

EDITED  
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# The Pansy.

THE MAN  
OF THE HOUSE.

VOLUME 9.

PUBLISHED BY D. LOTHROP & CO., BOSTON, MASS.

NUMBER 32.

Saturday, August 12, 1882.

Monthly, 15 cents.

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Semi-monthly, 25 cents.

Weekly, 50 cents a year.

## THE MAN OF THE HOUSE.

BY PANSY.

REUBEN'S telegram was sent; you may be sure of that. A boy like Reuben Watson Stone is not likely to forget his first telegram. So when the stage drew up with a flourish at the little house, Reuben saw with delight the smoke issuing from the chimney. Then, oh, what fun he had taking his mother and Beth and Miss Hunter through the pretty rooms—hearing their exclamations of surprise and delight; seeing Beth try to hug the stove, though it was so hot she couldn't and declare that she would like to kiss that tea-kettle which didn't leak; hearing his mother question in a bewildered way as to how he came to have this, and who thought of that! When that busy, happy evening was done, and Reuben was fairly settled in his new bed, it seemed to him that he had never been so happy in his life.

The excitement kept at white heat all the next day. Reuben had a holiday from the shop in order to help his mother get settled, though, truth to tell, the settling had been so thoroughly done for her before she arrived, and she had so few possessions, that the work was not hard. But there was the box-shop in all its departments to take the wondering Beth through—explaining to her in detail with the confidence of one who had been familiar with the business for years—and the glove factory, in which she saw the wonderful little machine with brass teeth, and discovered that she was to put her needle *between* them, instead of through them. He had also to introduce his mother and Miss Hunter to the glove factory, where they hoped to get work; and to crown the eventful day, Mrs. Barrows came with Grace to get acquainted with his mother, and was as friendly as though she had known her for years. The next day they all went to work in earnest.

The first Sabbath in the new home was one to which Reuben always looked back with a special feeling of interest. A great many things happened for him to remember. In the first place they all went to Church together, and sat in a pew which Mr. Barrows told Reuben they better keep for their own if they liked it; and when he with blushing cheeks asked how much it would cost a year, he took a new lesson in Church work on being told that pews in this Church were not rented; that people selected their seats and paid what they could for the support of the Church. He told his mother before they were fairly out of the building, and she had answered heartily: "That is something like. We can pay a little something ourselves; I've always sat in the gallery and felt like a pauper; if they've found a way of making poor people at home in their churches, I'm glad to hear it." Then Reuben had taken Beth to Sabbath-school, and put her in Grace Barrows' care; and in her new blue merino which Miss Hunter had at last contrived an excuse for giving her, and her fur cape and hood, she looked as well in his eyes as the best of them. In fact, he told his mother that their Beth was certainly the prettiest girl in the class. In his

own class there had been much to think about and remember. Almost the first question his teacher asked was, whether he had remembered his promise of the Sabbath before, and when he, with eyes that drooped a little in embarrassment, had still answered firmly that he had remembered, and also that he had decided the question, he never forgot the glow in her eyes as she held out her hand to him and said: "I am very glad. Now, my boy, remember this: Show your colors everywhere." He thought about this sentence a great deal during the lesson. What chance was there for him to show his colors, he wondered. He was not quite sure what she meant; he thought he would like to know, and he waited a little for Beth, and also in the hope that she would speak to him again after the school was closed. Sure enough she turned to him with that bright, glad smile and asked him one of those direct questions:

"Are you going to do it?"

"Do what, ma'am?"

"Why, show your colors everywhere and always."



THE STAGE DREW UP WITH A FLOURISH.

"Reuben looked down at his plain gray clothes; very little color about them, and that little rather dingy; he had not even a bright neck-tie, like some of the boys. "How'll I show them if I haven't got 'em?" he asked at last, a glimmer of a smile on his face. He knew that Miss Mason did not mean that sort of color; but he was



puzzled all the same to know what she did mean.

"Reuben, you know something about soldiers?"

"Yes'm," and Reuben's thoughts went back in a twinkling to the story of his great grandfather and his brave fighting, and his hat shaped like George Washington's; his mother had entertained his and Beth's childhood with stories that she had heard while sitting on her grandfather's knee.

