an old kiln, when he was to give three whistles; some one would then show up, when he was to say that it was all up, and that they must clear out; and, added Phil, "take Toto with you; he will know where you are bound for, and will go right a-head." Toto had jumped from under the cart to greet Jack, and now looked up whining at his master, as if asking Jack to put him in the cart; but when Phil bid him go, he followed Jack, looking back once or twice to see if his master really meant him to go. "Look sharp," cried Phil, "or the men will be back and will stop you."

Jack knew well enough that Phil's father had been concerned in a great fight,—some "bad job," as Phil called it, when one of the officers of the coast-guard was killed, and that his life would not be worth much if he was caught. The smugglers' adventures were often talked of at the Hall, and Jack had listened with interest to the daring feats of the Redstones and their comrades. He now sped quickly over the common, Toto running on before, as if he understood where

they were bound for; nor did Jack pause till he had got near the spot, and was well out of sight of the lower side near the river. There he slackened his pace and began to look out for the hillocks where he lost his kite, and try to make out the old kiln; but the little dog did not heed to look out; he ran straight forward till he stopped near a broken wall, where he began to sniff about and wag his tail. Jack now mounted on the stones amongst the brambles, gave his whistle, and waited and listened. Nothing stirred except a lark that flew out from the grass, and a rabbit or two that popped from one hole to another; but suddenly, while he was looking all round him, something seized his leg, and he was pulled roughly down through the briers, a man's cap was pressed over his face, so that he could neither speak nor see, and he could make out nothing till he found himself carried into a low sort of cave or vault. Two men were sitting there, besides the one who brought him down; and it was dark, except for the flare of an oil-lamp standing on a barrel. One of the men was Redstone; the other, a wild looking-fellow, with long grizzled hair and a great scar on his face.

"All right," said the youngest of the men to those who had pulled Jack down; "the

REDSTONE SHARPENING THE CUTLASS.

(*See page* 65.)

dog is with him, he comes from Phil. What's the news, lad?" Jack was frightened, but he could do nothing but give the message. The men got up and placed some logs and stones, so as to close the place where Jack had come down. They then began to talk together in a low voice. At last the wild old man looked at Jack, and Redstone said, "The widow Smith's boy." Then turning to Jack, he asked when he had seen Phil? Jack told all he could, but it was not much; he was in hopes they would now let him go, but dared not ask. They took no more notice of him, but after consulting for a few minutes, the young man crept to the other end of the vault, where there was a trap-door opening inwards, which he unbarred and pushed up. A quantity of sand fell as he did so, but he pushed his way out through it, and as soon as he was gone, Redstone closed and barred the trap, and then sat down and took a whetstone, on which he began to sharpen a cutlass. Jack sat very still; the sharp edge of the cutlass, gleaming in the lamplight, made him think that there would be fighting. He saw they had no thoughts of letting him go.

Presently the men took some eatables out of a hamper,—dried fish and bread and

sausages. Redstone gave Jack some of the food, which he was glad to eat, for he was hungry. Then they pulled out a flask and drank from it, and the grisly man held it to Jack, and said, "Take a pull, young'un; 'twill keep your heart alive." Jack had never tasted spirits, but he thought they smelled nice,—so he swallowed a little, but it seemed like fire, and almost choked him; he tried to show he did not mind, and gave back the flask. Toto had come from his retreat when the food appeared, and Jack gave him some scraps. The men then put by what was left, and the old man lay down and went to sleep. Meanwhile, Redstone went on cleaning his cutlass, and also a pair of pistols, of which he examined the locks and rubbed the barrels. The little dog curled himself up on an empty sack; and Jack, feeling as if he was his only friend, sat down close beside him.

Jack was not a cowardly boy, but he was too much frightened to like to go to sleep. The grisly old man had a terrible look, as if he would not care what he did.

Jack looked about to see if there was any chance of escape, but the vault was carefully closed up on every side, and Redstone never went to sleep; he seemed always watching and listening.

The time passed very slowly, and dark thoughts filled Jack's mind,—thoughts of his mother and of the trouble she would be in, and then the thought that it was Sunday. He would have liked to say his prayers, but when he tried, he could think of nothing but the text in Annie's Bible; and there it was, in his pocket, to reproach him. If he had only turned back when he read it! Poor Jack laid his head down on the sack beside Toto, to hide his tears, and crying bitterly, he fell asleep.

How long he slept he did not know, but when he awoke, he heard voices speaking in a whisper; the lamp was out, but Redstone had a dark lantern in his hand. "What must we do with him?" he said. "Put him out of the way," said the gruff voice of the old man; and he swore a horrid oath. "The boy must not tell tales." "Bring him off in the boat," answered another voice; "we will take him where he shall not get back in a hurry."

Jack now felt himself pulled roughly through the door and down a bank of loose sand, the men having told him not to speak, or it would be the worse for him,—but to make more sure, Redstone tied a great handkerchief over his mouth; then they went on still through the deep sand, till at last he felt his

feet on the pebbles and saw the glimmer of the water, and found himself tumbled into a boat.

The boat pushed off at once. Not a word was spoken, and every minute he thought he should be thrown into the sea. The boat rose and fell on the waves, and the water plashing in its bottom, and the creak of the oars in the rowlocks, were the only sounds he heard. He lay quite still at first, and then he sat up in the bottom of the boat. When he put down his hand to raise himself, he felt something soft and warm; and a lick on his hand made him know that it was Toto. Poor little Toto!—it was like finding a friend, to know that *he* was there. Jack gave him a friendly pat, and the little dog squeezed himself closer and got into his lap.

The men rowed on silently for some time; at last Jack could see a light reflected on the water, and that they were rowing towards it. When they got up to it, he could make out that it was a sailing-boat, like one of those French fishing-boats that he had once seen at Mudford. The men began to pass some goods up the side of the boat, and there was a good deal of talking. They spoke in French, and so Jack could not make out what they said. Redstone seemed to want the man in the boat,

who had on a red cap, to do something, to which he objected; but at last they seemed agreed. Redstone then said to Jack, "You must go along with them, youngster; they'll do you no harm."

He had nothing to do but to obey; so taking Toto under his arm, he mounted on the bench, and Redstone called out, "Catch the rope and scramble up;" then, seeing that Jack could not do so while holding the dog, he said to him, "Let go the dog, and be quick; we cannot stay all night." As he spoke, he seized Toto and let him drop. Instead of falling into the boat, the little dog fell into the water. Jack jumped down and leaned over. Toto was trying with all his might to get hold of the edge of the boat, but it was too high for him. Jack nearly fell in himself while stretching over; but he caught Toto by the neck and drew him in, just as Redstone seized him by the arm and was going to thrust the little dog back into the water.

"Oh, pray, do not drown him!" cried Jack passionately. "He is Phil's dog. Phil gave him to me to keep. I will not go without him."

"Then climb up," said the younger man, anxious to be off; and throwing the little dog up into the sailing boat, Jack made what

haste he could to follow, and the man in the red cap pulled him in. He was no sooner in than he felt the boat moving on, and they were soon cutting through the water. The wind filled the sail, and the boat lay over so much that Jack could not keep his feet, and was glad to lie down in the bottom, cuddling poor little Toto, who had crept up to him, bruised and frightened, but not much hurt by his adventure. There were only two men in the boat, and they seemed too busy stowing away the goods they had taken on board to think about Jack, who felt it quite a comfort to have got away from Redstone and the fierce-looking old man. By degrees, the fresh air and the motion of the boat made him very sleepy; the sound of the men's voices died away, and the rushing of the water seemed to change into the rustling of the wind among the trees that Jack used to hear in his little bed at home; and soon he was so sound asleep that when he woke he could not remember where he was.

It was now broad daylight, and he saw that he was on the open sea, out of sight of land. The two men in the boat with him were evidently French fishermen; one of them was sitting in the end of the boat holding a rope with which he was tightening the sail; the

other was busy over an iron pot in which something seemed to be cooking on a fire of charcoal; a savoury smell of soup came from it, which made Jack feel very hungry.

The man who was cooking looked up, and said, "You wake, boy; he! eh! Come eat, dine—good!" Then taking the soup off the fire, he brought out some tin cans, and, his companion joining him, they made Jack sit down with them, and ladled out a canful of the steaming soup for each. It looked very good, and Jack, with a wooden spoon that came to his share, soon went to work on the soup. They cut off a great slice from a long loaf of bread and gave it him; and then Toto, who had been much interested in what was going on, came and sat up solemnly on his hind legs, opposite the man who was cutting the loaf, as if to ask for his share. The men laughed good-humouredly, and he had a fine number of scraps of bread tossed to him, and a little platter of leavings when the meal was over.

Jack's spirits were much improved by his good breakfast. They tried to talk to him, but one of them spoke only in French, and the other soon came to the end of his English. He wished to make Jack understand something, but what it might be it was not easy

to make out. He pointed to Jack, and said, "My wife; you come—old father, too; you boy to them;" but he had to give it up, and with a shrug and a laugh, went to his work and left Jack to his own thoughts, which were less dismal since he had had the soup. The day was bright and the wind fresh, and the boat danced merrily over the waves; and, at length, Jack was able to make out a line of distant land, which was getting more and more distinct as he watched it, and could see by degrees the little nooks amongst the white cliffs, and then a wide opening where the shore was flat; he could see too the spires and churches of a large town, and he knew it must be France.

"Dieppe," said the younger of the men, pointing to the town where Jack's eyes were fixed; "we go there." Then he laughed and talked, and stroked Toto, wishing to take him up; to this, however, Toto so decidedly objected, that he went away. By-and-by he came back with a little canvas bag, which he carefully untied and pulled out a piece of money about as big as a shilling; this he held out to Jack in the palm of his hand, and pointed to Toto in a way which made it clear that he wished to buy him. Jack shaking his head, he pulled out a second piece and laid it

by the other; then Jack took Toto between his knees, and pointing to the money, he held out all his ten fingers, and shaking his head violently, said, "No, no! not for twenty." The man clapped him on the shoulder, and said, "Brave—bien;" and tying up his money again in the little bag, seemed quite as good a friend as before.

They got nearer and nearer to the shore, and could see the boats in the harbour and the long rows of high houses that bordered the quay. At last they floated into the harbour, which was thronged with boats like their own, just come in with the full tide. Then Jack saw the busy crowd of fish-women with their high baskets on their backs, and their great white caps and gold ear-rings, and short blue skirts with red stockings; and he heard their shrill voices amidst the chatter and the clatter of the men pulling in their boats and struggling to get a place by the side of the quay. Some were already unloading, and pouring their stores of bright fish into the baskets of the women, who came down to carry them away. It was all so strange and so gay that Jack almost forgot to think of what was going to become of himself, though he did not forget to catch up Toto and keep him tight under his arm. Presently

he found that they were not to wait until they could bring the boat up to the edge of the quay, for the elder of the two fishermen made him a sign to follow him; and crossing over two other vessels, they were soon standing safely on the quay, and right glad was Jack to feel his feet on dry land again.

As they climbed from the last boat, one of the women came forward to meet them; she was not one of those who had the high baskets on their backs, but she carried a large basket full of vegetables on her arm, which she set down while talking to Pierrot, as she called the fisherman. They seemed to have a great deal to say to one another, and Pierrot was clearly explaining something about Jack, who stood there with Toto under his arm, wondering what was to happen next. The woman was Pierrot's wife, and Pierrot was telling her how the English fishermen had been in trouble with the Custom-house officers, and wanted to get the boy out of the way, as he knew too much of their secrets; and how they had asked him to take him to France. He said that he owed the Englishmen a good turn for helping his brother to get away to Jersey, when he was in danger on account of a quarrel with the soldiers; so he had taken the boy on board. Pierrot's

wife must now take him with her, and tell the old people, his father and mother, that they must give the boy meat and drink and shelter, and make him as useful as they could. The old folk wanted some one to help them, and this boy would suit them well.

Of all this Jack understood nothing; but at the end, Pierrot's wife gave one or two nods, and said *Bien*, the French for "Well," which seemed to settle the matter. Pierrot then turned to Jack and said, "You go with her, go to my pappa; you boy for him; he old man." He then said a few more words to his wife, took some cabbages and fruit from her basket, and ran back to his boat. Fanchon, Pierrot's wife, lifted the large basket again on to her head, and giving Jack a smaller one to carry, they set off towards the town.

Dieppe is a large town, with fine old churches in it, and a gay market-place, and a high street with gay shops; and Jack, who had never been in any grander place than Mudford, had enough to do to look about him as he went along. They crossed the market-place, where the booths were still standing, though the market was over; here and there an old woman might be seen packing her goods and chattels into one of the country

carts, waiting to take away what had not been sold. They did not stop there, but went on down a back street where a cart was standing, and a man in a blue frock putting in the horse. It was a long, narrow cart, something like a hay-rack put on wheels. Several people were already in it, sitting along each side on some straw. They seemed to be expecting Fanchon, and were amused when they saw her companions,—poor Jack and his little dog. They looked, however, very good-humoured, made room for him amongst them, and talked a great deal to him, without minding whether he understood or not. As soon as the horse had been fastened in, the cart started.

The village where Pierrot and his wife lived was called Little Appeville; it was about two miles from Dieppe, so they were not long in getting there. The old couple, however, with whom Jack was to live, did not live there, but at a farm some distance from the village. The cart stopped at Appeville, and Fanchon got out and signed to Jack to follow her. She stopped at the door of one of the cottages, leaving Jack outside while she went in and talked to some one. When she came out, a nice-looking girl, about seventeen, came with her. This was her eldest daughter,

Annette. They both began to talk to Jack, speaking very loud, but that did not make him understand; at last, however, by signs and a pull from Annette, and a shove from Fanchon, he made out that he was to go with the former.

Jack was rather sorry to leave Appeville, for it was a pretty village. The church with its pointed spire standing amongst the large trees, and the little brook sparkling through the street, and the flowers and orchards round the houses, made it look comfortable and homelike; and now he was going he knew not where. After leaving the village, the road ran through large fields with no hedges or trees, and went straight on as far as Jack could see; but after walking some way along it, Annette turned off up a cart-track, which led up a hill over more large fields, till it reached the farm where her grandparents lived.

It was not a cheerful-looking place. Large wooden gates, standing half-open, led into a courtyard. This had once been the entrance court of a grand house; there were still remains of carving on the stone doorways and windows, and a broken colonnade, but now the court was strewn with litter for the cattle; one corner was filled with brushwood, and there an old man was chopping billets for

firing. This was grandfather, as Annette called him, and to him she explained her errand, pointing to Jack. He scanned him rather disdainfully, but as Annette went on he nodded his head, as if to say that she spoke the truth; at last, he laid down his bill-hook and led the way to the house.

Here, sitting knitting by a low fire in a great dismal room, was the grandmother, and to her again Jack's history had to be explained, in spite of the additional difficulty that she was very deaf. She made out, however, that Jack was sent by her son Pierrot, and this seemed to satisfy her; but she looked doubtfully at Toto, who was now following close to Jack's heels, and making the acquaintance of a large dog that was lying on a sheepskin very near the fire. Loulou was told to be quiet, and as the two dogs seemed peaceably inclined, no further difficulty was made.

When Annette was gone, and Jack left alone with the old couple, it all seemed so strange that he felt as if he must be dreaming. They did not take much notice of him at first: the old man went back to his chopping, and the old woman got up and set a stool by the fire for Jack, and then sat down again to her knitting.

The old couple lived quite alone. They were

put into this deserted mansion to take care of the cattle and poultry; their youngest son had lived with them and earned good wages and made them comfortable, but now he was drawn for a soldier, and they missed him sadly. War had been going on for so many years, and the French armies fighting all over Europe, that the country was quite drained of its men; in the villages and fields were seen only old men and boys, such as were too old or too young to fight. This year it had been hard work to get in the harvest; so no one could be spared from Appeville to work for grandfather. The old man was glad to get a boy of Jack's age who might help him and his wife about the farmyard, and do little jobs under his eye.

And here, very dull and lonely, we must leave Jack for the present. Perhaps some boy who reads this story will say, "Why did not Jack go down to Dieppe, and cross over to England by the first boat?"

Now there were two reasons why he could not do this. There was war at that time between France and England, and Bonaparte, who governed France in those days, had forbidden any English goods or people to be landed in France; no English ships could come near the coast; he had even shut up in

prison those English people who happened to be in France, and would not let them go back to England, or even write to their friends.

Besides this, it was not so easy then as it is now to get across from Dieppe to England. There were no steamers; there were only packet ships now and then, or the chance of a trading vessel to take people over.

CHAPTER IV.

