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EDITED
BY
MRS. G. R. ALDEN.

The Pansy.

THE MAN
OF THE HOUSE.

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THE MAN OF THE HOUSE.

BY PANSY.

FROM the pasting room Reuben was called downstairs to the marking and cutting room. The queer little machine that bit the corners out of the covers so skillfully, had taken his fancy the day before, and to his great delight he was set to working it. Skill was required here as well as in pasting, but it was of a different sort, and Reuben caught the movement of the machine at once; his eyes brightened with every turn of the bright shears.

"You have a very correct eye," Mr. Barrows said to him, and then his face broadened in a smile. His success was worse for him, in one sense, than his failure in the upper room had been, inasmuch as it moved certain of the others to envy. They did not approve of the city boy at the best; as if there were not fellows enough in the town to run the box factory! This was the way they felt, and this, in some form, was what they growled to each other from time to time. Very little attention did Reuben pay to them; so that he guided the skillful shears in biting out those square corners, it was all he asked. The very speed with which it worked was a delight to him. Reuben liked fast things.

Mr. Barrows was moving in and out, talking with first one workman then another, with a general eye to all that was going on. During one of his visits he was sharpening a pencil with a very choice, four-bladed knife, whose pearl handle and polished steel caught an admiring flash from the eye of every boy in the room. Near the busy shears he laid both down for a moment, while he explained to the man who was running the large machine just how a certain kind of board was to be cut. Then came a sudden call for him from the office, and he went away.

It was perhaps an hour afterwards that he came in hastily, and looked among the fast increasing pile of chips that was gathering around the little shears, as Reuben still successfully clipped out the corners.

"Boys, have any of you seen anything of my knife?" he asked, and half a dozen pair of hands paused in their work, and as many pair of eyes looked up to his; innocent eyes, and certain mischievous ones. But they shook their heads. Before, however, one of the others could speak, Reuben's clear voice was heard:

"Yes, sir; I had a glimpse of it. It is in the upper pocket of my jacket; and the pencil you were sharpening is there too."

Mr. Barrows looked at him in astonishment, it is true, but it did not compare with the amazement on the faces of the boys.

"Reuben," said the gentleman in a grave, inquiring voice, "did you fear that the knife and pencil would get lost, and so put them in your pocket for safe keeping?"

"No, sir; didn't put them there at all; but I know they are there, for I saw them drop in." Then seeing

that Mr. Barrows still waited with a grave and not altogether pleased face, he added: "I didn't touch them, sir, as true as I live."

"Will you explain, then, how they got into your pocket?"

"They were put in, sir."

"But not by your hands?"

"Not by my hands."

"Do you know anything about whose hands put them there?"

In that room, at that moment, busy place though it generally was, you could have heard a pin drop. Every boy was listening. One of them had a red face. For just a moment Reuben considered, then he spoke:

"Yes, sir, I know just exactly whose hands put them there; but I kind of think it was done just for fun,



CLARKE POTTER.

without much thinking about, or meaning any harm, and if you will take them away, and excuse the hands that dropped them there, I will too."

"Boys," said Mr. Barrows turning from Reuben, "you hear what this new-comer says. He is a stranger to all of you, but I know him a little, and I have some reason for trusting him; still, I will be fair to every one of you, and give you a chance to express an opinion.

Do you believe that he has told the truth about my knife and pencil?"

A chorus of voices answered him:

"Yes, sir; we know he has."

"Very well, then, I'll claim my property." And he went to the poor little almost worn-out jacket, and took from the pocket the four-bladed knife and pencil; as he did so he said: "Now there is at least one boy in the room who has been guilty of a very mean trick, and ought to be ashamed of himself. I don't know which one it is, and don't want to. Since Reuben has asked it as a favor, I am willing to excuse the hands that put them in. I hope the owner of those hands will be manly enough to apologize for the mischief he tried to do, and say 'thank you,' for the kindness shown him."

Then Mr. Barrows went away. Reuben made the little machine bite out the corners as fast as it could, and did not raise his eyes. Not a boy spoke. After a little one of them whistled, then several of them laughed. Reuben worked on. It was not until the great bell in the church tower around the corner rang out its six-o'clock call to come home to supper, that the tongues of those boys were let loose. Then, while they rushed for caps, and coats, and mittens, they all talked at once; not loud enough for Reuben to understand what they said, but loud enough for him to know they were talking about the knife and the pencil.