"Well, don't you know they wear their country's colors? A uniform, we call it; and when we see them, we are never at a loss to know which side they are on, because their colors tell us instantly. Now the Lord Jesus Christ has called you to be a soldier, and you have accepted the call, and I say to you, be sure you wear his colors always. Let nobody doubt on which side you are."

A bright, pleased look came into Reuben's eyes. This was a new thought to him, that he was really a soldier like his great grandfather, of whom his mother had told him dozens of times he had reason to be proud. It was nice to think he wore the colors of his Captain. He understood almost in a flash, what Miss Mason meant.

"Yes'm," he said, his voice showing his gladness; "I'll try for it."

She saw that he understood her, and was turning away with a smile; but she turned back. "And Reuben, one thing more; remember your Captain has had your orders written out for you in a book, and he expects you always to look for direction as to what he wants done. You can talk with him, to be sure, at any time; but after all, you can hardly expect him to repeat to you directions that you might find by looking for them in your order-book."

"That's the Bible!" said Reuben, and his eyes flashed. "I never thought of it; thank you, I'll remember."

Did he walk with a sort of martial tread as he went down the aisle to meet the waiting Beth? He understood for the first time that he was a soldier.

They sat together, he and Beth, that evening in the pretty little parlor. It was so funny for the Stones to have a parlor! This little speck of a room was the most delightful spot that Reuben and Beth knew any thing about. It chanced to be a mild day, and the door leading into the neat kitchen had been thrown open all day; besides, the sun had shone in at the east window all the morning, so there was a pleasant warmth in the room, and here sat Beth and Reuben together, reading their Sabbath-school books. At least Beth was reading. Reuben had closed his book and was deep in thought. The story had been about a Christian girl who had prayed for, and talked with, and worked for, her brother, and led him at last to give his heart to Jesus. It made Reuben think of his sister. Ought he to talk to her? He had prayed for her all the week. Indeed, it was the first thing he thought of that Monday morning when he prayed; how much he would like to have Beth understand about this new sweet feeling that had come into his heart. Ever since her name had come into his prayer as naturally as his own. Still all this week he had not said a word to her on the subject. This astonished him a little; he always told Beth every thing; she had heard about the boys in the shop, and the spoiled pasteboards out of which he meant to make his fortune, and the two tickets to see the pictures, and — well, every thing that had had to do with the eventful days during which he had been separated from her; every thing but this one experience: his talk with his teacher, his promise to her, the thought he had given to it all that Sabbath afternoon, the kneeling down in the solemn midnight, and the strange new feeling with which he arose, and that had been with him ever since. In regard to all these things he had been entirely silent.

He was surprised to find that he shrank from telling Beth any thing about it. Why should he? Reuben did not know then, so well as he afterwards learned, about the enemy who longed for nothing so much as to keep him from showing this new spirit to Beth and enlisting her at once as a soldier in the same army. To-night as he sat staring into the twilight, thinking of the book he had been reading, of Miss Mason's words about showing his colors, of his promise to try for it, there came suddenly to his heart this question:

"Are you showing them to Beth? Does she know any thing about this new Captain of yours? Suppose you had never mentioned Mr. Barrows' name to her during all these days, what would you think of yourself?"

"Oh, but Mr. Barrows has done so many things for me; I *had* to mention him." And then did Reuben's cheeks glow for very shame! Did he really mean that this new Captain had done nothing for him? Oh no, no! He could never mean that; for Reuben had thought about it a great deal during this week, and he felt very sure that it was this great Captain of his who had been leading him in these strange new ways. All his life, perhaps, but certainly on that night in which he took that awful ride with Spunk and Spunk's master, and felt himself directed where to go, and what to do, and the weeks that had followed had been no less wonderful! Oh yes, Reuben was very sure that a great deal had been done for him. Then why didn't he tell Beth about it? he resolved that he would.

"Beth," he commenced, "it is too dark to see to read any longer, let's talk."

"Well," said Beth, closing her book promptly, "talk." But all that Reuben did was to sit and stare out of the window.