WHEN Phil lay down to sleep on the night that Mrs. Smith took him in, he never doubted that he should be up and off next morning; but it was many days before he left his bed. In the morning Mrs. Smith found him very bad, so she had nothing for it but to send for the doctor, who, when he came, was afraid that it was rheumatic fever, caught from sleeping out in the wet, and from want of food. There was no hospital within forty miles, and Mrs. Smith could not bear to send him to the poor-house; so she kept him where he was, and nursed him through his illness as if he had been her own boy.

To Annie it seemed hard at first that this trouble should come on them, and through Phil too, who was the cause of it all; but she saw that her mother was happier nursing Phil than she had been since she lost Jack. And one day, when Annie was vexed at her mother being tired, she said that she was only doing

for Phil what she hoped some other would do for her Jack, if needful.

By-and-by, Phil began to get better. When he was at the worst he would rave in a rambling, senseless way; but when the fever left him, he grew sensible again and lay very quiet, saying but little.

But he thought a good deal more than he had ever thought before. He thought that he had been near dying; and though Phil had never been taught the fear or the love of God, he knew enough to be afraid of death and judgment. While he lay ill he had heard Mrs. Smith reading the Bible and the prayers; he liked too to listen to Annie singing hymns in the evening, and he wondered if he could have done better if he had had a home like Jack's. All the bad things he had done would come into his mind, though he tried to put them away; for what good could it do thinking of them? said poor Phil to himself.

The first day he got up he went to the door to breathe the fresh air. As he looked out, he saw the thorn over the hedge, and it brought to his mind the evening when he had seen Annie kneeling by the bank with the sock in her lap, and how he had watched her put it into the hole, and then planned that he would come back and take the money. How

he wished now that he had not done it. What would Mrs. Smith think of him if she knew it? And, yet, he almost wished she did, that he might tell her he was sorry; but he could not make up his mind to confess what he had done. Soon after this, when Mrs. Smith was out one day, Phil said abruptly to Annie, "I am well, now; and I must not stay here to be a burden. I shall go into Mudford and shift for myself."

When Mrs. Smith heard that Phil talked of going, she was vexed, for she did not think him well enough to go back to a rough life: and she had got quite fond of him too, and hoped he might turn out well after all. She had a plan in her own mind which she now told him. The gardener at the Hall had not yet got another boy in Jack's place, for he said he would keep the place open, as Jack might come back any day; and Mrs. Smith thought that if he would take Phil on for a time, it would help him along till he was quite strong again, and give him time to look about.

Phil had no great fancy for being a gardener; but he wished to earn something, and he thought he could take charge of the pony, and go with the water-cart, which Annie told him had been part of Jack's work.

Besides that, he wished to please Mrs. Smith, so she lost no time in making her request to Master Towell. It was not graciously received. He spoke kindly to her, and said he should be glad to see her well rid of Phil; but as to taking him, or recommending him, that was quite another thing. "Those Redstones," he said, "never came to any good since I knew them; and I do not see but that the boy Phil will be like the rest of them."

At last his wife put in a word for Phil. He was a poor, motherless lad, and that now his father and his uncle Job, who was the worst of them, were out of the way, he might do better. She had seen Phil, and he was a smart, likely-looking lad.

"Ay! smart enough, and too smart," muttered the old man; but he gave way, and settled to have Phil for a week, and see what he could do.

Phil was very badly off for clothes; so Mrs. Smith set to work to patch and alter, and contrive as she best could, to make him tidy enough to go to work. She never seemed to think things a trouble, or to grumble over what she did for him, as his grandmother used to do. As he watched her looking out Jack's clothes, he saw how she prized everything that had belonged to him, and how the

tears came in her eyes when she spoke of him; and yet she did not seem to blame him for having caused her loss, but to think only of doing all she could to help him. If he could only do something to comfort her, he would not mind how hard he worked.

So he went to work with the old gardener; and when he came home at night, and Mrs. Smith asked how he had got on, he made the best of it, though he did not much like it. Old Master Towell had not found him so handy as Jack, and he was rather a crusty old man at times. Phil found the best part of the work to be minding the old pony and driving the cart, for he was fond of animals, and liked anything stirring far better than steady work.

The week went by and Sunday came, and Mrs. Smith wished she could have got Phil to go to church; but when she said something about it, she saw that he did not like it; and, indeed, till he was better clad, she scarcely wondered that he did not like to go. When they came back from church, Annie was very full of the family from the Hall, all of whom had been there—Lady Townshend, the mother of Sir Charles, and his children. They were in deep mourning for the death of the young Lady Towns-

hend. Lady Townshend looked so stately with her gown lying in a train on the ground, all of crape, "like mother's best bonnet," Annie said, "only not old and brown; then she had rings with jewels on her fingers, and the little boy and girl had such beautiful curling hair, hanging down and tied with black ribbon. I wish you had seen them as Lady Townshend walked out of church with the little boy holding her hand,—every one bowing and curtseying; she looked so nice, and nodded and smiled."

Phil could not feel any interest in Lady Townshend or in the children. He would like well enough to see Sir Charles. He knew a man who had served under him in the *Revenge*, and he was a gallant officer, though strict enough with the men. Sir Charles, however, was not come down yet, but Annie had heard that he was coming before he sailed.

One evening, when Phil came home, he told Mrs. Smith that he was going into Mudford next day with the cart. He was to fetch out some potatoes that were coming from a distance, and the man was to bring them to meet him at the White Hart. He seemed in great spirits at the thought of the expedition.

Mrs. Smith said that, if Phil had time while the pony was baiting, he had better go and

see his grandmother. At first he did not seem to care to do this. "Granny," he said, "does not think much of me; it was Uncle Job she cared for." But the thought came across him that he had always been a bad boy to his grandmother, and he added, "But I will go, if you like."

Mrs. Smith said that she would bake a cake and send a few fresh eggs for the old lady; and Phil felt more willing to go with this present in his hand. So the cake was made, and was ready in time to be packed in a basket with the eggs, and safely stowed in the cart.

The pony was a willing little fellow, and trotted merrily into Mudford; and so Phil enjoyed his drive. At the White Hart the man had not yet arrived with the potatoes; so after putting up the pony, and seeing him fed, according to Towell's orders, he set off to the infirmary. His way there lay by the church, and as he passed along he heard the bell tolling, and saw a funeral going in. It was a plain coffin, carried by two men in the dress of the workhouse; there were no mourners, only a man in black who walked by the side of the coffin. Phil thought it looked like a workhouse funeral. When he got to the infirmary and asked for the Widow Redstone, the old man at the gate shook his head:

"You are too late, my master," he said; "they have carried her out of the gates e'en now. Poor soul! she was left alone—none of her children came near her. But it's all one to her now."

Phil wished he had come sooner,—but as the old man had said, "It was too late now." He stood a minute, and then turned away with Mrs. Smith's basket in his hand. As he crossed the market-place on his way back to the White Hart, some one clapped him on the shoulder, and said, "Holloa, Phil! where are you bound for?"

The speaker was a young man named Parker, whom Phil had known in Guernsey. He had been in the royal navy, and had deserted to escape punishment. He was standing at the door of a low sort of tap-house, and asked Phil to come in and have a glass. Phil would have liked to go in; but luckily for him, he had no money in his pocket but the shilling Towell had given him to pay for the pony's bait; and he knew that if Parker *stood* a glass of something for him to drink, he would be expected to do the same. So he said he could not stay, as some one was waiting for him. He asked if Parker had any news of his father; but Parker, though he had heard of the business at Oldcot, knew nothing later. He ran on about

his own adventures since he had seen Phil, and told him he was going on some smuggling expedition to the coast of Ireland. He asked what Phil was doing, and told him he had better come along with him. They wanted another hand, and Phil was one of the right sort.

Phil felt more than half-inclined to go. It was well for him that the cart and pony were at the White Hart waiting for him. As it was, he had just firmness enough to say he must be off or he should be too late for his business; and so he got away. Parker called out that he should be in Mudford again in a few days, and would look out for him; so Phil could think it over. "Better come," were his last words.

The words kept sounding in Phil's ears as he made haste back to the inn. When he got there, the man with the potatoes had not yet appeared, but he did not want again to fall in with Parker. After going to see the pony, therefore, he stood at the door of the yard and waited. At last the man came. Phil gave his message, the potatoes were safely stowed away in the cart, along with a can of oil which had been left at the inn for Phil to take back; the pony was put in, and they started homewards.

The road from Mudford leading to the Hall ran for two or three miles along the bank of the river, and then mounted a low ridge, from the top of which a steep road led down to the bridge. At the top of this hill, just where the road turned down to the bridge, there was a wayside inn, called the Cross Keys; and as Phil came up he saw, standing at the door, a light dog-cart which he knew belonged to the Hall. He had seen it in Mudford while he was waiting at the White Hart, driven by the groom; the little boy, Lady Townshend's grandson, was sitting by his side. It was the little boy whose curls Annie had so much admired.

The child was very fond of the horses, and having seen the dog cart getting ready, he begged the groom to take him; and the nurse, to get rid of the child's teasing, let him go. The man was only going on a message, and promised not to get down in Mudford, or leave the child. When safe out of the town, however, on his way back, the groom saw no harm in stopping at the Cross Keys to drink a glass of ale. He could not make any one hear, so he got down, and holding the reins in his hand, he knocked and called, and then waited while the landlady brought his glass of ale, which he was drinking just as Phil drove by.

The little boy on the seat was holding the whip and looking very proud and happy.

Phil had got nearly down the hill, when he heard the noise of a horse's feet trotting very fast behind him; he looked round and saw the dog-cart coming down at a great pace; no one but the child was on the box, and the reins were dangling on the ground. Near the bridge the road narrowed, and Phil saw that either the horse would run against his cart, or else swerve and upset, down the bank into the river. He had not a moment to think, but he jumped down and backed the cart down the bank quite on to the grass by the river-side. The dog-cart was close upon him, but he was in time to get in front of the horse, and seize his bit just as he was going on to the bridge. The child was still holding on, though the dog-cart stopped with a jerk, which Phil was afraid would throw him down. He called out, "Oh! lift me down;" but Phil replied, "You must wait a bit; stay where you are, for I cannot leave the horse." He began to stroke the startled animal, and try to pacify him, thinking what a beautiful creature he was; but he was puzzling what to do, when a woman who was weeding turnips close by, and had seen what happened, came up. Phil asked her to lift the child down. Meanwhile the

groom, followed by the landlady, was rushing down the hill, and reached the place just as the little boy was set safely on his feet in the road. The groom began gathering up the broken reins, and they both attacked Phil for having set the horse off by rattling down the hill with that old cart of his. "They should not trust a young scamp like you," said the groom. "And to think that the blessed young gentleman's neck might have been broken through your wickedness,—you bad boy," added the landlady.

Phil, indignant and astonished, turned to look for his good old pony which was quietly eating by the river; he had been driving very slowly, being in fear of shaking the oil-can. The attack, therefore, was quite undeserved; the fact being that the whip had fallen from the child's hands and startled the horse; and the groom having the reins loosely on his arm, and the glass of ale in his hand, had not been able to stop him. So Phil left the groom and the landlady to mend the reins as best they they might, and mounting his little cart, went on his way. Before he had gone far, however, he was dismayed to see some oil oozing from the cart; and he found that, in backing it he had upset the can, wasting a good deal of the oil, and making the cart very greasy.

He put things right as well as he could, but he had now to go slowly, and take back the cart in sadness. It was late before he got to the lodge, and old Master Towell, who had been much alarmed at Phil's long stay, and doubtful if he had been right in trusting him to go into Mudford, was by this time very cross, and growled out, "Well, I suppose you know what you have been about all this time, for it is more than I do. The oil all over the cart! You have been rattling that old pony off his legs, I'll warrant, to make up the time you were idling in Mudford."

Phil had been going to tell Towell about the dog-cart and his stopping the horse, but now he got very angry, and did not think Towell would believe him; so he made no answer, but began to take the pony out of the cart. As he led him away, Towell called out to him to come back and unload the potatoes. Phil did not turn or speak, but went to the stable, cleaned down the pony, gave him a friendly pat, and then took him to the field and turned him in. Having then shut the gate, and watched the pony walk off and begin to eat, he turned away and went home without going back to the lodge.

There was a footpath that made a short cut across the fields from the lane up to Mrs.

Smith's cottage, and at the end of it, very near the garden paling, there was a stile, which had a pleasant outlook over the fields, with a glimpse of the high road in the distance. It caught the last rays of the evening sun, so there Annie would sometimes take her work and sit while the light lasted; and there she was now sitting as Phil came slowly up the path. She was glad to see him coming, for she always liked to hear the news from any one who had been to Mudford; and then she had some news of her own to tell.

Half an hour before, Phil would have been quite ready to tell his adventures; but since his bad reception by Towell he was in a very sullen mood. He felt himself very ill-used, and not inclined to forgive; so he answered Annie's questions about his grandmother rather shortly, and then said no more, standing moodily by the stile trimming a stick that he had cut from the hedge.

Then Annie told her news. While Phil was away, Lady Townshend had come to the cottage, "not Mrs. Dickers," said Annie, "but Lady Townshend, her own self. She sat and talked a long while. She had heard all about Jack before, but she wished to hear it from Mrs. Smith herself. She said that she remembered our coming to the Hall, Jack and

me, and how Jack spoke out so honest. When she saw that talking of Jack grieved mother, she spoke to me, and asked if I was good at my needle, and if mother would like me to come and help the nurse with the children. And she spoke about you too, Phil, and was glad when mother said you worked with Master Towell."

As she said these last words, Phil looked so odd that she wondered what was the matter.

"It is lucky for them," he said, "that they have got that little chap, with his curls, safe back to his nursery without any bones broken."

Then he told Annie of his drive home from Mudford, and of the runaway horse, and how the groom and the landlady had turned against him. "And now," he added, "they will be going and telling every one it was my fault, when, if it had not been for me, there would have been a precious smash. I was pretty well frightened when I saw that horse close upon me. I did not think I could have got the cart out of the way, and that horse coming at such a pace."

Annie was full of indignation with the groom for having got down to drink the ale, and for having been so unjust to Phil, and she thought it was very brave and clever of him

to stop the horse. "I suppose," she said, "it was that Thomas Jones who came down with them from London. I saw him at church—such a grand young man! and I know Mrs. Dickers don't think much of him."

Annie now got down from the stile and went towards the house, and Phil jumped over and followed her still working at his stick. She asked him what it was for; and he said in reply, "A fellow wants a good strong stick when he is travelling." When she said, "But you are not travelling;" he answered, "I may be. I saw one of my mates to-day, and he asked me to go out to sea with him."

"But you said you did not care for those you had been with before,—that they were a bad lot."

"I shall never do any good ashore," he said; "and you should be glad if I went back with my old mates, for it is the best chance of your ever hearing what has become of Jack and my dog. I would give something to get him back."

"I believe you think more of your dog than of Jack," Annie said pettishly. "If it was not for the dog, we should not have lost Jack. I would rather have a dear little puss that does no harm to any one."

While she was speaking, they had gone into

the garden, where the little black kitten had come to meet her, and was playing round her, —jumping first from the hedge on to her head, and then springing from one thing to another till she lighted on Phil's shoulder.

"Cats are stupid beasts," he said; "they care for every one just alike. They are like girls, who will be friends with any one who will play the fool with them." But he stroked the kitten as he put it down.

"Cats are clever enough to tell secrets," Annie said,—"secrets about bad boys."

Phil looked up quickly. "What do you mean?" he said. Annie ran into the house, and came back with her work-bag in her hand.

"This was Tib's secret," she said, pulling out the little red sock. "It was tangled in her paw when I took her down from the roof at Oldcot, and you know what it told me."

Phil looked very much ashamed. So they had known! "Did you know this all the time I have been here? and did your mother know it too?" he asked, after a pause.

"We both knew it; but mother told me I should forgive you, and that you would do better now you are older. I ought not to have told you, only you made me angry talking about going away, and laughing at Tib."

"You had better give it to me then," Phil said, "and then you will not remember it; and I shall bring back the sock some day, and mayhap, something besides."

Annie had poked her fingers into the sock and stood looking at it. It reminded her of Jack and of their childish days, which to her seemed a long while off; but it reminded her too of all the little quarrels they had had, and of hard things she had sometimes said to Jack. Perhaps now it would remind Phil of having done what he was sorry for, and do him good. "Very well," she said; "it will make you think of finding Jack. Jack would never let me say you did it." And she rolled the sock into a ball, chucked it over to Phil, and went in.

Phil did not like to go in and see Mrs. Smith. He loitered about outside till they called him in. Annie had already told her mother that he had brought back the basket with the things sent in it for his grandmother, and how he had seen the funeral, and also of his adventure coming home.

