

THE MAN OF THE HOUSE.

BY PANSY.

REUBEN jumped from the platform just as the engine gave its final yell. His cheeks were red as roses, and his eyes were bright. He had been gone a whole week; and what a week it had been! He looked taller and larger in every way than the boy who left that depot a week before. Not that he had grown so very much, but it is wonderful how much larger a thick, heavily lined, well-fitting overcoat, buttoned up to the chin, makes a boy look.

He had Miss Hunter's flowered satchel on his arm; it was full, too; he couldn't imagine of what. "Some lunch for you," Mrs. Barrows had said, and smiled as she gave the heavy satchel into his keeping. But the boy had not needed a lunch for a two hours' ride, and had concluded not to open the satchel until he got home. He signalled a down-town street-car the first thing, and took his seat; he was in too much of a hurry to walk; and, besides, the satchel was wonderfully heavy.

He took out his pocket-book to pick out five pennies for the fare; and his face grew redder, and his eyes shone brighter; whenever he thought of that pocket-book he laughed. Grace Barrows had given it to him, "to remember their ride by," she told him; and within it was a wonderful paper, an envelope. This envelope Mr. Barrows had given him just as he started away. "Put it in your pocket-book, my boy," said he, "and don't open it on the cars; it is never a wise thing to handle money on the cars. It is yours, every cent of it. You will need it to help move your family. I wouldn't bring the stove, if I were you, nor some of the other things that will cost more than they will come to; better sell them. The things in the house are all a present to you from Mrs. Barrows, but the money in this envelope isn't a present, it belongs to you. If you hadn't picked up that paper I should have offered a reward for its return; and my horse that you saved for me is worth a good deal of money. So you have fairly earned what you will find here. You just send me a telegram on what day you will get started, and we'll have a fire in the house and supper going, so your mother will feel at home; and now good-by, sir, and success to you!" and Mr. Barrows had shaken hands with him as though he were already a man. He laughed again over that white envelope, carefully sealed. What if there should be as much as ten dollars in it! If there *only* were, he could see his way clear towards moving right away. Then he fell to wording his telegram. Suppose mother could get ready to go this week! Suppose it should be on Thursday; a good deal could be done in two days and a half; then he would telegraph: "Dear Mr. Barrows: We will come on Thursday morning on the train that leaves here at twenty minutes after ten." He counted the words and was amazed to find that there were twenty of them. How did people ever say any thing with *ten* words, which he knew was the usual number for dispatches! He tried again and again; the

first message didn't suit him anyway; it didn't sound business-like. He had stood by and listened to the reading of business dispatches many a time, and admired their short, sharp sound. By the time the car turned into Ninth street and he knew that he must leave it at the next corner, he had his dispatch planned in a way that delighted his heart. "We take the ten-twenty A. M. train Thursday." "It sounds just like 'em," he said half aloud in his glee as he pulled the strap.

A brisk walk of five minutes or so and he was at home. The fancy came over him to knock at his mother's door, and Beth opened it, and stood a moment and stared, and said, "Mother!" and then said, "Oh, oh!" and put both arms around the young man's neck. "I thought you were a messenger boy, I was *so* scared because of your coat," she explained breathlessly. "Why, Reuben, where *did* you get your coat? Oh, mother, isn't it splendid?" And the mother who had never really hoped to see her son in any thing so fine,



ON THE HORSE CAR.

and warm, and beautifully fitting, could not help laughing a little too.

"You are just in time for dinner," explained Beth; "but I hope you are not awful hungry; or no — yes, I hope you are, *dreadful* hungry, because then just potatoes will taste good; we haven't a speck of meat."

"I don't want meat;" said Reuben, unbuttoning his coat; I had steak for breakfast, plenty of it; but then

maybe I've got some in my lunch; you pitch into the lunch, Beth, and see if there is something good for dinner." Whereupon he unlocked Miss Hunter's satchel, and Beth began to draw out the treasures, with little screams of satisfaction over them.

"Mother, here is a whole chicken, put in for Reuben's lunch! And oh, here is a pie, two pies tied together,



THEN HE LEANED HIS HEAD ON THE TABLE AND BURST INTO TEARS.

just slipped in whole, on the pie-plates! And here is a loaf of bread. O mother, mother, here is a cupful of the sweetest-smelling butter you ever saw!"

"I guess it is!" said Reuben, in intense satisfaction; "their butter tastes just like the roses that you smell as you pass the greenhouse on North street. I'm awful glad they sent you some." It was a splendid dinner that they at last sat down to; the potatoes were done to a nicety, and the cold chicken, and pie, and cheese, and butter were a little better than any they had ever tasted before.

"I declare, we ought to have Miss Hunter in, to get some of these good things!" the mother said.

But Beth explained that she was up in mother Perkin's room, making her some tea and toast: she saw her go.

Then commenced Reuben: "O mother, do you suppose Miss Hunter will move with us? She could get ever so much more work there, and better wages, a good deal better; Mr. Barrows told me to tell her so, and to urge her to come. He said now was her time to get in with some of the best."