One, the oldest and most lawless-looking, lingered while Reuben hunted among the chips he had made for a bright bit of paper that he had a fancy to save for Beth.

"Honor bright," said the boy, "do you know who put the knife in your pocket?"

Reuben turned full bright eyes on him and answered quickly:

"Know as well as though you had told me all about it beforehand; you did it yourself."

Whereupon the boy gave a sharp little whistle. "What did I do it for?" he asked presently.

"I don't feel so sure of that. I thought maybe it was just for what some fellows call 'fun'; I don't see much fun about it, but I thought perhaps you did, and if you meant nothing but that, why there's no harm done."

"Suppose I meant a good deal more than that?"

"Then there's lots of harm done; you feel mean over it by this time, and folks don't like to feel mean; at least, I don't."

"Why didn't you tell Mr. Barrows which of us did it?"

"I didn't see any good in that. He got his property and that was what he was after, and I proved all around that I had nothing to do with putting it where it didn't belong, and that was what I was after."

"Well," said the other, after a somewhat longer pause, "my name is Clarke Potter, and I didn't mean a single thing only to have some fun, and tease you a bit; I thought you was a spooney little fellow away from his mother, and we might as well have a little fun with you as not."

"All right," said Reuben gravely. "I'm a little fellow, that's a fact; look younger than I am, and I'm away from my mother. As for being spooney, I don't feel any too sure that I know just what it means down here in the country. Perhaps I am a spooney, and perhaps I ain't; never mind. The knife is where it ought to be, and I guess you and I will be all right after this."

"I guess we will; I mean to stand up for you. Only I'd like to know this: are you one of the goody-goody sort?"

"Don't know them," said Reuben in utmost good humor. "What are they like?"

"Oh bother! you're not so green as all that. Are you one of them that thinks it is wrong to wink, or sneeze, or whistle, and that tells your mother every time you turn around, and says your prayers, and all that?"

The merry twinkle went out from Reuben's eyes, but he looked with clear steady gaze at Clarke Potter, and answered slowly:

"I'm good at whistling, or bad, I don't know which



SAMPSON RUNS AWAY.

to call it; mother says I almost deafen her sometimes. I like to tell things to her, first rate, when I don't think they will worry her too much; you see it is different with me from what it is with most boys; my father has been dead a long while, and I'm the only boy—in fact, I'm not a boy at all. I have to do what I can to support the family. I've been the man of the house these three years, so I have to think about things. As for saying prayers, I never did much of that—forgot it, you know—after I got too old to say them with mother; but one night a while ago I was in an awful danger—didn't expect to get home alive—and I just asked God to help me, the same as if I could see him, you know, and he did it. Since then I've thought it would be a good plan to ask him about things."

Said Clarke: "You are a very queer chap! A very queer chap indeed!" he added gravely, after a slight pause. "But I'll stand up for you through thick and thin; I will, so. And when Clarke Potter makes a promise, it means something."

Work went on quietly after this for two days. The boys tried to tease Reuben occasionally, but there were two things in the way of their doing much in this line: Reuben was hard to tease; he was good-natured over what would have made many boys angry; he laughed when they expected him to frown, and whistled when

they had planned for him to growl; besides, he soon discovered that Clarke Potter was a sort of leader among them, and when he said: "Look here, fellows, if you know when you're well off, you'll let that little chap alone; he's a friend of mine!" the boys knew he meant it.

Reuben's success in the box business was a surprise to himself. He learned rapidly. Not that he was any smarter than most bright boys of his age, but he had a mind to do his best all the time: and the box trade is, like most others, easy to learn when a wide-awake fellow does his best.

He discovered from Mr. Barrows' manner, rather than from anything he said, that he was giving satisfaction, but on Saturday the gentleman spoke:

"Reuben, Mrs. Barrows thinks it would be a good plan for you to hire a woman to clean the little house, and get it ready for your mother. What do you think about it?"

Reuben's face brightened, then grew sober.

"I'd like it first rate," he said with his usual promptness; "only I don't know whether mother would."

"Why, she's the very one we are trying to please! what's in the way?"

"Well, you see, sir, it takes a good deal of money to move, and we are pretty short in that line, and I don't know but mother would think I ought to have saved the money and let her and Beth do the cleaning."