Mrs. Smith spoke very kindly to him when he came in; and when they talked of the run-away horse, she said, "Perhaps the groom thought the woman from the field had stopped the horse, and did not know it was you, Phil."

"He must have known," Phil said; "for he saw me at the horse's head, and the woman lifting down the child. He *must* have seen that."

But Phil did not say much; he did not know how to tell of his quarrel with Towell, and of the way in which he had left him. At last, when bedtime come, he lingered behind Annie; and when she was gone, he stopped Mrs. Smith, and said, "I shall have to go off to sea, thanking you for all your kindness. I have broke off with the old gentleman there; he was angry, and I was angry, and I took French leave, and left the work, and came away; and I cannot go back."

By degrees Mrs. Smith got all the particulars of the quarrel, and heard how he had seen Parker, and had the chance of going with him. He did not tell on what sort of business Parker wanted him, but only said that he should go into Mudford next day, and that if he did not find Parker, he would go down to the port and try to hear of something. He seemed determined on going. "I shall never do any good on shore," he said; and she could only get him to promise that if he did not find anything to do, he would come back again.

The next day he took the stick he had cut,

put the red sock in his pocket, and was off in the early morning with a heavy heart.

Mrs. Smith was very sorry about Phil, but she was vexed that he had been so hasty, and behaved ill to the old gardener, who had taken him to please her. So she went across to the lodge as soon as she could, to speak to Master Towell, and make what excuse she could for Phil; but she did not get there till the evening of the next day. Meanwhile Mrs. Towell had heard from the Hall some account of Phil's adventure on the road from Mudford, though not at all a true one. Both she and her husband therefore were very hot against Phil, and so were not disposed to listen to Mrs. Smith's story; she was too good by half to "that boy," they said, and they were right glad she was rid of him.

The servants at the Hall had, as Phil expected, given a false history of the running away. The nurse and groom, afraid of being blamed for having let the little boy go, tried to keep the whole thing quiet; but, as it could not be altogether concealed, they made up a story about the horse having been frightened by Phil and his "racketing cart," and of the groom having got down to lead the horse by it. Every one was charged to say nothing about it to "her Ladyship," as she would be frightened.

The fact that Phil, or "that smuggler's boy," as the servants called him, had left the lodge suddenly, made this story seem the more probable; and perhaps the truth would never have come out, had not Annie gone up on the same day to begin her trial as nursery-maid at the Hall. She felt rather shy, and was a little afraid of the nurse, but she knew she had a kind friend in Mrs. Dickers, whom she had known so long. She was delighted moreover with the children, and they soon made friends with her.

When she was sent down to have her dinner, she heard the servants talking of Sir Charles who was expected home that evening; and one of them said, in a mysterious way, that it was a pity he had not stayed away till Master Charley had forgotten his drive to Mudford; for, if nurse did not take care, the young master would be chattering away about it to his papa, and nurse and Thomas, the groom, would be in a nice scrape.

In the afternoon the nurse sent the children out with Annie. They were to play about in the garden, while she sat near them on a bench and worked. The children were playing at horses, and ran up to her.

"Wo, ho! Whisker," said little Charley, drawing up by the bench. "Lily, you see is

Whisker," he said, "and I am Thomas; but I shall not let Whisker go too fast; he must not gallop. Did you hear how I went with Thomas to Mudford? and I drove Whisker my own self; Thomas was only holding the reins a very little."

"Did you indeed?" said Annie.

"And do you know what happened to me?" he went on. "Should you like to hear? I will tell you;" and the child sat down by Annie on the bench, and gave a pretty clear account of the drive back, and of the horse setting off.

"While Thomas drank his glass of ale and held the reins, I took the whip and meant to give a little flick for fun, just to see if he would go on. But it tumbled out of my hand, it was so heavy. You cannot think how heavy it was; and Whisker gave a toss, just like Lily tosses when I drive her, and went off quick."

When he came to the end, he said, "The woman who ran out of the field let all the turnips tumble out of her blue apron; and then the boy told her to take me, and she jumped me down, while he stood stroking Whisker. Nurse says that Thomas stopped Whisker; but Thomas could not, because he was not there,—and nurse was not there; so she could not tell, could she? I was

not afraid, at least not much. Papa says boys must not be afraid. I might tell papa that I tried not to be afraid; might I not?"

Annie said, "Your papa is coming to-night, Master Townshend; so you can tell him then."

"Nurse says that papa will be angry if he knows that I went with Thomas, and will whip me. So I am not to tell him," said the child; but, after a minute's thought, he went on: "But that is not what mamma said. My mamma is dead, you know; that is why Lily and I are all in black. Lily cried when she had her black frock, because mamma was buried; but she has forgotten now, she is so little. But I am bigger; I am five, you know, and I don't forget. And mamma told me that I must take care of Lily, because I am a man; and that I must always tell the truth, quite exactly, and tell papa everything when she was not here; she told me so several times. Mamma is gone to heaven."

When Annie was coming to the Hall, her mother had talked to her about setting the children a good example; above all, in telling the truth in little things as well as great ones, and never teaching them to hide things from their nurse or their grandmamma; and now, as she looked at the open-hearted child, and saw that the nurse was trying to teach him deceit,

she felt quite shocked. He stood silent for a minute or two, as if speaking of his mother had brought back his grief, and then he ran away to his little sister who called to him.

The nurse was very busy after the children's tea, getting them ready to go down to see their papa: but they were scarcely dressed when the carriage wheels were heard. Sir Charles was soon in the nursery with his children on his knee, though he had to wait till Lily's sash was tied to take her down with him to the drawing room, where he had left his mother. Annie saw that the children were quite at their ease with him, and that there was not much fear that the nurse would prevent their talking openly to him.

The next morning, when they were on the terrace with Annie, Sir Charles came out to them and told his little boy he might come with him to the stables to look at the horses, at which Charley was delighted. "And Lily," he said to his papa, "may stay with Annie. This is Annie, papa; she is come to help take care of us, and we like her very much. Lily likes her; don't you, Lily? She does not bother Lily about her frocks, and tumble her hair like nurse does."

Annie blushed at being brought forward, and took Lily's hand.

Sir Charles laughed good-naturedly, and said, "I dare say we shall all like Annie, and I hope she will like you, if you do not give her too much trouble; so I will take you off now, and we shall leave Lily with her."

Of course it was not long before little Charley told his papa the history of Whisker and the drive to Mudford. It turned out, too, that the groom had been desired not to drive Whisker, who was a young horse, in the dog-cart. The whole affair thus came to be inquired into, and Lady Townshend finding that the groom's account and the child's did not at all agree, began to be afraid there was something wrong. Annie was in the room when Lady Townshend questioned the nurse on the subject; and she heard the nurse say how Phil's cart had done all the mischief; and how Master Townshend might have been killed if the groom had not stopped the horse; and what a good thing it was that that wicked boy, whom the widow Smith had taken up, was gone off, and poor old Master Towell was rid of him.

Annie felt very indignant and longed to speak, but she was afraid before the nurse; so she thought the best way was to tell Mrs. Dickers, for she could not bear to stand by and let Lady Townshend be so deceived.

In this way the whole truth came out at last.

Mrs. Dickers had already seen enough to wish Lady Townshend should know that the nurse was not to be trusted. Sir Charles, moreover, was not blinded by the groom's excuses, but that he might be quite sure that Annie's story was the true one, he went to Mrs. Smith, and from her he learnt the name of the woman who came out of the field and had seen the whole affair. He did not rest till he saw the woman, who gave the same account as Annie and the little boy.

Mrs. Smith talked of Phil to Sir Charles, who thus felt interested for him, and sorry that he should have been allowed to go away in disgrace, when he ought to have been rewarded for his courage and presence of mind in stopping the horse, and for saving the life of his child.

"The boy would make a good sailor," he said.

"That's what he would like to be, sir," Mrs. Smith answered; "but I am afraid he has got amongst the wrong sort."

She still hoped, however, he might return, and was to let Sir Charles know if he did. But a few days later, as Mrs. Smith was walking in on Sunday to church at Little Mudford, she was stopped by the woman at the turnpike near the village, who told her that a man with a fish-cart from Mudford had left a message

for Mrs. Smith, to be given her by the first chance, to say that Philip Redstone sent his duty to her, and that he had got a job down the coast, and that she was not to wish for him back, or trouble to think on him.

Mrs. Smith was very sorry, and went sadly on to church; but she did think on poor Phil, and remembered him, with her own boy, in her prayers.

CHAPTER V.

WHEN Jack began his new life at the French farm, he felt quite bewildered; scarcely sure that he had not been dead and buried, and had waked up again in another world. The two days that had passed since he left home seemed like years. The old people could only make him understand by signs, and as for speaking to them, he might as well have been dumb. His only comfort was Toto, who never left him. He was a gentle little dog, and seemed to feel as strange as Jack did.

Mother Bodin was rather crabbed, and grumbled at him sometimes, as he could tell by her voice and look; but the old grandfather took his part, and would show him what he was to do, without getting impatient, when Jack could not understand him. And when the great dog growled at Toto, and would not let him share his sheepskin by the hearth, grandfather Bodin went and found a little old cushion and laid it down for Toto; and then he jumped

on it, and curled himself up, wagging his tail to thank the old man. Jack was very much pleased.

The days went by heavily. They were all very much alike. If there was any stir in the villages or town down below, it did not come up to Hericourt, as the old house was called.

Jack had to be up very early to turn out the fowls, and drive the turkeys up into the stubble, and help Grandmother Bodin to feed the pigs and the poultry. He liked scattering the grain when the ducks and chickens all came round, and the pigeons circling round the great high dovecot in the middle of the court, would light down amongst the others, sometimes perching on Mother Bodin's head, and sometimes, as they got to know him, on Jack's hand. He did not like so well having to help in the house, and be taught to wash and scrub and do what he thought was girls' work, and cut up the vegetables for the soup, which was their chief food. There was food besides to cut for the cattle, who were not in the field like ours, but shut up in their stalls; and when other work was done, the old man would teach Jack to twist straw ropes and make mats.

One day, Fanchon, who had brought Jack from Dieppe, came up to see her parents, and there was a great consultation between the

three. Jack stood dolefully looking on, wondering whether he was to be sent away somewhere else, and wishing he might get down to the sea, and so have a chance of getting away. By degrees he made out that they were talking about his clothes. Fanchon had a bundle under her arm, which she unrolled, and it turned out to be a blouse or smock frock of blue cotton, such as Jack saw worn by French peasants and boys; there was also a red night-cap and a pair of wooden shoes. They motioned to him to take his jacket off and put on the blouse, which he did, taking out Annie's little Bible from the pocket. Fanchon saw he was afraid that the jacket was going to be taken from him, but she seized him by the arm, and, dragging him to a large press, she threw open the door and laid the jacket on the shelf, with expressive signs that it was safe; then she showed him the wooden shoes, and pointed to his boots, clearly wishing him to take them off. Jack would have liked to object; he by no means admired the wooden shoes; he knew that the old people wore them, and even Fanchon when at her work; he thought them like great sauce-boats, and wondered how they shuffled along in them; but it was no good to try to explain that he did not like them. So he unlaced his boots; Fanchon then twitched

FANCHON BRINGS A FRENCH SUIT FOR JACK.

(*See page* 110.)

his socks off, and laid them together with the jacket, while Jack got into the wooden shoes. She then stuck the red cap on his head and clapped him on the shoulder, saying, "Brave, bien." They then left him to himself.

He got away with Toto, and went up to the great dreary room where he slept, and sat down on his bed. It was only a mattress, with a bit of sacking for covering, laid down in one corner of the room, which was nearly filled with all sorts of lumber. Old furniture and broken farm-tools were piled up, to make a home for rats and spiders, among heaps of mangold and onions and dry pumpkins and seeds of all sorts.

There he sat down, and kicking off the wooden shoes, had a good cry. He felt as if he should never get home, never see his mother or Annie again. A good cry, like a thunderstorm, clears the air. Presently Jack had brighter thoughts; he felt Toto give his hand a lick, and he took him up. He had one friend at least; and what was Toto about? He had got hold of Annie's Bible; but he had not hurt it, he was only sniffing at it. Jack then began to remember that he had another friend in his Bible. He had not said his prayers since he came, he had felt so lost. He now looked again at Annie's text, and wondered if

he should know when Sunday came. He had quite lost the day of the week. He had not seen the old people make any difference. At all events, there would be no going to church for him; so he resolved he would try to read the Bible and say his prayers every day.

Then he looked about for a place to put his Bible in, but determined at length to carry it in a nice large pocket he found in his blouse; for both rats and mice were plentiful in the room, and would be likely enough to gnaw and spoil it, if not prevented.

He now heard Mother Bodin's shrill voice calling, Shack! Shack! and he ran down in better heart. Fanchon wanted him to go down with her to Appeville, carrying a sack. It was put on a kind of open basket, like the back and seat of a chair, fastened by cords over his shoulders. As he was not used to carrying things in this way, nor to the wooden shoes, he stumbled many times as he went down the hill; but as Fanchon was carrying a great load on her head, she did not look round; so Jack got on as well as he could till they reached the village. There the children began to laugh at his clumsiness, and two or three boys ran after him mimicking his awkward trot. Jack thought that, if he were but clear of his sack, he would soon teach them to laugh at him!

At Fanchon's cottage the eldest daughter came out. Seeing the little crowd of tormentors, she clapped her hands and seized a pail of water, telling them to be off; so to escape a ducking they ran away. Then she tried to make Jack start on his way back before they came again. He was very ready to be gone, and taking his wooden shoes in his hand, he set off up the hill, all the quicker that one of the boys had thrown some walnut shells at Toto, and Jack was in alarm lest they should hunt him or try to take him. After this he was quite content to stay up at Hericourt. At first some of the bigger children would come up to see the strange English boy and his dog; but as Jack could not speak to them, he got out of the way, and if Mother Bodin saw them, she would scream out, and throw a broom or a basket at them, and so they soon gave up coming.

It was autumn when Jack came to Hericourt. The weather soon grew cold and stormy, and the days began to shorten. He was often wet and weary with working about on the cold clayey ground, or up to his knees in the wet litter. He got barely enough to eat, and though he was used to poor fare at home, this was poorer. The old people were not unkind to him, but they were dull and silent, and

pinched with cold when winter set in. Sometimes the old woman cried, and would show Jack some clothes which had been her sons',—two, three sons, as she showed him on her fingers, who had gone to the wars. Jack did not make out if any of them had been killed, but he thought so, and that made him think of his mother left without her boy. He therefore tried to be good to Mother Bodin, and do all he could for her.

One day an event happened which made Jack get some new acquaintances. He was surprised in the morning to find Mother Bodin making cakes. She had some raisins and flour and lard, and when the cakes were baked, they were stuck all over with almonds. She made sugar-drops too with brown sugar and butter, and brought out a jar of preserved apples,—there was clearly going to be a feast. Almost before the preparations were finished, a large party were seen coming up the hill. There was Annette with her two younger sisters, and another girl carrying the baby, Fanchon's youngest, and leading a little boy. Annette had a basket on her arm, and Marie, the second girl, carried a large nosegay. The frost had cut the flowers, so the roses in the nosegay were of paper—pink, yellow and blue—tied up with a bunch of evergreens. It was Grand-

mother Bodin's birthday, and her grandchildren came up to bring her a birthday present and their good wishes. They all kissed her; and Marie then presented the nosegay, and ran to find a jug in which to set it in the middle of the table. Annette set to work to help her grandmother in getting ready the dinner; while Jack was sent for water, and had to make himself generally useful.

The dinner was not to be eaten till near dark, when Fanchon and Pierrot himself made their appearance. Pierrot was very friendly with Jack, and evidently had heard a good character of him; but the sight of him made Jack think of home, and feel very lonely amongst them all, as they chattered round him; but he nevertheless came in for his share of the good things, and, best of all, he got some cake for Toto.

Toto, like his master, had found Hericourt rather dull; but he had not forgotten his accomplishments,—and now, enlivened by the prospect of gingerbread, he not only sat up and begged, but walked on his hind legs; and when Marie held out a cake to him, he followed her round the table.

The children were delighted, and then Jack, armed with a piece of gingerbread, made him jump through his arm, and give a paw, and bark at the cat, and lie down and die. Never

was dog more admired. Fanchon laughed till she cried.

After this it became an amusement to Jack to try to get Toto to remember his tricks. He had saved a little store of gingerbread with which to give him his reward; and he cut a bit of wood into the shape of a pipe; and made him a wooden musket, that he might present arms; but he could not remember all the words or signs Phil had used, and wished he had observed them more carefully.