Beth looked up quickly at her mother, to see how she took this matter-of-course way of speaking of moving, and turned to the man of the house with her startling bit of news:

"O, Reuben, don't you think they have raised the rent of this house one whole dollar a month!"

"Raised the rent!" said Reuben in great contempt; "I hope they will get it, or else I hope they won't. Anyhow, I know they won't from us. But I do wish Miss Hunter would go with us; there is a room in the house that would be just right for her.

"Reuben," said Beth, the color coming and going on her face, "do you really and truly mean you think we are going to move?"

"Why, of course we are going to move. Haven't I been at work all the week getting things ready? Mother, could you go this week, do you think? There's lots of work there waiting; and Mr. Barrows needs me; and if they've raised the house rent here, the sooner we get out the better."

Mrs. Stone looked bewildered; she looked as though she didn't know in the least what to say to her eager-faced boy and waiting girl. She glanced from one to the other a moment in a puzzled way; then she laughed. It was more than a week since Beth had seen her laugh. "Reuben," she said, "I believe you are forty instead of ten. Do you really suppose we could get work right along, if we were to move, and get a place to live in, and manage to pay the rent, and all that?"

"Why, mother, I *know* we could," he said, his bright eyes sparkling. "And I've seen the house we are to live in; fact is, I've rented it, and had it cleaned and all; and there is work waiting for all of us. The queerest little machines, Beth, you ever saw in your life! Brass, you know, with rows of tiny little teeth for you to put your needle through!"

"Put a needle through brass!" said bewildered Beth; and then Reuben laughed, and said he couldn't explain, but she would see for herself in a few days. And then he began at his mother again about the moving, and with advice for her to leave the stove behind. Mr. Barrows advised it.

"Horrid old thing!" said Beth, bestowing glances of hatred on it; "I should be *too* happy to go away and leave it behind. Reuben, you can't think how hateful it has acted since you've been gone; twice as hateful as it does with you."

"I'll fix it to-morrow morning," said Reuben, nodding his head at it; "but, mother, don't you think it would be best to sell it for old iron? That is what Mr. Barrows advised; and, well, to tell you the truth—I was going to keep that for a surprise—he gave me a stove to use in the place of it; one that goes better than that."

"He gave you a stove!" said bewildered Mrs. Stone.

"Yes, he did," said Reuben, his eyes dancing; he concluded that there were surprises enough left without that one.

To tell you all the talk, and all the plans that there were in the Stone family during the rest of that day, would make a book. Before three o'clock in the afternoon, Mrs. Stone was saying to herself: "If we *should* move, we ought to let the agent of this house know;" and by evening she said: "We ought to let Mrs. Bemus know about this house; I guess she would like to rent it."

Then Beth and Reuben looked at each other and laughed; that showed them that their mother was decided to move. I must tell you though, of one thing: "I don't know how we would ever get money enough together to buy what will have to be bought, and get ourselves ready!" This was one of Mrs. Stone's objections. It made Reuben whisk out his pocket-book, over which Beth exclaimed in delight.

"I've got some moving money here," he explained. "It isn't a present, mother; Mr. Barrows said so; he said it was rightly mine, because I had saved him a good deal. I don't know how much there is; he sealed it up, and told me I had better not open it on the cars. But he said I would need it to move my family." Then he broke the seal. Out came the bills, four of them. Reuben's breath began to come quick, and the flush on his face grew brighter. One bill was a five. What if some of the others should be!

"If there *should* be as much as fifteen dollars here,"

he said, stopping and looking at his mother, "what would you say?"

"I'd say that you must have worked most uncommon fast for a boy of ten," she answered, and her tone was not altogether one of pleasure. She did not fancy folks taking pity on them and giving them money.

Reuben laughed, and looked down at his money; he had a story to tell that he fancied would satisfy his mother even if there should be fifteen dollars. But then he began to act very strangely. He gave such a sudden jump in his chair that Beth held to the side of the rickety table. Then he leaned his head on the table and actually burst into tears.

"Why, Reuben Watson Stone!" said Beth, "what on earth is the matter?"

"My dear boy!" said his mother; and she felt almost frightened, it was such a strange thing to see Reuben cry.

He came around to his mother and buried his head in her lap; but not until he had dropped the four bills on the table before her, and she saw that there were two fives, and two twenties. Fifty dollars!

I'm sure I wouldn't like to try to describe to you the commotion there was in that family for a little while.

Mrs. Stone was perfectly bewildered; to give a boy ten, or even fifteen dollars for a week's work, because a rich man felt sorry for him and thought he had a great burden to carry, would be unusual enough; but who ever heard of one giving a ten-year-old boy fifty dollars! She thought for a few moments that there was some wicked plot to ruin her boy, and almost expected to see a policeman appear and arrest him on a charge of stealing.