"I see," said Mr. Barrows, and he looked by no means displeased. After a few quiet minutes he spoke again. "There is a woman living down the lane from my house, who wants a cord of wood split and carried into her wood-shed. She works at house-cleaning, and washing, and all that sort of thing, and she can't afford to pay money for her work. How would it do to turn a job? or, are you too tired when six o'clock comes, to think of splitting wood by the light of a lantern?"

Now was Reuben's face all bright.

"It will do splendidly!" he said with the eagerness of a boy who had had a fortune left him. "If I can get the job, mother shall come to a clean house."

"You shall have the job," Mr. Barrows said with well-satisfied face. "I promised her this morning I would look out for a boy of the right sort."

An hour afterwards Reuben was down-stairs piling boxes in the hall, ready for the delivery wagon, when Mr. Barrows drove up in his carriage, and jumped out, leaving little Miss Grace in charge.

"Shall I hold your horse, sir?" asked Reuben, bestowing admiring glances on the sleek coat of the handsome fellow.

"No; he is used to holding himself. He is better trained than most horses," Mr. Barrows answered, and passed into the office, where he stood talking with his foreman, and looking over some papers that were handed to him. Grace Barrows leaned out of the carriage and nodded to Reuben:

"How do you like boxes by this time?" she asked him.

"First rate," he answered heartily, setting down ten of them at once with great care. "Don't you hold the reins when you are left in charge of a horse?"

"Oh no; Samson never does anything but stand still until papa wants him to go."

"Is that his name? What a queer name for a horse."

"Isn't it a nice name? We call him that because he is so big. *Isn't* he big?" she said with pride. Just then a paper fluttered from the desk, out of the door, down the walk, stopping at the wheel of the carriage.

"Catch that, Reuben!" commanded Mr. Barrows in a tone that said: "It is an important paper." Reuben sprang after it.

What made a sudden whirl of wind just at that moment bring a great torn newspaper half way across the street and fling it into the very eyes of Samson? Why should a torn newspaper frighten a horse out of his senses? A great many questions can be asked, but who stands ready to answer them? Not Samson, certainly, for he hadn't time. Away he flew as if he had suddenly discovered that his four legs were long, and made on purpose for running away. Not Reuben, for he had other business. His hand was on the hind spring, just where he had placed it in the act of stooping for the important paper, and as he did not let go, you can imagine, perhaps, just how fast he was travelling at that moment.

BUSINESS IS BUSINESS.

"Oh well," said Dickie, sitting back and looking injured, "if you're a mind to be so mean as that, why you'll *have* to be, I s'pose; only I know I wouldn't do it to you, not for a farm."

"Business is business," said Jack, as, perched on the table, he gravely fingered over his pile of nuts. "If they was *mine*, now, you'd see how quick I'd hand some over. Or, if I had a red cent to buy some of 'em with; but you see I'm dead broke, and not a nut among the lot belongs to me. So what can I do?"

"But such a pile of 'em! And all I want is five or six. *She* can't eat no lot; she's sick abed, you see, and I've had an unlucky day, and not a bit of anything can I give her unless you will let me have some. Two or



"SEE HERE, DICKIE SIMMONS!"

three would do. Who do you s'pose would miss 'em?"

"It's queer to me that a fellow can't understand," said Jack, twisting himself around uneasily, with an impatient look on his face. "See here, Dickie Simmons! Do I pass for an honest fellow among the chaps, or don't I? That's the question."

"Why, everybody knows you're honest, of course."

"Well, then, how am I going to take a handful of nuts that belong to the man that hires me, and give them to you? Answer me that."

"I don't want a *handful*!" persisted Dickie, impatient in his turn. "I told you two or three would do."

But the boy on the table gravely shook his head.

"That's not the question," he said earnestly. "I never heard that being honest was not taking a *great many* of other folks' things. Honesty means letting everything that don't belong to you *alone*. I wish I had a cent, to show you how quick I'd buy a cent's worth of this stuff, and send to your little sister."

But Dickie was in a very sullen mood, and only sniffed up his little nose in a disagreeable manner at these comforting words, and answered:

"That's easy to say! Much you care about my sick sister."

Stepping softly up behind them came a customer, a pretty girl not more than fourteen, who bought ten cents' worth of nuts. This made Jack's eyes sparkle; it was the largest sale he had had. Then she tried to crowd them into the pocket of her velvet sack.