When his cake was pretty nearly at an end, a fresh supply arrived unexpectedly, and also some little folks who were never tired of playing with Toto. These were Marie and her little sister Louise, who were sent up to stay at Hericourt. Louise had been ailing, and she was sent to be with her grandmother, and live on milk and whey; and Marie was to take care of her. Marie was somewhat younger than Jack, but not near so tall as Annie, yet somehow she reminded him of his sister.

He soon made friends with Louise, for he was always ready to give her a ride on his back, or to dress up Toto with Marie's blue muffetees, with his red cap on his head and his pipe in his mouth. The children were very happy whenever Jack had time to play with them; and he soon began to make out a great deal

of what they said, and to speak in French to them himself, almost without knowing it. Marie was quick and merry, and would laugh at Jack's blunders, as Annie would have done; but she could be grave and steady too about her work.

Jack was sorry when the month they came for was ended, and they went away. There was snow on the ground then, and it was very cold and dreary; and Jack's greatest treat was to go down now and then on a message to Appeville, and play with the children and Toto. The village boys had got used to see him now, and Jack had got used to the wooden shoes, so they no longer laughed at him.

One evening when Jack was sent down to Appeville with a message to Fanchon, she was not at home, and was not to be in for some time, so he had to wait till she came from market. No one was at home but Annette, and she was busy washing; so he thought he would walk up to the church and get out of the way of the village children. He took a path across a field which led him to the churchyard gate, and he went in. There were many graves, each with a little iron cross at the head of it. Many were planted round with rose-bushes: on some newly-plucked flowers had been laid; on others the withered

garlands that hung on the crosses had not been replaced by fresh ones.

As Jack was looking about, he was stopped as he turned round the corner of the church, by coming on an old man kneeling by one of the graves. A little basket stood by him in which he brought some flowers, for there was a bunch of fresh snowdrops at the foot of the cross, and also some heart's-ease which he seemed to have just planted. He had a string of beads in his hands, and knelt for some moments without seeing Jack. He wore a faded uniform, and looked like an old soldier; his head was bare, showing his close-cut grey hair; and when he got up, Jack saw that he was lame. He looked very grave, but so gentle that Jack was glad when he turned and spoke to him, and to his surprise, spoke in English.

"Ah ha," he said, "you de Inglis boy. Boy with Peter Bodin, and this de leetle dog." He stooped to stroke Toto; and he probably was used to dogs, for Toto allowed himself to be patted, and jumped up on the old man. Jack was so glad to find some one who could speak English, that he scarcely knew what to say first. The old man went on,—

"They tell me of you and of de leetle dog. They say, Come and speak with de poor boy; he has no French. But," and he shrugged his

shoulders, "in winter I am too bad, and to Hericourt is long. Only de young may run about."

While he was speaking, he took up his basket and a large stick on which he leant, and said he would show Jack where he lived, that he might come and see him; adding, "But you do often find me here, where lie my wife and children; only not those who died in battle."

He now turned and left the churchyard, and led the way along a narrow path to a little cottage in which he lived, not much bigger than a summer-house. He seemed to live quite alone in his cabin, as he called it; there was but one little room, into which he took Jack; outside the door a little open shed had been added that served as a washhouse and workshop, for in it there was a lathe on which the old soldier turned many ingenious little boxes and ornamental handles, and such small wares; and here he sat and smoked his pipe, and looked over the village to the far-off sea.

In front of this was a little strip of garden, where grew the heart's-eases and a few early spring flowers; a cage with a starling hung from the roof. He made Jack sit down on a wooden bench and did so himself, giving a groan or two as he laid aside his hat and

stick. Then he addressed Jack, "Now, say, tell me of your coming. Are they dead, your parents, or did you fly from them?" It took a good while to get out all Jack's history; he did not know where to begin, and the old man did not always make out what he said at first; but at last, when he had heard all, he said, after a pause,—

"You cannot now go home; it is not possible now for that it is war. Ah! that war, it makes much trouble. I have lost in it two sons on the battle-field, and one, the youngest, came back only to die. It broke the heart of their mother when she lost her boys. Now your dear mother grieves for you,—the poor mothers, they have so many tears. But it is the will of the good God, and we must make no moaning. And now, go back to Grandmother Bodin and her good husband, and serve them well; and hope for the good time when you may again see your own country; and, when you please, come here and chat with the old man who is alone."

When Jack got back to the village, he was eager to ask about his new acquaintance. He could speak a little French now, but Fanchon could not understand him, and turned him over to Annette and Marie, who, between English and French, could make out what he

meant. They said it was the old soldier, Uncle Joseph. He could speak English well, having been with English people in ships, in prison, and in distant lands. "He was sick," Marie said, "and they were good to him; he likes them. He has lost all his loved ones, all but one who is still away with the emperor. Every day you see him by those graves, praying to the good God. Yes; he will like to talk English to you, and he will be good to Toto; Toto will cheer him, for he loves dogs, and is good to all living creatures. Did you see his bird? That bird talks; he talks and knows, oh, more than I do. And then there is his white mice, and the tame toad,—they are charming."

Here Annette broke in. "Are you two for ever chattering? There is mother calling for Marie, and Shack should be at Hericourt long since." And she pretended to box Jack's ears, and drive him away with a broom she had in her hand.

Jack's acquaintance with the old soldier was a new life to him. He thought of nothing now but when he could next go and see him; but this was not always easy, for mother Bodin was fond of calling him if he was out of the way even for a few minutes, and he never could explain anything to her; so his

only chance was to ask the grandfather for leave, and get off before she missed him, submitting to be scolded when he came back. At first he stopped at Pierrot's cottage and got Marie to go with him, for he was shy of going alone; and Marie willingly agreed to go, and would take Louise, for "Uncle Joseph" loved little ones. He had had a little daughter once, but she was in heaven now, and he loved all children for her sake. The little party were kindly welcomed by the old soldier. Toto was now formally introduced to his notice by Marie; his tricks were shown, and Jack found to his great delight that Uncle Joseph knew a great deal more about dog's tricks than he did; and Toto, at once feeling that he was before a master of his art, obeyed his signs and displayed new accomplishments. Not only did he lie down and die, but he shut his eyes, allowed himself to be called by his name, and to be hung up by his hind legs without showing any sign of life; even when Jack whistled to him he did not stir an eyelash, till Uncle Joseph said, "The guard's coming." Then he would jump up and flee, howling, coming back after a moment with a flourish to receive a lump of sugar, which the old soldier seemed always to have in his pocket.

Then the starling showed off in his turn. The white mice too were brought out, and the toad, which Jack would have liked to make friends with; but as Louise did not like it and began to cry, the toad was replaced in his hole.

After this visit, Jack lost his shyness and no longer minded going alone; indeed, he liked best to be by himself with Uncle Joseph; for Joseph liked to talk English, and Jack loved to listen to his stories of the wars he had been in, and the countries he had seen. On the wall of his cabin he had a coloured print of the Emperor Napoleon on his white horse; and he had the bullet which had been taken out of his leg after some battle with a hard name, that Jack could not remember. He liked to tell of the brave generals he had fought under, and of his old comrades; but he would end with a sigh, and say, "Fallen, fallen so many; it is good to die in battle if the soul is ready. The good God will have mercy on the soldier; but it is too much war; so long! France must have rest; only boys are left to fight at last." Jack's visits could only be few and far between; sometimes he stayed too long, and then he was in disgrace with the old people and did not like to ask to go again. But presently he got more liberty, for

mother Bodin became so ill that either Fanchon or Annette had to be constantly at the farm; and Jack was often sent down on messages, and kept at Appeville to do jobs for Fanchon, which he liked much better than being always at Hericourt. Marie too was pleased to have Jack's company sometimes. "Now," she said, "Mr. Shack, you will not pass our door and go without me to Uncle Joseph. You go and talk English with him, and you will not learn to speak French. Fie, then; you do not want me at the cabin. Perhaps I shall not let you go."

"You can come too," Jack said rather ungallantly; "but I like to hear him talk English, and when you are there, he talks only French."

Marie gave a little pout, and said, "I do not go, if you do not want me." But she went and scolded Uncle Joseph,—"her Joseph," as she called him, for talking English to Shack; then she sat down on a low stool, leaning against Joseph's knee, and taking out her knitting, said, "Tell him your stories, then. I too will learn English." "Stories of what? my daughter," said Uncle Joseph, stroking her head. "Not of fighting? The old soldiers' tales of battles are not for young maidens. They are terrible and sad." Marie

declared that she liked sad tales, even if they made her cry.

Uncle Joseph then told them of the troubles in his younger days, when the people rose against the king and queen, and attacked them in their palace, and how he had been among those who defended them. He told them how they fled and were taken prisoners, and at last died on the scaffold, and how bravely the beautiful queen met her death. "The people were mad," he said. "They had been trodden down by the nobles so many years, that when at length they got the power, they were like wild beasts let loose. It was very wrong. The king was good, and loved his people, but he had bad advisers. Since then it has been nothing but fighting. War, war; always war."

"Now you will make me cry," Marie said. "You speak so sadly, and make me think of my brother who is in the war, and of Annette's lover. When he went she was broken-hearted; she still cries when she speaks of him. But she will see him soon, his regiment is on its way somewhere,—to Spain, I think. They pass near here, and he will have leave and come to see us."

Then the old soldier and Marie talked about the regiment in which young Francis Leclerc,

Annette's lover, served; and about other men from Appeville, who were with the army, one or two of whom would come with Francis. Marie then started up and said, "We must go, else Annette will say we stay too long."

The visit of young Leclerc was a great event, not only to Annette, but to all the village. He brought news of absent sons and brothers, and also of the war, of which generally only uncertain rumours reached Appeville. In Fanchon's house nothing else was talked of. Fortunately, the grandmother was better, and so Annette could go home again. Some days passed before Jack saw or heard anything from the village. At length Marie and the children were sent up to ask for news of their grandmother. They brought some sweet things which Francis had given them, and which they were to share with Jack, and an especial portion of gingerbread for Toto. Marie wished Jack to see Francis. She described his gay uniform, and how grand, how terrible he looked with his sabre and his spurs.

Next week there was to be a fête at Lonville, a village not far from Hericourt, and they were to go. Marie did not yet know if she could go; she hoped, but was not sure. She wished Shack should see it, and was

eloquent in describing its glories. The trees would be hung with lamps of all colours—red and blue and yellow; there would be a merry-go-round, and above all, dancing. "But you say you do not care for dancing; that English boys do not dance. What a pity! Francis dances beautifully; he will dance with Annette. And I shall dance, if I may only go."

Marie could not stay long, and Jack thought he did not much care. As for the fête, he would much rather go and see Uncle Joseph; but there seemed no chance of that. Mother Bodin was better now, and would come and sit out in the sun; and she and grandfather trusted to Jack for everything. It pleased Jack, when he tried to serve them, to see that they were glad to have him; and when they would say, now and then, it was well that God had sent them this good lad to comfort them.

"It is the fête at Lonville to-day," said Mother Bodin one day. "I think they will come here on their way. They have not yet brought Francis to see us. Annette is a good girl, and she will not forget to show proper respect to her grandfather."

Nor was she mistaken, for in the afternoon, when Jack was cleaning out the cowhouse, he heard merry voices in the court, and looking

out, saw a gay party coming in. Annette looked very nice in her holiday dress, with large white sleeves and red bodice, and with some fresh flowers prettily fixed among her dark hair. The young soldier, too, looked very martial in his hussar's uniform. Fanchon also was with them and Marie; the rest of the party had gone on, not wishing to disturb the old couple with too many visitors.

Jack did not go out to them. He was all over straw and mud, and he felt rather sore. He did not care for them or their fêtes. But presently Marie came running out to call him in. Grandmother wanted him, and "they are having supper," she said, "and you must come. Oh! Shack, I am going; and Francis has been giving sugar to Toto, and I want you to come and show his tricks. He has been begging, but I cannot make him dance. Come; never mind the straw; see, I have taken half off already. Yes, you can wash your hands; come to the well and see yourself in the bucket; it makes a very good looking-glass." And so, helped by Marie, Jack smartened himself up as well as he could, and went in at all events with clean hands.

Fanchon and Annette scolded him for not coming to see them; he thought the young soldier looked scornfully at him and wished to

fight him; but he stroked Toto, and said good humouredly, "He catches the cake, and he begs for it; but more he will not do without his master, in spite of Marie's flatteries." Toto then displayed his talents, and Francis told of wonderful dogs that he had known, and tricks that you could not have believed possible unless you saw them; but he praised Toto, and Jack was proud of him. Marie flitted about like a butterfly, full of delight that she was on her way to the fête, and in much fear lest they should be late.

Jack stood at the gate and watched them as they went away laughing and talking. "What did he care for their fêtes?" he said to himself. "He did not want to dance; Marie was right enough there." But he felt very lonely as he turned to go back to his work. He would like to take Toto and get away from it all, and wander about till he could find his way home; but he did not know how to set about it.

But Marie, though so happy at the fête, could think of other people too; and when she came to Hericourt a few days later, after she told Jack how gay the dancing had been, how Francis had danced with her himself, and how well Annette and he looked when they danced together; she got quite grave, and said, "But

since then I have heard things that trouble me; they are about you, and I must tell you."

It seemed that Marie had heard Francis talking with her father and mother about Jack, and that he wanted them to send him away to some place where boys are trained to be soldiers or sailors,—Marie was not quite sure which. He said that grandfather and grandmother could not stay much longer at Hericourt, and that, if they came down to Appeville, Jack would not be wanted, and that he ought to be getting his living. Marie thought that Francis did not like the old people making so much of Jack, and that he meant some day that he and Annette should live with them. Pierrot had told Francis that he had promised the English sailors to keep Jack from going back to England. They wanted him to be sent away in some ship, bound for the French colonies, that he might never get back to England, for he knew secrets about their hiding-places which no one must learn. But Pierrot found Jack useful to his parents, who liked him and had no wish to send him away. Still, he would think of it. "Then," Marie went on,—"which is the worst of all—he spoke of Toto. He said he was too good for Hericourt, where no one saw him; that he was a very clever dog, and that he would take him

away with him. The regiment would delight in him. Annette said that you would not like to part with him. 'Of course,' he replied, 'I shall give the boy some silver; but I do not suppose he dare refuse me.' When he saw that Annette was not pleased, he said no more. But I don't trust him." Here Marie embraced Toto, and said that no one should take him away.

Jack had listened with great attention to Marie's report. A few hours before, he had thought he would gladly fly from Hericourt, but now he felt he should be sorry to go,—to go again amongst strangers he knew not where. He thought he should like to see the old soldier and tell him what he had heard. Perhaps he would speak to Pierrot and turn him from the thoughts of Francis's plan. Marie at first objected to any one being told what she had said, but agreed at last that, with Uncle Joseph, it was safe.

Jack was up very early next day, having determined to get down to Appeville and pay his visit to Uncle Joseph before the time of the morning milking. He knew that the old soldier kept early hours.

When he got to the cabin he found the door locked, and no one answered his knock. The starling chattered from his cage, and Jack saw

some fresh food in his trough; the old soldier must be therefore already gone out. He thought he might have gone to the churchyard where he had first seen him. It took him but a few minutes to run down. At the graves he saw fresh flowers, and the ground had been watered, but no Joseph was there. He thought he must go back to the cabin and wait for him; but as he passed the church door, he saw that it was open, and peeped in. It was all still, and he entered. It looked very like their church at home, only there were some ornaments of tin or brass, and some pots of artificial flowers at one end. At first he thought that no one was there but himself; but turning ronnd, he saw the old soldier on his knees, praying, as he had first seen him by the grave. He did not look up or hear Jack come in; and Jack stood very still, waiting till he moved.

Jack had not been in a church since he left home; and though he generally prayed every morning, this morning he had come away in such a hurry that he had forgotten. He felt the wish to pray now; and so, kneeling down, he said the Lord's prayer and a prayer his mother had taught him, asking God to make him a good boy, and to take care of him through the day; to this he always added now that God would let him get safe home to his mother

and sister. After that he opened his Bible and read the 27th Psalm, which he had often heard his mother read.

Just as he had finished, Joseph got up, and Jack put away his Bible quietly, that he might not seem to be making a show. But the old soldier who had seen him on his knees, had no such thought. He looked very kind and peaceful, and said, "Ah! you too come here. It is good, my son, to pray in the early day, and to seek the house of the Lord. The good God is everywhere, but we do not always remember it. And what brings you to me so early? Some trouble? Have you got wrong with the old people? Some boy's tricks? Eh?" and he gave Jack's ear a friendly pinch.