But Reuben's tears did not last long. He had been taken by surprise, and following hard on so much excitement, had forgotten his dignity, and cried it out with his head in his mother's lap. Now he brushed back his hair from his hot forehead, wiped away all traces of tears, and told his remarkable story, beginning with the ride behind Samson, and the paper worth a thousand dollars that tried to blow away and didn't, and ending with the story of the locked kitchen door and the two boys who were prisoners. It was a long story, and very well told. The mother who, when it began, was all ready to resent the fifty dollars almost as an insult offered to their honest poverty, by the time it was finished declared that she didn't know as fifty dollars was any too much to show his gratitude. As for Beth, she laughed and cried half a dozen times during the account, and half smothered Reuben with kisses when it was finished. This is the way in which the matter of expense of moving was settled, and by night the Stone family were actually packing! There was only one drawback. It didn't seem as though they could make up their minds to go and leave Miss Hunter behind. She had heard the whole story told over by Beth, and enjoyed it quite as much as that small lady thought she ought; and she had heard with pleasure about the room that would just suit her, and the chance for plenty of work at good prices. Then she had grown thoughtful, and finally had owned that she couldn't see her way clear to leaving poor old mother Perkins alone. To be sure she hadn't known her but a week, but the nice old lady was getting used to her, and liked to have her come in, and liked her toast, and relished an egg dropped in water, and was getting pretty feeble, and the long and short of it was, she didn't believe she ought to go and leave her.

"It is *your* duty to go, of course;" she said to Mrs. Stone; "you've got Beth and Reuben to think of, or any how he has you two to plan for, and he's done it like a man, I'm sure—a first-class man at that—and of course it is your duty to go along with him; like enough I'll come trotting behind after a little while, there is nothing in life hinders me but the poor old lady. But I can't make up my mind to leave her, and that is a fact."

So Reuben and Beth felt doleful all one evening because Miss Hunter couldn't see her way clear to leaving mother Perkins. But they need not have wasted a sigh over that.

The fact was, their Father in Heaven saw the way clear, all the time. He meant to have Miss Hunter go with them, and he knew exactly what to do for mother Perkins so that she should not miss the loving care of her new friend. I'll tell you what he did: that night in the silence and the darkness he sent his unseen angels, and they came without sound of footfall or rattling of keys; passed swiftly and silently through the door that Reuben himself had carefully locked but two hours before, and when they passed out again they had mother Perkins with them.

In the morning Miss Hunter found her still body and her wrinkled old face lying just where she had left it the night before; but she came and called Mrs. Stone and Reuben and Beth.

"Look here," she said, her voice grave and yet sweet, "come up here, something has happened; something that we don't have a chance to see very often. Look at her face; did she ever smile like that when she lived here? I'm glad I kissed her last night when I tucked her up. The Lord must have touched her in a very little while after that. He left a little gleam of the glory right here on her face, so we could feel sure of what had happened. Well, Reuben, there's nothing to hinder my moving along with you now. Since the Lord wants her in the palace, of course she doesn't need me to look after her any more."

So they all waited one day, and the funeral of mother Perkins was held in the sunny south room. Miss Hunter put a rose on the coffin that she bought of a small boy who passed by, and Reuben bought a flower that he saw in a greenhouse window: "It looked so kind of sweet," he said, "I couldn't help it; it only cost three cents. Will it do to put with the rose?"

"Why, it's a bit of live forever!" declared Miss Hunter, "and seeing she has gone up there to live forever, it is the very thing." So there were flowers and tears at mother Perkin's funeral.

And the very next day the man of the house moved his family to the country.

A JINGLE FOR VERY LITTLE PANSIES.

BY G. A. R.



THERE was a young toad got lost on the road,
"Ker-hopper, ker-hopper," went he.
Though he tried every track,
He could find no way back,
Oh, what a sad plight for a toad!

There was a young weasel got scratched by a teazle,
 "Ker-skipper, ker-skipper," went he.
 Though his eyes weren't put out,
 He went flying about,
 Oh, what a sad plight for a weasel!



There was a young frog got lost in a bog,
 "Ker-hopper, ker-hopper," went he.
 Though he jumped all about,
 He could find no way out,
 Oh, what a sad plight for a frog!



There was a wee kitten caught her head in a mitten,
 "Ker-mew-yeou, ker-mew-yeou," went she.
 Though she pulled with her might,
 Her poor head stuck tight,
 Oh, what a sad plight for a kitten!



There was a grasshopper jumped into a popper,
 "Ker-flopper, ker-flopper," went he.
 But hop as he would,
 Get out he ne'er could,
 Oh, what a sad plight for a hopper!



There was a Miss Grace
 got a scowl on her face,
 "Ker-whimper, ker-
 whimper," went she.
 Though her mother
 complained,
 The wrinkles re-
 mained,
 Oh, what a sad plight
 for Miss Grace!



There was a boy, sly, who
 got caught in a lie,
 "Ker-boo-hoo, ker-boo-
 hoo," went he.
 Had he cried till quite
 old,
 That lie *had* been
 told,
 Oh, what a *sad* plight
 for a boy!