"I can't carry them all, it seems," she said good-humoredly. "Here, little merchant, I'll give this handful to you. Tell your employer that they are good honest nuts that belong to you; not stolen ones."

As she spoke she brushed what was left of her purchase close to Jack, and nodding gaily, walked away.

In an instant Jack's hands were behind the nice little pile, and he brushed them with eager haste over in front of Dickie.

"Here, take 'em," he said excitedly. "Every one; and give 'em to the little sister. There's a good three cents' worth, and I'm glad of it. I know they're nice, for Rob Stuart bought some this morning, and he gave me one."

"I don't need so many," said Dickie, shamefaced and sorrowful. "You keep some of them, Jack; she can't eat but two or three."

"They'll keep," said the nut-merchant gaily. "She can eat two or three every day. I'm awful glad for her to have them. I like to give things when I have 'em to give, but you see, old fellow, I set out when I commenced business to be honest every time, and I have to stick to it."

WHAT MAKES THE DIFFERENCE?

DO you think it is wrong to be proud of one's country?

Perhaps not, but there are few lands whose inhabitants have so much to be proud of as have the boys and girls of America.

I love to see our flag; to me it is the most beautiful thing that I ever saw floating in the breeze.

Once, in a foreign port, I looked across the harbor, and here and there I could see our own dear old Stars and Stripes waving from some mast-head, and, oh, how beautiful they looked!

Still, after all, it is what the old flag *represents* that makes us love it. It represents our country, and the country is ours, because here are our homes and friends, our schools and our churches, and these are so precious to us that we can hardly tell how much we prize them.

The old flag is like a bank-bill which stands for all our fortune.

Which of you would be willing to exchange this land for any other in all the world?

There is no mistake about it, ours is a wonderful country! This is known by people across the sea in every direction!

How many times I have thought of this when standing on the dock in New York, watching the crowd of men, women and children, just landed at Castle Garden; or some ship steaming up the bay, its deck thronged with passengers, who had heard in their far-off homes of this goodly land, and were now come to realize their dreams; and then I have asked myself, "What has made this

land so desirable, so worthy of our pride, and loyalty, and love—so different from all others?" And this was the answer.

"Here we have, and always have had, the precious Bible."

You don't think very much of it. Don't read it much. You have one. Mother has one. Grandfather has one.

You go and take down that "old-fashioned Bible," and look at it carefully. Never mind if its covers are broken, if its binding has yielded, if its leaves are worn, and soiled, and stained with tears. Examine this book carefully, over which grandfather bent in prayer morning and evening, and from which the minister read at his funeral; this book that crowns every Christian pulpit; and remember that this made that man what he was, made home so pleasant, your school so helpful, and society so enjoyable, and while you thank God for such a gift, and for the land made free and good and grand by it, think of those countries where the Bible is little known, where its blessed light has never shone; and while gratitude makes your heart swell, offer a prayer for those who need your pity.

It is almost impossible for us here, who have never visited a heathen land, to realize what a wonderful difference there is between their society and that which we enjoy. Do you have pleasant evenings at your home, when your brothers and sisters and cousins come in, with other boys and girls, and young ladies and gentlemen? If you had been born in India, and had been educated as a Hindoo, this could not have been.

Social gatherings such as we enjoy when the church society meets, or the literary society, or the temperance society, or when a few families come together to have a social tea, and to chat and sing and laugh away the evening, could not be spent there.

The mothers might meet, the men might come together, but the mothers must gossip by themselves, and the men by themselves.

"PANSIES FOR THOUGHTS."

What is the Pansy Society doing? Brave battle, lovely work, that persevered in, will make many households very happy during 1882. *What is it?* Whatever will help each one of the Band to overcome his and her faults and small temptations, is faithfully tried. To do this, little memories must be jogged often and often. For it is the "*I didn't think*," that has spoiled many an otherwise noble character.

So the beautiful Badge is a reminder to the grand work.

The Publishers are sorry to announce that the promised Badge that so many are waiting for, is not ready to be distributed. As each Locket is to be in eight colors and very elegant, and a great many thousand are being made, it will take a longer time to finish them all and send them, than was at first anticipated. It is hoped, however, that before very long all can be supplied. Meantime, the members must bear it in mind that the delay will make the beautiful Badge all the lovelier when it does come.

NEW BOOK FOR MISSIONARY SOCIETIES.

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