Jack told his story, to which Joseph listened gravely. He then said, "I would not have you fear. There is much talking before anything is done. Pierrot goes to his fishing, and before he comes again, Francis will be away. Pierrot has his boat to think of, and he is content that you are with his parents, and that all will go as before. For the rest, I think much of your getting home, but you must take patience. This war cannot last always. They talk grandly;" he said, and shook his head,—"but the emperor has strained the country too long; things are going badly. We must wish

for a good peace, and then,—we shall see! As for the little dog, it is only talk. Francis will not offend them all by robbing you of the favourite you like so well. The little Marie thinks too much of what she hears. Girls love to make up fears."

Then the old soldier advised Jack against listening to careless talk that makes ill-will and suspicion, and bid him keep to himself and go quietly on in the right way. Jack now felt comforted, and ashamed of his fears. He did not stay long, but thanked Uncle Joseph heartily, and got back to Hericourt before he was missed.

CHAPTER VI.

BUT Marie was not altogether mistaken, though at first it seemed so. Francis, finding that Annette did not like his trying to get Toto away from Jack, and that Jack was a general favourite, bethought himself of getting possession of the little dog by a trick, which would be excellent fun, besides saving him from any blame. He had not much to do at Appeville, and he went up two or three times to Hericourt and made friends with Jack and Toto; the latter being not altogether above the influence of sugar. Jack was suspicious, and hung back at first, but Francis said nothing about buying Toto, and one day remarked that Marie had told him that Jack would not sell him. Jack's suspicions were thus lulled,—the more so that Francis helped to make some hoops for Toto to jump through, and gave him a more martial air by adding a cock's feather to his red cap, and fixing a piece of tin to the end of his stick as a bayonet. He proposed too that he should be called "The Gene-

ral Toto;" and one day they went down to Appeville, where the general with his new adornments gave great delight to the children.

The time was now near when Francis was to rejoin his regiment; and one day he told Jack that he had to go down to Dieppe, and proposed that he should accompany him, and that they should take Toto and show him off there. Jack had not been down to Dieppe since his arrival, and was delighted with the proposal. Marie was willing to stay with Mother Bodin, and Francis got leave for him to go.

"You go with Francis?" Marie said. "Ah, well; they make good sport, he and his sailor friends; but see that they do not play you some trick; they love mischief."

Jack, nothing daunted, and thinking more of the fun than of the possible mischief, set off with Francis, who was soon joined by the sailor friends spoken of by Marie. They were a smart set of young fellows; and Jack felt rather small and shy amongst them, as they talked and laughed together, taking but little notice of him. They seemed not to think of the little dog as anything but an amusement, or to know how much poor Jack valued this, —his only treasure.

When they got to Dieppe, they passed on through the streets till they came out on one

of the quays, and there they stopped at a wine-shop. Francis went in and ordered some wine, and they sat down on the benches at a table outside, whilst glasses were brought out. The young men began to drink, pouring out a glass for Jack. Jack had got used to the sour wine drunk by the French peasants, so he drank his glass slowly, and then sat quietly on the corner of the bench with Toto under his arm, on which hung the little hoops and a bag with Toto's military accoutrements.

Presently one of the young men got up and left them; and soon after, Francis told Jack that now the bottle being empty, they would show off Toto, and get some money to pay for another. Three or four young men came out of the wine-shops to look on, and the children at play on the quay began to gather round. "Not too near, not too near," said Francis, and drove them back with his sheathed sabre; while Jack, kneeling down behind the table, was dressing up the General Toto.

"Now," said Francis, "is he ready? We will lay this board on two chairs, and he shall jump on it. I have the sugar; but stay,—let us put the benches so as to keep a clear space. You then make him do the exercise on his hind legs; he jumps through the hoops to me; I give him sugar; he jumps on the stage, and

you hand him his pipe, which he smokes; then the rogue falls as if dead; you take him up, pull his tail, lay him down again; no life! but the word is given, 'The guard is coming,' and he jumps down, runs to me and gets his sugar. Then they shall put money in his glass to pay the General Toto's wine bill."

Jack held Toto, talking to him a little that he might not get frightened; while Francis and his companions arranged the stage and a clear space in front for jumping through the hoops. Francis then, in a loud voice, announced that the General Toto, lately returned from his glorious victories in distant lands, would show himself in various characters to his friends at home.

The speech was attractive and drew a crowd. The servant girls came out on the doorsteps near, to see what was going to be done; and the errand boys and paper boys stopped on their way. Toto was a little shy at first, and did not like so many spectators; but by persuading them to be silent, and not come too near, and by drawing off his attention from them, he was induced to begin, and soon got courage.

Francis made an excellent showman. Jack admired his smartness, and thought his acting was as good as Toto's. When the show was

ended, Francis took a wine-glass from the table, and said, "The general must drink to your healths, and asks for something to pay the reckoning." Many hands were stretched out to put a small coin,—a penny, or a farthing or two, into the glass. Jack stood with his arm round Toto, and his eyes fixed on Francis who was setting the glass down on the table, wondering what they were to do next. He did not see that a man in the crowd had been watching him, who now rushed forward, and seizing him by the collar, called out, "Take him, take him; he is a robber; the dog is mine."

Jack looked round to Francis for help; he thought he saw him turning into the wine-shop he could not defend himself and follow him without letting go his hold of Toto; the crowd closed in, the man still crying, "Take the thief; give me my dog."

Jack holding Toto tight, tried to get to the door of the wine-shop, but some one took hold of his arm and snatched away the little dog. He could only see that this person had a sack in his hand. Poor Toto, hampered with his little coat and his sword, was too frightened to take care of himself. Jack then turned and tried to fight his way through the crowd with his fists, and get after the man; but he strug-

gled in vain. Some were trying to help him, and some to hinder; others cried, "The robber; the robber. Take him! Where is the guard?" till, in the confusion, Jack was thrown down and might have been seriously hurt, had it not been for the appearance of a tall man in a cocked hat and uniform. He was one of the town watch, who had drawn near to see what was going on. Having heard an account of what had happened from a bystander, he pushed his way amongst the people, and standing over Jack, he said, "You say he is a robber. Very well; I take him prisoner to the guard-house. Clear the way."

He set Jack on his feet, who had just sense enough to understand that he was taken prisoner; but that was better than being trampled on, and held fast by the collar, and followed by a crowd of hooting boys. He walked as best he could through the town, till his conductor stopped at the gate of the guard-house, where he turned round and told the crowd that the prisoner was safe, and they had better disperse and leave him in the hands of justice. As, however, they did not pay much attention to this advice, but continued yelling and stamping, Jack was very glad when the guard and he went in through an iron gate which closed behind them, leaving them alone in a dark stone

passage leading to the guard-room. The man then opened the door of an inner room, and after looking round to see that all was safe, he made Jack a sign to go in. He then stopped as if to consider, but only said, "Ah, well, I shall soon come again;" and went out, shutting and locking the door after him, leaving Jack alone. It was a bare room, with only a bench and a table in it; there was no light except from a window high up in the side, with strong iron bars. Jack was safe from the yelling crowd; but, now that he no longer heard their cries, he thought only of the loss of Toto. He would have rushed out through them all to try to find him, if he could but have got free.

The town guard, though he was so tall, and looked so alarming with his cocked hat and sword, was a very mild, good-natured man, with a wife and children of his own; and in seizing Jack, and carrying him off as he had done, he had merely wished to save him from the rough usage of the crowd. He saw that Jack was a simple country lad, with a good honest face, and he knew enough of the uproarious crowd round him to pay but little attention to their calling him a robber. He guessed too that some one had set them on him to carry off the dog; but as he did not explain all this, poor Jack

was left under the idea that he was taken up as a thief and was likely to be put in prison. Meanwhile the guard went home to his supper, and to talk the matter over with his wife.

It chanced that his wife's sister had come in that day from a farm near Appeville. When she heard the story, she exclaimed, "It is the English boy from Hericourt. All the family there,—the Bodins and Pierrot and Uncle Joseph, treat him as a son. He is no robber; and some one, out of mischief, must have set the boys of the town upon him. The only thing to be done now is, as soon as it is dusk, to see him safe on the road to Hericourt, and bid him not come into Dieppe again till this affair is forgotten. Go, brother-in-law," said the good-natured woman, "and bring this poor boy out of the guard-house; no doubt he is all this time in great trouble."

"Poor boy!" echoed his wife; "an honest boy, and taken up for a thief; go, and fetch him to sup with our children."

Anton was used to obey his wife's orders; so, having finished his own supper, he got up and went out. But it was not yet the hour for going to the guard-room; so he took a few minutes to smoke his pipe at the door of the coffee-house on his way. Here he found assembled a little knot of idlers, who were eagerly

discussing a subject on which every one seemed to have a different opinion.

"Here is Anton," cried one of them, "who can tell you that what I say is true;" and he turned to Anton who had sat down on the bench and was lighting his pipe. "This English boy you have taken has on him papers of importance; is it not so?"

"He is a spy," said another, "who has been concealed at Appeville, and is on the way to some port to return to England."

Anton was a silent man, and answered only by nodding and looking round, as if to say he must hear more. By degrees he made out that the news of Jack's capture had spread in the town, and had even reached the chief magistrate or prefet, as he is called in France, who had said that if the boy were English, he must inquire into the matter, and that he should be sent to Rouen or to Amiens, where there were prisons for the English who were detained during the war. He must be examined, and notes taken, and witnesses brought; but the office was now closed, so nothing could be done till to-morrow.

Anton heard all this with some alarm. If it was true, and it ended in the boy being sent off to Rouen, he would have made a host of enemies. All the Appeville people would be

against him; his sister-in-law was not a person to hold her tongue. Pierrot would make a quarrel of it, and would be backed by his brother fishermen, a rough, independent set, who often gave trouble in the port. Anton knew that he could do nothing if the matter once got into the hands of the prefet and the townspeople, who would get up a cry against the English to please the Government. Like a wise man, therefore, he determined at all events to stand well with his wife and her sister, and to lose no time in taking the boy from the guard-house. So, without finishing his pipe, he set off to release Jack.

Jack was listening anxiously for the returning footsteps of the guard; and when he heard his heavy tread, and the key turning in the lock, he was in great fear as to what was about to happen; so that when Anton rather mysteriously told him to come with him, and not to be afraid, he was much relieved, and in hopes that he should be set at liberty. He pondered, as he walked along, whether he could find his way to Appeville. He was afraid he could not without asking, and that would not be safe. When they reached Anton's house a grand consultation was held over Jack's affairs, though the good-natured women insisted that nothing could be thought of till Jack was set down

with something before him to eat, "to fortify him," as they said, "to bear his troubles. Poor boy! he was too young to be knocked about in this way."

While Anton was gone to release Jack, new light had been thrown on the cause of his misfortunes. The brother-in-law had come for his wife, and he had heard the whole story from a man who was at the wine-shop when the dog was acting. He had learned that the whole thing was plotted by Francis, and that one of his companions in disguise was the man who had seized the dog. "Francis and the young sailor," he said, "had been laughing over it; and he believed that the dog was to be concealed, or carried away, as Francis was leaving Dieppe almost immediately. They seemed to think it great fun to encourage the report that Jack was an English spy; and laughed to think what a piece of work the prefet would make about it. Young soldiers, such as Francis and his friends, were not popular in the town. They were always making some disturbance, and they defied and laughed at the town guard." Anton thus knew that he should have a nest of wasps about his ears if he tried to protect Jack, and his great wish was to get him quietly away.

Of all this history Jack could understand

but little. He told his newly found friends that he wished to go back to Hericourt, but with this they were not satisfied. At last it was decided that as Anton's brother-in-law and his wife were going home, and would pass near Appeville, they should take Jack along with them as far as the cabin of the old soldier, to whom they could explain what had happened, and who would advise with Jack. If Jack was asked for, Anton was to say where he came from, that he was known to be an honest boy, and that his friends had come and taken him away. They thought however that he must go to a distance, else the prefet would make trouble both for him and for those who had released him.

It was not yet dark, and the party were to go out of the town by a quiet back street, and to cut across into the high road when they were clear of the houses. Anton's sister-in-law mounted her donkey, her husband and Jack walked. Jack had lost his cap in the scuffle, and Anton's wife would not let him go without a straw hat belonging to one of her boys, which she declared, gave him quite a manly air; and he was only too glad to get anything to wear and to start on his way.

It was late in the evening when they reached Appeville. They avoided the village, and took

a path which went straight to the church; there the donkey was tied up, while the party went up to the cabin. The old soldier was already gone to bed, and they had to knock oftener than once before they could make him hear. At last he opened the window and put out his head. When he found who his visitors were, he bade them wait till he could open the door; then he would talk to them, and hear what brought them at so untimely an hour.

The history was soon told by Jack's conductor, but he spoke so fast that Jack could not make out half what he said. He learned however that Francis Leclerc had something to do with taking the dog, and that it was supposed he wanted to have Jack sent to the English prison, and thus to get rid of him.

When the talking ceased, Joseph turned to Jack and told him he should stay at the cabin for the night. No one should be told of his having come there, and he would consider what could be done. He would undertake not to bring any blame on either Anton or his relations. With this the countryman and his wife were satisfied. They nodded approvingly, and said that Uncle Joseph knew best; he was wise; he had seen much, and "could do—bah! —he could do anything!"

When they were gone, the old soldier shut

and bolted his door, and coming back to Jack, he sat down on his bed and put the light out. "The moon is up," he said, "and we can talk by her light. I have been thinking for you, my poor boy. I would gladly keep you with me, but I cannot now. They are right in saying you must go. It is not now Francis that we must deal with. This Prefet is a busy man; he loves to write letters and to be of consequence; he will put all the place astir about our harbouring this English boy, and we might have to let you go into his hands. I have thought of what you should do."

He then explained that he had a friend at the great seaport called the Harbour,—le Havre. He worked on the wharves there, and to this man he would send Jack, who would keep him until better times. This would be Jack's best chance of getting to England, and till that could be, he would be safe. If things got better, and he could come back to Appeville, Joseph would let him know.

Jack looked unhappy, and murmured, "My dog!"

"Ah!" the old man went on, "your mind is with the little dog! It is natural; he was so faithful a little creature; but for me to get him back will be difficult. I see not how to try. The man who took him will keep him

hid; he has perhaps already left the town, and will meet Francis, who goes from here immediately. But I will try to see Francis, and if I can get hold of the dog, I will keep him safely, or let you know."

With this Jack was obliged to be satisfied; he then asked how he should get to the harbour, and to Uncle Joseph's friend.

"A man," said Uncle Joseph in reply, "who drives a luggage van between some of the neighbouring towns and Havre, will pass on the road above Appeville early in the morning. To him I will give you in charge. No one will suspect your having been at the cabin, or your having gone in that way. You will be thought to have run off, or to have hid yourself in the town. The carrier is a cautious man,—he does not talk to every one he meets; and when you reach Havre, he will direct you where to find Jean Vertôt, my friend, whose name I will give you in writing, that he may know from whom you have come. I do not know where he lives, but the carrier will help you to find him. You had better now go to sleep. I will rouse you in time to go out and meet the carrier on the road, after he has passed by the turn to Appeville."

But Jack could not sleep. He lay down on the mattress which the old soldier had laid for

him in a corner of the little room, but he lay wide awake. The moon's light streamed in at the window, and he heard the ticking of the little clock over the fire, and thought the time would never come when he was to go. Thinking of his troubles only made him feel them the more; he thought he would not have minded anything if he had not lost Toto, and wished now he had taken Marie's warnings; but Francis had seemed so friendly! And Toto! he, poor dog! would be so frightened. Jack could have cried, only he felt so angry.

The night passed slowly, and he was half-asleep when roused. Joseph had got up and struck a light and dressed himself, and he now told Jack that it was time to go. Louis, the carrier, passed near Appeville at five o'clock, and it was now four. They would have a good bit to walk, and must be at the place in time for fear of missing. The old soldier went to his cupboard and took out a long roll of bread, which he cut in two and gave to Jack, with some slices of sausage. "Put them in your pockets," he said. "You will want to eat on the road; and take these pence. Louis will stop to breakfast, and you will want something to wash down the bread, —a drink of milk, if you can get it."

Thus provisioned, Jack again set forth,

following the old soldier, who with his lame leg, journeyed but slowly. The dawn was just breaking as they started, and by the time they reached the high road there was light enough for them to see the lumbering conveyance in which Jack was to travel, jogging slowly towards them. It was a sort of van for luggage, with a hood in front, under which sat the driver and any passengers he might pick up. There were three horses harnessed abreast, adorned with red tassels and fringes, but the harness was made only of ropes. There was no one under the hood but the driver Louis, who seemed an intimate acquaintance of Joseph. After a short explanation, he unbuttoned the leather apron and let Jack in beside him. Then the old soldier gave Jack the slip of paper, with the name of Jean Vertôt on it, and bade him not be afraid; and not forget the old man whom he might not see again. Jack shook hands most affectionately with him; Louis then cracked his whip and cried, He, heup! to his horses, and they were off.

Once in the dark corner of the driver's seat, the jogging of the van soon sent Jack to sleep, and he was only waked by its stopping at a roadside inn. The driver got out and told Jack to come if he liked. He was going to give the horses some water; and while a boy

went for it, he fed them with some thick slices of black bread, which he cut from a great loaf he took from under the seat. He then went in to get something for himself.

Meanwhile, Jack got out and sat down outside to eat his bread and sausages. There was no Toto now to look for scraps, so he put what was left back into his pocket to serve for his dinner. Then, as it was raining fast, he got back into his corner. Just as he had done so, he heard voices. A party of young men came up from behind the van and stopped at the inn door. One of the voices sounded familiar to him, and looking out, he saw that one of the speakers was the young sailor who had walked down to Dieppe with him and Francis. He drew back hastily, fearing detection, and soon after Louis came out. The young men spoke to him, and said something about going with him, as they were travelling the same road.

"Worse luck then," muttered Louis as he took up the ropes he used for reins, and got into his place by Jack, cracking his whip, and seeming in haste to be off.

"Where are they going?" said Jack, in as good French as he could muster.

The driver went on smoking, but after a little he took his pipe out of his mouth to cry, "heup!" to his horses; he then said to Jack,

"On the road one is best without company. I did not want them in my wagon, so it was well to be off; and we must not go to sleep on the road." So with another, "he, heup!" he cracked his whip and took again to his pipe.

The journey was tedious. They stopped again towards afternoon, to rest the horses and get some dinner. Jack did not want wine, so he laid out his pence on a plate of soup and some cherries, and kept what he had in his pocket for supper. When evening was closing, the carrier pointed out a place in the distance where Jack could see houses and the masts of shipping lying beyond them. "That," said he, "is the harbour."

It was dusk when they arrived, and drew up at an inn near the water-side. Havre seemed a large place, with many vessels, and many trucks of goods, and many people passing to and fro. The house they stopped at had a quantity of packages lying about the door, and attached to it a kind of wine-shop or tavern, into which the carrier went, making a sign to Jack to follow. He spoke to a lazy-looking young man who was lounging at the door, and then told Jack to sit down and wait till he came back; he must see to his horses. Jack saw some rough-looking men inside, playing at cards; he did not much care to go in,

and thought he would sooner wait outside. He sat down therefore on some timber lying near, to watch for the return of the carrier, and was looking carelessly at the passers-by. He had not sat there long when he noticed the party they had seen at the inn in the morning coming up. They had apparently got a lift on a country cart, for they were sitting on the top of a load of hay, and got down in front of the tavern. Jack was in great alarm lest they should recognise him; but to his intense relief they went into the tavern, and he had time to move away. Seeing a doorway just by opening into a sort of wood-shed, he took his stand just inside. In a few minutes he saw the young sailor come out with a pipe in his mouth, and stand talking to some of his companions. This made Jack close the door and get behind it, so that he could just see through a chink and be ready to take the first opportunity of getting away. As he stood and watched and listened, a well-known sound caught his ear; it was the scratch of a little paw against the door. His heart jumped into his mouth; he opened the door a little way very gently, and in a moment Toto sprung into his arms, and placing his paws on his shoulders, was licking his face, whining for joy.

"O Toto, Toto," whispered Jack, "you

must not let them hear you, or they will take you from me."

Poor Toto shook all over. He had a bit of string round his neck, and had almost torn his skin through in trying to break it; he had on the remains of his soldier's coat, but his cocked hat was gone.

Jack felt that half his troubles were over now that he had got back his faithful pet; still he was puzzled what to do. He could not speak to Louis without the risk of being seen; and if he stayed near the inn, and the dog was missed, he might soon be discovered. He determined, therefore, as soon as he could to slip away, and if possible, conceal himself somewhere for the night. Next day he would set about finding Joseph's friend Jean Vertôt.

It was not long before the party outside the door were joined by some new comers, and they all went in together. No sooner were they safe inside, than Jack slipped out, hiding Toto under the loose sleeve of his blouse. He took the first turning which led from the quay into the town, and went on for some distance down a long narrow street, which brought him out on the market-place. The stalls and sheds were now empty, and there was no one about; so here he thought he might pass the night without any fear of being found. In an out-of-

the-way corner of a large shed he found some straw; this he heaped up so as to make for himself at once a bed and a hiding-place; and here, satisfied that in the darkness no one could find him, he sat down to enjoy the happiness of having got back Toto. Nor did they want a supper; he had still his half-loaf in his pocket; it was not much, but it was enough, and he had the pleasure of sharing it with his companion.

Somehow it made Jack feel very happy, and brought up again the thought of home. How strange it all seemed! What would his mother think if she could see him now? She and Annie would be just going to bed, and perhaps they were talking about him. His mother would think of him in prayer, and would ask God to take care of him. And God had taken care of him, though he had not deserved it, and had given him back his little dog. Jack then got up from his scanty supper and knelt down on the straw in the dark shed, and prayed with a thankful heart before he lay down to sleep. Toto put up his head to be stroked, and then, curling up close to his master, they slept as sound as if they had been in a palace.

CHAPTER VII.

WHEN Jack awoke in the morning, he could not at first think where he was. He jumped up and ran outside; the people in the houses round the market-place were just beginning to take down their shutters or were cleaning their doorsteps. It was early morning, and near him a fat old woman in a tall white cap and gold earrings was setting out some cups and plates on a tray, by the side of which stood a tin pot on a brazier. A workman came up, and she poured him out some steaming coffee into one of the cups, which he drank and paid for, taking from her stall a sort of pie or tartlet. It reminded Jack that he was hungry, and had no money to get anything to eat. He must set about trying to find Jean Vertôt, who might get him some work. The old coffee-seller might be able to help him, and as she looked good-natured he drew near.

"You want some coffee?" she said, looking

up "or a tartlet,—two for a penny." She held one out, and Toto sat up prettily.

"Ah, ha! he answers for himself that he will have one, but they are not for dogs." She then put her hand under the stall and pulled out a bag, from which she took an old bone and a dry crust. "These are for my cat Selim," she said; "but you shall have them for your pretty manners;" then turning to Jack, "Take a tart then; two for a penny."

"I don't want a tart; I want to find a man called Jean Vertôt."

"You are a stranger," said the old woman, after looking at him curiously for a moment. "How came you here; and what do you want of Jean Vertôt?"

Jack said that he knew a friend of his, and had a message to him. He had to do with the boats, and lived near the water.

"You may look a long while for him, if you know no more than that," said she. "The harbour is not a village; you must go down to the quays, and if you do not find your man there, you can come back to me. Any coffee this morning?" she went on, addressing a new comer.

Jack walked away. He would have liked to tell his story and get advice; but he was afraid now of any one knowing that he was English,

and so getting into trouble. He wandered on; it was still so early that few people were about, and he thought he might venture down the street he had come in by the night before, and out on to the quay, turning as soon as he got there, in the opposite direction from the inn where the carrier had stopped. When he had gone some distance along the quay, and crossed a wooden bridge, he found himself on the other side of the harbour, and there he began to look for some one whom he might ask about Jean Vertôt. But some whom he asked were busy, and shook their heads and went their way. Some began to ask him questions, and then, when Jack saw two or three loiterers stopping to listen, he said "Good morning," and got off as quickly as he could, not stopping again in the same part. He was now getting down-hearted and hungry, but he must try again. This time he went up to a poor-looking shop, in which he saw no one but a woman with a baby in her arms. She was quite ready to attend to him, and help him if she could. She thought there was a man named Vertôt who worked about the wharf near there, but she would go and ask her husband.

While she was gone, Jack was alone in the shop. There was something of all sorts in it, —ropes and baskets and candles; in the win-

dow there was fruit, and lumps of salt, and lard; and, on the counter close to him, a basket of eggs and a tray piled with cakes. He had eaten nothing since his hunch of bread. "I might take a bit," he thought, "and pay for it as soon as I can get some money. It would not be stealing."

He had put Toto on a chair that stood near, and now the dog, seeing the cakes, sat up and began to beg, giving Jack a little pat with his paw to make him attend. "Down, Toto;" Jack said rather crossly. He wished the woman would come back. Toto lay down meekly. Jack's conscience smote him when he saw the obedience of the faithful little animal.

The woman soon returned with her husband, and they both went with Jack to the door to show him where he must go, and give him directions. The woman spoke kindly to Toto as Jack took him under his arm again, for fear of losing him on the wharf.

The wharf was reached at last, and there Jack saw the lamp-post, and the white house with six windows, the signs by which he was to know the place. A knot of sailors were busy near him with some chains, but they did not seem to understand when he spoke to them. He went on, and stopped again where some

stone-cutters were at work, looking for some friendly face before he asked his question. While thus engaged, a man who had been watching him came up, and asked him what he was looking for?

Jack drew back. He felt a dislike to the man—he did not know why. Perhaps it was because he had only one eye, and did not look straight at him. However, he answered by asking him if he knew whether Jean Vertôt worked about there.

The man, as usual, inquired what he wanted of Jean Vertôt; and Jack said he wanted to get some work.

"What sort of work?" asked the man. He then looked hard at Jack, and laughing, said in English, "We need not go on parlezvousing, for I reckon you can talk English as well as I can."

Great was Jack's joy at hearing his own mother tongue; and it was not long before he had told all his story, ending with, "If I can only get on board a vessel, and have a chance of getting back to England, I would work my passage, or do anything."

"You have met with the right man, then," said his new friend; "I have a vessel lying off here, and I shall be sailing for England before long. I want a handy lad on board; so, if you

like the job, the bargain's made, and we shall turn in and get something to drink on it."

Jack had set Toto down, and the man seeing that he followed at Jack's heels, asked if the dog was his; saying, "We don't want dogs on board."

Jack stopped, and said in a mournful voice, "Then I cannot go; I cannot go without him." Probably he looked much dismayed, for the man half-laughed, and said, "Very well; never mind. Come along, dog and all. But we will go straight to the boat."

So, with Toto under his arm, for he had caught him up, Jack followed the long steps of the ship's captain, and they were soon by the water-side. There a small boat was lying, with a man asleep in it. The captain hailed him and made Jack get in, following himself; they then rowed off. The captain said a few words in a low voice to the man, and they rowed on in silence to a vessel lying near the entrance of the harbour.

"There she is," said the captain; "the *Ocean Queen* from New York. You'll soon be on board."

"And you are going to England?" Jack asked, as he stood ready to leave the boat.

"All right; we'll take you right away to England, never fear," was the answer.

A man looked over the ship's side, and the captain called to him, "Here, mate; here's a young lad ready to take his passage with us,—willing to work his way home. We are going to England, you know. You take him on board—him and his dog, for we have made a bargain of it. So lend a hand there. I must go ashore again." And the captain, in his boat, pushed off as soon as Jack had left it.

By the help of a rope's end and the mate's strong arm, Jack soon got up the ship's side, having made the skirt of his blouse into a bag by fastening it round his waist, and having put Toto into it.

"A reg'lar landlubber," said one of the sailors in the vessel, looking over the side as Jack was climbing up, "What does the captain mean by bringing such as he? He will be no good."

"And he comes with a little bit of a dog, like a French showman."

"Can your dog dance, young master?" said another.

"He can walk on his hind legs," said Jack, "if you will give him something to eat for it."

The men, who were having an idle time, were glad of anything to amuse themselves; and so one of them took out a piece of biscuit, and Toto, under his master's orders, sat up and

begged beautifully. When a little bit was laid on his nose, he tossed it up and caught it very cleverly. But the poor little dog was hungry, and Jack had some difficulty in keeping him from eating till he had earned his reward.

The crew, some five or six men, were a wild-looking set. Two or three seemed to be English or Americans; one was a mulatto; two others were very dark men, and spoke a language which Jack did not understand; he found afterwards that they were Spaniards. While they were talking, a black man came up from below, who proved to be the negro cook. He was in raptures with Toto, and went down again to fetch him a bowl of broken victuals.

Jack had never seen a negro before, except in a picture-book. The cook, Mungo, they called him, was a great fellow, six feet high; his skin was as dark and shining as India-rubber, and his woolly hair stood up in bristly curls on his head. He had a great mouth, with red lips, showing two rows of large white teeth. To Jack he looked exactly like an ogre; but he was a merry, good-humoured fellow, and he turned out to be Jack's best friend. Perhaps he saw that Jack looked with a hungry eye at the meat he was giving Toto; for suddenly he ran below and came up with a plate full of stew, which he gave to him, saying, "You de

showman, you hab some too;" and Jack fell to with hearty good-will.

When the men had had enough of Toto and his tricks, they sat down—some to smoke, some to sleep, and some to play at cards; while Jack with Toto curled up at his feet, settled himself where he could see the harbour and watch for the captain's return; for he longed to sail, and wondered how soon they should be in England. No one took any notice of him; but, towards evening, there was a whistle which all seemed to understand; and as they collected round the cook, Jack went with the others and had his portion of soup and biscuit, and also of spirits and water, or grog, as they called it. Jack did not much like it, and would have been much better without it; but he drank it nevertheless, and after supper got so sleepy that he could keep awake no longer.

At night the captain came on board. Jack was roused by the noise, for the wind being fair, the ship was weighing anchor and getting under sail. He jumped up ready to be of use, if he was called; and put Toto in a place of safety by making him a bed with his cotton night-cap, in an empty basket which lay under a shelf. "O Toto, Toto!" he said, as he stroked him, "we shall soon be at home now, and all our troubles ended."

But Jack's troubles were by no means over yet. He soon found that he was to be the drudge of the crew, that he was to do everybody's bidding and everybody's work, and take cuffs and hard words for his wages. Jack, however, was now used to rough work, and, as he was quick and active and obedient, he got on pretty well with the captain and the better disposed among the men; but some of them were wretched tyrants to those they were not afraid of, and they would have tormented the quiet, harmless boy and his dog out of sheer cruelty, if they had not been in some degree protected by Mungo. The cook was a person of some importance, whose favour every one liked to have; and he was also a strong powerful man, very passionate when provoked, so that even the captain was glad to keep him in a good humour.

When Jack found the sort of men he had got amongst, he tried to keep as quiet as he could, and not to say more than he could help to any one. The worst was, that he felt he had got among wicked men. Their language frightened him; all they cared for was drink and gambling; they could not trust one another, and would deceive even the captain whenever they could. Still, thinking he was on his way to England, he took it all quietly;

he longed to ask when they would be there, and what port they were going to; but he was afraid they would only jeer at him and tell him some nonsense.

One day he saw land at a distance, and was very glad; for he thought that, as they had been sailing some days, they must be getting near England.

"I see land," said he to his friend the cook; "I wonder what part of England it is."

"Englan'!" said Mungo; "lor, bless you! dat Spain or Portigal."

"But why do we go there?" Jack asked. "Is it on the way to England? If we land at Portsmouth or Southampton, I could soon get to Mudford and to my home."

"Porsmout! Lor bless de boy! Why, Porsmut—dat be Englan! If cappen go to Englan, he git hung up or shot. Trus' him know better den dat. Go to Merikey praps, or Cuba, or Spain, or Wes' Injies praps. Dat war we be goin'."

This answer troubled Jack; and he said, "Why should not the captain go to England? He told me he was going there."

"Cappen say what make you come 'long wid him," answered the cook. "He want boy. He tell lie—all his bisness lies; he what you call free-trader."

Jack did not understand much from this, and asked, "But why is it a lie?"

"The ship and every one in it are lies," said the cook. "No man hab his own name. De short man, Red Jim, he run away out of King Georgie's ship; if dey catch him, dey shoot him. De mate, Jones, no one know who he be. He done something very bad, and will nebber set foot on Englan', for fear of being took. All de rest be de same. Mungo myself de same;" and here Mungo laughed. "I hab bad massa; he sell my wife and piccaninny, and I run way. But I don't mind goin to Englan'. We be free men dar. But I'se no find my wife and little ones dar;" and Mungo wiped a tear from his eye.

Jack felt very sorry for him. Mungo was worse off than he was. After this they often talked together. Jack made out by degrees that a free-trader, such as their captain was, was much like a smuggler, only on a larger scale, sailing under false colours and a false name; for Mungo had reason to suspect that the captain had got possession of the papers of an American ship called the *Ocean Queen*, which had gone ashore near Newfoundland; and he told Jack that the figure-head of the vessel had been painted over, so as to look like the head of the *Ocean Queen*. Many tales of

wickedness and cruelty Jack heard from the old cook, which made him feel more and more miserable at living among such men. But there was no good in asking any more questions. The vessel was short of hands, and it was clear that the captain had decoyed Jack on board by the false promise of taking him to England.

They sailed on for some time. Once they neared the land, and a boat was lowered in which the captain frequently went ashore during some days. They said it was some port in Spain; but it made no difference. Jack had no chance of getting ashore, and would have been no better off if he had. Still, when they set sail again, he felt more hopeless than ever. Rough weather now set in, and the work was very hard. Toto looked very miserable when the waves broke over the deck. Jack could not now let the creature follow him about; but he found a sheltered corner for him near Mungo's kitchen, where the good-natured old man could have his eye on him.

One day there was a stir on board. The captain was on deck with his spy-glass, looking out, and the mate beside him. First one took the glass, and then the other. Jack made out that they were looking at some vessels in the distance. Presently he made out two large

ships and a smaller one with them, and heard one of the men say, "All right; they are keeping on their way."

Orders were then given to take in sail and lay-to, the captain evidently wishing to slacken his course so that the ships might pass ahead of him. Jack watched the vessels. It looked for a time as if the plan had answered, but they were near enough now for Jack to see that they carried guns and were ships of war.

"Englis ships," said the cook. "Dey get hold of the *Ocean Queen* with her one gun, and make mince meat of us all, very quick; but cappen will slink off if he can."

In the evening the vessels were still nearer, and the smaller one seemed to be parting from the others, and tacking, so that she might cross the path of the *Ocean Queen*. The captain watched anxiously, and many orders were given—sometimes to tack and take in sail; sometimes all the sails were spread, and the vessel flew before the wind; but when night closed in, the English ship was getting slowly but steadily nearer.

There had not been much time for talking, but Jack had made out that the English ship of war would claim the right of searching the *Ocean Queen;* and that, if anything wrong were discovered, she would be captured and

taken to the nearest port that English ships could enter. Ah! if they were only taken! All Jack's hopes revived, and he fell into a delightful dream of home. He longed for day, and yet dreaded it. The war-ship might be no longer in sight; or if it were, and the officers boarded the *Ocean Queen*, they might take no heed of a poor boy like him, and not believe his story. If they would only set him ashore in England, he could find his way home, even if he had to beg his bread and walk a hundred miles. While he was busy with these thoughts, he heard Mungo's voice close to him; he spoke in a whisper,—

"If dey come on board, you and I be bad off, Massa Jack. We better git out ob de way."

"Why?" asked Jack in astonishment; "we have done no harm."

Then Mungo went on to explain in a hurried whisper, that if the officers came on board and asked questions, the captain and his men would all tell one story; but that they mistrusted him, and he thought that they would put him out of the way for fear he should let things out. So he meant to keep very quiet, and hide, if he could, till he saw how things went. He advised Jack to do the same. "Cappen know dat you boy tell de truth, if dey ask."

Jack did not pay much heed to what Mungo said. His hope was that the ship would overtake them; and if she did, and the officers came on board, and he was hid away and could not get the chance of being heard, they might let the vessel go on her way, and so his last hope would be gone. He was not therefore inclined to hide. Daylight came at last, and there was the English ship, with all her sails set, bearing down upon the *Ocean Queen.* She was so near now that Jack could see the sailors moving on her deck.

"What are you about, youngster?" said a rough voice to him. "Where's cook?"

Jack turned round and saw the mate; he said he did not know.

"Come along with me," said the mate, "you are wanted here;" and seizing him by the arm, he hurried him away. Before Jack knew where he was taking him, the mate drew a sack over his head, tied his hands behind him, and thrust him down into the hold. It was dark; and being in the sack, and with his hands tied, Jack could only discover that he was among casks and packages, and was breathing the close, damp air of the hold. He tried in vain to get clear of the sack; it almost stifled him.

At first he lay quite still. All sorts of

horrible thoughts came into his mind. The English ship might take the vessel, and no one might know where he was; he might die without any one knowing. Then he thought of Toto. What would become of him, if Mungo was hid away; or, perhaps, shut up like himself? He thought he felt the legs of insects crawling over him. He had heard of scorpions, and centipedes, and venomous creatures being in the hold. He made a desperate effort to free his hands, the result being that he rolled over and fell down, and could not get up again.

How long he lay in this way, Jack did not know. The first thing he was conscious of was the sound of voices, but he could not comprehend where he was, or what had happened. He sat up, but his eyes were quite dim. However, he could hear some one say, "He's all right; he was only stunned by the fall."

What could it all be, and where was he? He blurted out, "Where's Toto?" in a stupid sort of way, as if he were only half awake.

"Here's Toto," said some one, laughing; and, behold, the little dog was standing by his master, watching him eagerly. When he put out his hand to stroke him, he jumped up and seemed quite wild with joy. Jack now began to get back his senses, and to look about him.

He was on deck; but on a clean, white deck; not the deck of the *Ocean Queen*. A young lad in a sailor's dress was standing by him, and round them was a group of men. He got upon his feet.

"Why, Jack; don't you know me?" said the young sailor, taking his hand. "Toto knew me, and told us where you were. I'm Phil—don't you see?" But Jack felt more bewildered than ever.

"It's all right, lad," said an old sailor to him; "you'll make it out by-and-by, only you be still a bit dazed. We have got you out of that thieves' den, down which they crammed you out of sight and hearing, as they thought; and you're safe on board His Majesty's sloop the *Curlew*, bound for old England."

Jack looked at the smart young sailor before him. He was quite himself now, but more puzzled than ever. Could it be Phil? He was half afraid he must be dreaming; yet it was Phil—no doubt. He remembered his voice, and his face too, and his old mischievous look when he laughed; and he saw him laugh now, and pat Toto, and heard him say, "We did not think to find you both on board a freetrader, Jack. But you will be looking for something to eat. Toto has had plenty; they have all been feeding him, and making much of him,

"'Why, Jack; don't you know me?' said the young sailor, taking his hand."—(*See page* 176.)

because it was so 'cute of him to tell us where you were hid."

Then came a happy time for Jack. He had a great deal to hear, and a great deal to tell. All the party were ready to explain how they had found him, but they made the old sailor spokesman. He told Jack that the officers of the *Curlew* had suspected that all was not right with the *Ocean Queen,* and that therefore they would not let her pass without being searched; and that the captain, Sir Charles Townshend, had gone on board to see her papers and make inquiries. They found reason to believe that there were British subjects on board, though she was said to be an American vessel; and amongst the crew they found a deserter from the British navy, for Red Jim was known by one of the *Curlew* men. But Sir Charles could not find sufficient proof to justify detaining her, and they were very near getting off, "when," added the old sailor, "Phil here, who had come on board, because he's good at the French lingo, renewed his acquaintance with an old friend. He had gone near the cook's birth, when up jumps a little dog—a little bit of a crittur to have so much sense—and he comes snuffing about Phil's feet. Phil says, 'Why, Toto! as sure as I am alive.' So when he speaks, the dog begins to whine, and bark, and run a few

steps, and then come back, going on like mad. Phil sees there is something behind, and he says 'Why, Jack Smith must be on board.' He says it loud, and up pops the head of an old nigger out of a barrel, and he says, 'Jack hid away, massa; little dog go on terrible about him, and I 'bliged to hide too.'

"The crittur then gets hold of the bottom of Phil's trousers with his teeth, and tears at 'em till Phil follows him to where a large chest was standing. The cook said it was over a trap that opened down into the hold.—Well; they could not move the chest, nor make a search without leave; so Phil goes off to where Sir Charles was looking at the papers, and stands respectful waiting, with his hat in his hand, till Sir Charles asks him what he wants?

"'We have reason to think that an English lad is concealed below, sir,' says Phil; 'and we have got hold of the negro cook who can tell more about it.'

"The pirate captain turns green and yellow when Sir Charles comes over with Phil, and soon has it all out of old Mungo. The chest is shifted, and yon youngster pulled up by the heels; and the little dog too, for he had jumped right in, as soon as the trap was opened. The old nigger cried for joy, and I don't know which went on the most—he or the dog—

when we fished you up; and now here you are!"

With the help of Jack and Mungo, and by cross-questioning Red Jim, the history of the *Ocean Queen* was brought out at last.

Sir Charles Townshend and his crew were now in possession of her, and were rejoining the squadron they had left. Mungo was a free man, and was to be taken to England to remain there, or return to America, as he pleased. The ship was now bound for Gibraltar, whether on their way to England direct, or not, the men could not say.

They all wanted now to hear Jack's history, but he was rather puzzled where to begin, and very anxious himself to know how Phil came to be on board the *Curlew*. Phil however said that the captain wished to see Jack as soon as he was able to show himself, and they had better let him be the first to hear Jack's story.

After Jack had eaten a good dinner, Phil took him off, "to brighten him up a bit," as he said, and make him fit to go up to the captain when sent for; for he was but a sorry figure, all over tar, and sawdust, and cobwebs, just as he came out of the hold. When the two boys were alone together, they soon told each other something of what had passed since the day they parted at Oldcot.

Jack could have sat all day to hear Phil talk of his mother and sister, and of their home, and how he had been taken in there and nursed when ill; how afterwards he had worked with Towell, and had gone off without leave after the affair of the run-away horse, thinking they were all against him, and that he never could get on; and how he had then made up his mind to sail with Parker, and not come back till he had made money enough to repay Mrs. Smith for what he had cost her. "Not that I could ever repay her for her goodness to me," Phil said, in a tone that made the tears come into Jack's eyes. Luckily for Phil he had not found Parker, when he went to look for him by the water side, but had heard that he was gone for some days. Meanwhile, a man going down the coast offered to take him for a week, and he agreed to go, leaving the message for Mrs. Smith, which reached her safely, as we know, through the fish cart and the woman at the turnpike gate. When he came back at the week's end, poorly paid, and with nothing else in view, he went again into Mudford to look for Parker.

"I had half a mind to go out again to Risings," said he. "I did not care for my voyage down shore, and somehow I had it always haunting me that your mother would not like

my getting again with the old set. I was standing at the corner of the market-place with my hands in my pockets. I had then but a single shilling, and did not know when I could earn another. So looking about, thinking what I should do, I saw an open carriage stop a few doors off. There was a lady inside and a little boy. The boy jumped up on the seat and cried out, clapping his hands, 'There is Phil, papa.' Then I saw it was little Master Townshend, and Sir Charles driving. They talked for a minute, and then the groom came up and said to me, 'Sir Charles and my lady wish to speak to you.' I did not know what it might be, for I had left them all against me at the Hall, and I never thought of any good.

"But it appeared, that after I had left, the right of the story came out through the child and your sister. Sir Charles was pleased to say that he wished to thank me for having saved his child's life, and he praised me for my courage in stopping the horse; though I don't see what else I could have done, only I had to be quick about it. Well; he then asked me what I was doing, and what he could do for me; my lady spoke kindly too, and bade the child thank me. She then said, 'I hope they'll make a sailor of you; I'm sure you'll be a brave one.'"

The end of course was that, finding Phil's wish was to go to sea, and his ambition to sail in the Royal navy, Sir Charles took him into his service. "And so," added Phil, "he saved me from going back to my old life, and perhaps he'll make something of me yet, so that I shall not be ashamed to go back to them some day. Any how they'll have you back."

Then he added gravely, "It is no child's play serving under Sir Charles. He is one of your regular strict ones; kind to the men, but firm; and those in command under him, and those under them, down to us boys, have all to mind his laws. I did not quite like it at first," he said, laughing; "but I'm getting into it now."

We must now leave Jack and Phil in the *Curlew*, and go back to England. How long it was to be before they could get there, or how soon Sir Charles might find an opportunity of sending Jack back to his mother, was very uncertain. Meanwhile he and Toto might make themselves as happy as they could be, on board ship. But Jack longed for the green fields, and for a run, as he said, on Risings common; "and Toto with you," exclaimed Phil; "he must go along with you, for we shall never make a sailor of either of you."

CHAPTER VIII.

WHILE Jack and Phil were journeying, each on his separate course, till at last their paths met, Mrs. Smith and Annie were passing the time busily and usefully, but very quietly, at home. A new and good nurse was established at the Hall, who found Annie very useful, and as willing to learn as she was to teach her. Lady Townshend wished Mrs. Smith to leave the cottage altogether, and come to help in the laundry, thinking it must be very lonely for her, now that Annie was at the Hall; but, though very grateful for the offer, she could not make up her mind to leave her home. She felt that, while at the cottage, she was always ready for Jack, should he return, and that, to leave it, would be like giving up the hope of ever seeing him again. But sometimes she would lock up the house for a week or two, and go out nursing, if she heard of any one who wanted her. She never felt her mind so much at rest as when

she was watching by a sick bed, and giving all her thoughts to comforting some poor sufferer.

After Sir Charles Townshend sailed there came a letter to his mother, in which there was a message to say that Phil was doing well. After that letters were few and far between. As war was still going on, the uncertainty of hearing was very great. Winter came, and spring; and, occasionally, there was mention in the newspapers of Sir Charles' ship, which was cruising in the Mediterranean; and once there came a letter; but it was short and hurried, and made no mention of Phil. Mrs. Smith therefore could only hope that no news was good news.

During the winter, Annie had been away with the family, and, on her return, came to spend a few days at home, and had a great deal to tell. Her mother was pleased to see how womanly and happy she looked; and how interested she was in the children and in her work, though delighted to be at home again with her mother. When she had been at home three days, she and her mother walked up to the Hall to inquire when she would be expected to return to her post, and found that she was to have another whole day at home. They stayed to tea, and it was getting dark when they walked back to the cottage. When

they got near, they saw a little girl standing by the gate, as if waiting for some one. She stared at Mrs. Smith and Annie, but said nothing till asked what she wanted.

"If you be the Widow Smith," she said, "I have come for you. Mother sent me to fetch you; you are to come along with me."

Mrs. Smith had some difficulty in understanding from the child where she came from, and what was wanted; but, at last, she and Annie made out between them that she was the daughter of a woman named Giles, who kept a poor sort of public-house some miles away on the London road. Her husband was a cripple and drove a donkey cart. They had not been long in the neighbourhood, and Mrs. Smith knew but little about them. It appeared that a man had come to their house, and was laid up ill, and her mother had sent the little girl to bring the Widow Smith to nurse him. So said the child, and she was to come "right away."

Mrs. Smith was so used to be called upon to act half as doctor and half as nurse, that she was not surprised, and did not hesitate about going. On such occasions she liked to take with her the simple medicines she knew how to administer, sometimes herbs of her own gathering, and sometimes doctor's physic

supplied from Mrs. Dickers' stores at the Hall. From her too she often got help in linen, and warm clothing, or bedding; but, in this case, she could not tell what might be needed, and it would be too late, when she got to the Seven Stars, to come back and fetch anything that night. She therefore determined to take Annie with her, and that they should either stay the night, if necessary, or walk home together and get what was wanted ready for the next day.

As they had to pass near the lodge, lest any one should want her, Mrs. Smith informed Mr. Towell that she was going to the Seven Stars to nurse a sick man, and might not return till next day. When they got to the Seven Stars, Hannah Giles was looking out in some doubt as to whether her little girl had been able to find the way to Risings Common, and was much relieved when she appeared with Mrs. Smith and Annie.

"I was in a deal of trouble," she began, "and I did not know whatever to do. This man—as rough a looking fellow as ever I've seen,—came here two nights agone, and said that he must come in and get something to drink before he went farther. My husband was out, and I did not much like asking of him in. So I went to fetch a glass of ale out

to the door, but he came into the house after me, and sat down on the bench; and when I set the ale down by the side of him, he was that bad he could not take hold of the glass. So then he says: 'I can't go on; I must bide here for the night.' Well, seeing him so weak, I did not feel any more fear on him; he could scarcely follow me to the back room. I opened the pressbed, and turned it down, and said to him, 'You can lie down there;' and so he did. I drew a bit of a coverlet over him, and there he has lain ever since, and there you can see him. Sometimes he groans with pain, and sometimes I fancies it is his mind. He calls out, 'Pray, pray;' and then he says, 'it's too late.'

"When my old man went out yesterday, I wanted to send or the doctor or the parson, but he said that he must go on; he did not want the doctor; he was going to the Widow Smith, on the common. Then he was taken worse again, and has neither spoke nor eaten since. I think he is a dying man, and will never go nowhere but to his grave; we must have the parish to bury him, for I'm sure we cannot. It's a bad job for folks like we to have a stranger come and be a-dying in one's house. So I would not wait any longer, but sent my little maid right away to fetch you, as

"Where am I then?" he said. "Is it you, widow? Do you know me?"

"You are Philip Redstone," she answered. "They sent for me to nurse you."

"I shall not want nursing long," he said; "I am a dying man. Ruined, body and soul. I was coming your way, but I could not get on." He stopped as if his breath had failed him. After a few moments he stretched out his hand, and took the cup of cold tea she offered him. She tried to raise the bolster under his head, so that he might lie more easily. He had not taken his clothes off, and was lying just as he had thrown himself down on the wretched bed.

After a few minutes he spoke again. "You want to know about your boy," he said. "I am guilty of the loss of him, but not of his life. I would not take his life, nor let them do it. I must die and go to judgment, and the blood of my fellow creatures is on my head, and many a crime besides; but not the boy's life. I thought of my own boy—poor Mary's boy, and I told the Sharper he should not touch him. We put him on board a French herring boat, and the men swore he should never set foot in England again, lest he should tell of our hiding-places. He is in France, alive now, for aught I know."—He now stopped as if exhausted.

Annie had crept into the room, and stood in the shadow. She had fallen asleep, but she too had been waked by the sound of the mail horn, and hearing Redstone's voice, had come in to know what he said. "Fetch in something for him to drink," Mrs. Smith said to her, in a low voice; "and do not rouse Hannah Giles if you can help it; she must not know who he is."

Presently he spoke again. "They wanted to send for the doctor and the parson," he said; "but it is too late for that. It is too late,"—he repeated; "doctor nor parson can do naught for me now, body nor soul. There is nothing left for me but judgment. I must reap what I have sown. 'The wages of sin is death,'" he said, raising his voice in a wild, despairing tone. "That was what the preacher said,—'The wages of sin is death;' that was what took hold on me. He was preaching to the miners on the hill side, and some were listening, and some were mocking, and I stopped to hear what he had to say, and he said terrible things about death and judgment; and then he talked of mercy and eternal life through Jesus Christ. But I had turned my back on such things long ago, and now I must face my God with all my sins upon me. Then I journeyed by boat and by land to get home,

as I called it, though it's no home to me; and to try to hear of my boy—poor Mary's boy. What's gone with him? He will be just like the rest of us—me and Uncle Job."

Redstone got eager and spoke fast and strongly. "Mary was not much older than that maid of yours," he said, looking at Annie, "when I took her from her home to marry me, and I broke her heart. When the boy was born, and she knew she should have to leave him, she said, 'Train him up to good, Phil;' and what have I done? Trained him to break God's law and man's law, and he will come just to such an end as mine."

Mrs. Smith now said that she could tell him good news of Phil. She then told him how Phil had come to her house, and of his illness, and of what had happened since, and that he was now gone to serve in the Royal Navy, under a good captain, who would help him to keep straight. She told it as shortly as she could, for she did not know how much he could bear. She saw a gleam of pleasure in his eyes, and then he tried to speak again; but a fit of pain came on, and he could only lie and groan.

Mrs. Smith now looked out anxiously through the window—a little square pane of glass, fixed in the wall—to see if there was any glimmer of

dawn; but it was still quite dark. She wanted, as soon as it was day, to send Annie to the Hall to consult Mrs. Dickers as to the possibility of moving Redstone to her cottage. She did not wish to let any one else know who he was, and was afraid that, if Mrs. Giles was known to have the noted smuggler in her house, they would not long be left in peace. But as nothing could be done till the day broke, she put in another bit of candle, and taking her Bible, sat with it on her lap, thinking she might read out a few verses, and, it might be, give some hope to the dying man. But much was to happen before the last dawn broke for him.

The mail which had passed the Seven Stars and roused the watchers with the guard's horn, at the end of another half hour had reached the Lodge of Risings Hall, where again the horn sounded. The letter bag for the Hall was always dropped at the Lodge, as the coach passed, and Towell, or his wife, had to wait, before settling for their night's rest, till they had taken it in. Generally the bag was merely thrown into the garden by the guard, as the coach passed; but, on this occasion, the coach stopped,—a sign that it was bringing something more than usual. Mrs. Towell, who was keeping watch that night, went out to the gate with a grumble at "things coming at such an

untimely hour." A young man, as far as she could see by the coach lamps, was standing in the road, and some one else was scrambling down from the top of the coach. "All right," cried the guard, and the coach drove on, leaving them in the darkness at the Lodge gate.

"Hollo! missus," exclaimed a cheerful voice, "I've brought back Jack Smith; get us a light that you may take a look at him."

Jack was not slow in speaking for himself, and Mrs. Towell rushed back to the house, calling to her husband to get up and see if it was really Jack, for she could not tell whether she was awake, or asleep and dreaming.

The two lads, Phil, and Jack with Toto under his arm, were soon in the kitchen, where a light was struck. Master Towell, in a few seconds, stumbled downstairs with his nightcap on, and many were the exclamations of surprise and delight from the old people, when they became certain as to the identity of their unexpected visitors.

"And what will your mother say, and Annie?" and, "Well! you *be* grown, to be sure; and Phil too;" were repeated again and again. At last the boys said that they had told the coachman to set them down at the Lodge, as the nearest place to the cottage; and that now, they must be off there, and knock up Mrs. Smith.

They then learnt that Mrs. Smith and her daughter had passed, on their way to the Seven Stars, a few hours before, and that, not having come back, must have stopped there for the night. "Why then, they were there when we passed half an hour ago," said Phil; "and we never thought of being so near them."

After some discussion it was settled that the two lads should have such a supper as Mrs. Towell's larder could furnish, and then take a nap, if they could, in the kitchen, till it was light enough for them to find their way to the inn; but the old people sat for a long time talking and listening. Phil was evidently forgiven, especially as he had brought back Jack; but, indeed, the tide had turned in his favour when he went off as a "real sailor" with Sir Charles.

After the old couple went to bed, the young men, instead of trying to sleep, started on the road to the Seven Stars, Toto following close at their heels. They arrived long before Mrs. Giles had unlocked her door, and while Mrs. Smith and Annie were still watching by Redstone. They knocked cautiously, but no one answered.

"They seem to be all asleep," said Phil; "but I thought I saw a light in that side window as we came along; let us try there."

They went round and Jack put his face to the window. The fragment of a tattered red curtain which hung over it did not quite cover the pane, and as he looked in he could see, by the dim light of the candle, the figure of his mother sitting on the bed with her back to him. Annie had her face to the window. Tears blinded his eyes. "They are there," he said, drawing back. Phil then reached forward and gave a loud tap.

Annie heard it and went to the window. She saw a man's head, and was rather startled; but she went quickly out of the room to wake Mrs. Giles and her husband, and tell them that some one knocked.

Mrs. Giles was roused with some difficulty, and asked Annie to look out at the upper window and say that she was coming. Annie did as she was bid, and, looking out, saw the two lads below; she did not make them out, but, when she spoke, Phil knew her voice and said, "It is us, Annie; Jack and Phil; come down, and let us in."

Without waiting to explain to Mrs. Giles, Annie flew downstairs, and, in a few moments, the door was unbarred and unlocked, and her arms round Jack's neck, while she cried for joy. Phil stood back, looking quite shy —though Phil was not shy in general—till

Annie thought of him and turned round to shake hands.

They then heard with astonishment who it was that Mrs. Smith had been sent for to nurse. "He is quieter now," Annie said; "but I don't know what we had best do. How can we tell mother? Oh! Phil; he has been in a terrible way! Mother does not think he can live many hours."

Phil looked very much shocked. The thought of his father dying so wretchedly came strangely on him in the high spirits the lads were both in. "I should like to see him," he said. "I wonder if he would know me."

"He wanted so much to hear of you," Annie replied; "and was so glad to learn what mother knew. She will tell you all he said."

At last they agreed that Annie should try to get Mrs. Smith out of the room, telling her that some one just come from the Lodge wanted her. She would then find Phil in the kitchen, Jack meanwhile waiting outside, that he might not startle her too much.

Jack now went out, while Phil followed Annie to the door of the back room, and, anxious to see his father, looked in as she opened it. She paused, for they heard Redstone's voice, and could see by the dim light that Mrs. Smith had the open Bible on her knee. A

gleam fell on the pale, worn face of the dying man, and on the gaunt hand that lay on the coverlid.

"You may be right," he said. "You know more of mercy and forgiveness than I do. May God bless you for what you have done for my boy and for me! I shall never see the boy again, but if you do, tell him,—and tell all the young ones—what I have come to; tell them what the preacher said, and ask them to think on it before it is too late. Too late," he repeated, "if I have my deserts." Mrs. Smith knelt down by the bed. "Ay! pray," he said. "I would pray if I dared. What was that you read?" His strength now seemed to fail, but, in a broken voice, he exclaimed, "'God be merciful to me a sinner.'"

The voice died away and the light faded from his eyes. He never moved or spoke again. The flickering candle went out, and Mrs. Smith got up and drew back the red curtain, and let in the first streaks of dawn. She saw that the last struggle was over, but not, she trusted, without some gleam of hope.

Meanwhile, Phil had drawn back, unwilling to break in upon her, and left Annie to speak to her alone. As for Jack, he was getting impatient of waiting outside, and looking into the kitchen, he saw Phil standing silent and awe-

struck. "Is mother there?" he asked. "What is the matter?"

"She is all right," Phil said; "it was father —dying." He paused between the words. "I saw and heard him—I shall never forget it, as long as I live—never."

He spoke so gravely that Jack did not like to go on asking. But he had not long to wait. Annie explained to her mother, as soon as she could, what had happened, and Mrs. Smith came out with tears of joy and thankfulness to welcome her darling boy.

After a little time of talking, Mrs. Smith made them all come into the room, to look again on poor Phillip Redstone. So changed and softened were his features by the hand of death that Phil would have scarcely known that the face was that of his father.

The first thing of course was to make arrangements for the funeral. The Gileses were glad to have matters taken out of their hands, and asked no questions, being thus released from both responsibility and expense. But Mrs. Smith could not rest till she had heard all the particulars of Jack's recovery. And Phil felt very happy in telling her; it seemed as if he had now got a mother of his own to talk to. He had not long to stay at Risings, having to join his ship at Falmouth in

a few days; but he was able to see his father laid in his grave, in the quiet churchyard at Mudford, before he left.

Annie had leave to remain at the cottage over Sunday, and in the morning, Mrs. Smith, with her two children, set out, as in old days, for church. She was accompanied now by Phil, who had got into the way of calling her "Mother," and seemed like another son.

It was a happy day;—happy, and yet different from the happiness the two boys had pictured to themselves as they had journeyed homewards. Different and better; death and life, youth and age, remorse and penitence had been brought together; and they felt that they were all journeying to the same goal, all bound by one common tie, all redeemed by one Saviour, all guided by the hand of the same merciful Father. The blissfulness of unwearied love, patient under trial, and devoted to the good of others; and the bitterness of remorse and doubt, both came before them to comfort and to warn.

"And so, I have got back my Bible after all," said Annie, on their way to church; "and a pretty way you have worn it too! Why, it looks a hundred years old."

"But I have lost your text at last," Jack answered. "I kept it ever so long; but I

never found it again after my journey into the hold of that old pirate ship. But you do not want to take it to the parson now, I suppose; and I am not likely to forget it again, and run off from church after Phil."

"Specially as you have got Toto," rejoined Phil, laughing.

As they came out of church there was quite a crowd to shake hands with Jack, and so much wondering and talking that Mrs. Smith was glad when they got home to peace and quiet.

Monday was Phil's last day. Annie had gone back to the Hall, and Lady Townshend, who took the greatest interest in Jack's return, and in all the party at the cottage, had begged that Mrs. Smith and the two lads would come up to the Hall and spend the evening. The children, who had been charmed with hearing Jack's adventures from Annie, begged that Toto also might come, and show off his tricks in the large hall. A table was to be arranged, and everything to be done so as to act over the scene at the wine-shop, when Toto was stolen.

Phil undertook the part of showman, having learnt from Jack to imitate the young French soldier; and the scene was to end in one of the benches being knocked down, and in Jack, with Toto, rushing out amongst the servants pursued by Phil.

When all was over, and the party from the cottage had to go home, Mrs. Dickers and Annie walked with them to the Lodge, where Phil was to wait for the coach. Phil got rather silent at last. He loved the sea, and was proud to serve under Sir Charles, and liked to look forward to his life on board ship; but he felt now that he should like one day to come home —home to Risings. He had never known before what home was. But then, he might not return for years, and Annie might have got a husband, and Jack a wife, and they might all have forgotten him.

He had never yet felt able to speak to Annie about the old business of the sock, and the money. Somehow he had never spoken of it even to Jack. No one knew anything about it but Annie and himself, and now, as they stood under the trees by the Lodge gate, looking out on the moonlit road, he suddenly said to her,—"I brought back Jack, but why have you never asked me for the sock?"

"I do not know," Annie answered. "I suppose I thought you might have lost it."

Phil pulled it out of his pocket, saying, "Here it is. When I took it first, there was the money in it; but I have not put the money back. I thought you would not like it; so I put something else instead."

Annie took the sock and looked. There was a pretty little brooch in it, set round with garnets.

"It is very pretty; so very pretty;" she said. "Thank you, Phil; I never thought of your bringing me anything like that."

Phil put his hand out for the sock. "I am glad you like it," he said. "I will keep the sock for another time, till I come again. Some day, when I am gone, you can tell Jack about it. Somehow, I never could. And now, you will not think any more of that old bad time; will you?"

"I shall always think of how you brought Jack back to us," she said. "But there is the horn sounding, and mother and Mrs. Dickers are coming out to see you away."

Then there was a general shaking of hands, and wishing "good bye." Mrs. Smith gave Phil a motherly blessing, and wiped the tears from her eyes; and Jack held Toto up to receive a farewell pat, and felt as if he could not get on without Phil.

Little more now remains to be told of the history of Jack Smith and Phil Redstone. Jack has been lost and found again, and Phil has lost his old bad character, and has found a new one, which he is bent on keeping.

Jack settled again to his work at the Lodge,

quite resolved to make his living as a gardener, and to be satisfied with Old England for the rest of his days. Annie went on well under the nurse at the Hall, and Mrs. Smith was happy in having her home now made cheerful by the recovery of her boy. Good news was heard of Phil from time to time, though his friends had many anxious thoughts for him when they heard of tempests at sea, or our fleets engaged with the enemy.

Jack often talked of his friends in France, and wished he could see them again; or, at least, let them know what had become of him, and that he had not been ungrateful nor had forgotten them.

At last, peace came, and with it Sir Charles, and many who had been long away were restored to their homes. Phil had distinguished himself by his courage and steadiness, and when he returned, Sir Charles got him employment for a time on board a revenue cutter, cruising in the Channel. This brought him often to Mudford, and he had many happy days when he could run over to Risings.

One day he told Jack that the cutter was going over to the Harbour, and that if he liked to come, he thought he could get leave to visit Dieppe, and look up Jack's friends at Appeville. Jack therefore made up his mind

to cross the sea once more, and Toto, now enjoying an honoured old age, was taken to see his old friends, without being consulted.

But time had wrought some changes amongst Jack's friends, though it had not made them forget him.

He was warmly welcomed by Fanchon and her children. Marie had grown into a pretty young woman, and Louise had become a great girl, but neither had forgotten Shack and Toto. Annette and her lover, Francis le Clerc, had, it seemed, nearly fallen out over the loss of Jack, but when he had come back wounded from the war, he was forgiven, and Annette and he were married. They were now keeping house for grandfather Bodin at Hericourt. Poor grandmother had long since been laid in her grave. Uncle Joseph too slept in the churchyard where he had prayed so often by the graves of his wife and children. His youngest son had come home and comforted his declining years, and was now working, like Jack, as a gardener. When they went to see where the old soldier lay, he met them there, bringing fresh flowers, which he gave to Marie to lay on the grave; and, somehow, Jack was not surprised when Fanchon told him that he was hoping soon to have laid by enough to set up as a nursery man, and would then ask Marie to marry him.

All of them then went up together to Hericourt to see Annette and her grandfather, and there Jack brought out some little keepsakes—the best his earnings had enabled him to purchase,—English knives and scissors and needles, such as foreigners prize; and English roots and seeds which he had brought for Uncle Joseph.

They were admired and accepted, and after a pleasant day or two at Dieppe, the two young men returned, Jack taking home friendly messages and gifts for his mother and sister, but not a French wife. Let us hope that he did not fail, in due time, to find an English one; and that Phil had the same happiness.

Phil never forgot the deathbed of his father, and the first time that he came back from sea, with a little money, he put a plain stone at the head of his grave, inscribed to the memory of his father and mother, and below their names the words:—

"The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life, through our Lord Jesus Christ."

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