"Why don't you talk?" said Beth, "lots of things must have happened to you since we had a long talk last."

"There have; great big things. I'm trying to think where to begin."

"Begin at the biggest thing of them all and come on down, and tell me all about it."

"The biggest thing that ever happened to me in my life," said Reuben, speaking slowly and gravely, "is that I've got to be a soldier, and have got a Captain, and wear his colors, and am bound to obey him, just exactly, every time."

"Reuben, what in the world are you talking about!" said Beth, and she dropped her book on the floor and came and sat on the edge of the chair that was in front of Reuben's own, and stared at him, astonishment in her voice and astonishment in her face.

"Why," said Reuben, fidgeting a little, "that's it, you see; I don't know how to tell you. It's a long story, that is, it's long to think it, but when you come to tell it there doesn't seem to be much that a fellow can tell. Look here, Beth, suppose you were walking down this road" — and Reuben arose and took careful steps on the pretty flowers in the carpet, toward the west window — "and you should meet somebody who said to you 'I want you to turn right square around and go the other way, and you should make up your mind to do it, don't you see how different every thing would be right away?' Whereupon Reuben turned and walked briskly toward the east window. Beth watched him wonderingly.

"I should want to be pretty sure who was talking to me, and what he wanted me to turn around for, and what good it would do, anyway, before I should make up my mind to do any such thing," she said at last, seeing that Reuben seemed to be waiting for her to speak.

"Exactly," he said, coming back to his chair. "Well,



the fact is, I found out that the One who met me wanted to do the best thing for me all the while, and knew what was the best, and *made* me, in the first place, and had a right to direct me which way to go; and I just turned around and made up my mind to follow him the rest of my life."

"It must be you mean that you are a Christian!"

Reuben always remembered the great astonishment in Beth's voice as she spoke those words.

"I suppose I am," he said gravely—he had not put it into words before—"if a Christian means one who has made up his mind to follow the Lord Jesus Christ, take him for Captain, you know, why, I'm one, sure."

"That is what it means," said Beth, nodding her head. "Miss Hunter told me so; she told me a good deal about it; she wanted me to go that same way, but I didn't think I wanted to do that; I didn't want to leave you behind; I wanted to keep right along with you and not go anywhere at all that you didn't; and now you've gone and left me!" and Beth dropped her head on her arm and began to cry softly.

"O Beth, I haven't!" he declared eagerly; "I've come back for you, don't you see? That's what I am trying to tell you, I want you along. I couldn't be a soldier without you! we've always been together. Girls can be soldiers in this army just as well as boys; it's different from any other army. I say, Beth, won't you come right along? That's the very reason I wanted to tell you about it to-night."

Beth had already dried her tears and was listening.

"What did you mean about hearing somebody speak to you, and ask you to turn around, and all that? I don't understand what you mean."

So Reuben began at the story of that midnight ride, part of which she already knew, and told her about the terror, and the horror, and the prayer, and the quiet that came to him, and the sense of somebody leading him, and he following just where the Somebody led; and from that he jumped to the experiences of but the Sabbath day before; the lesson, and the teacher's question, and her talk with him, and his promise, and what hard work he had to keep it, and how Grace Barrows helped him along without knowing it, and how, finally, after midnight, he knelt down and settled it, and how he had been sure ever since of the presence and help of his Leader. Then he told how Miss Mason had reminded him that very day to be sure and show his colors. "I wanted to show you, Beth, the first thing, and ask you to put them on."

It had been quite a long story; the twilight faded out entirely while he talked and left the room dark but for the glow of the firelight. Beth had listened in silence, but with the utmost attention. She drew a long sigh when he closed, and if Reuben could have seen her face it would have told him that she felt herself left behind.

"You've been converted," she said at last.

"Have I?" said Reuben; "I don't know. I don't even know what the word means."

"I do, Miss Hunter told me; she said there were two sides to it; God had one side, and folks the other. God called to people, asked them to *belong*, you know, just as you heard him ask you—that is his side. Then they said either 'I will,' or 'I won't,' and that's their side, and she said even *God* couldn't do any thing for them so long as they said 'I won't,' because he had promised himself when he made them, that they should have the right to decide things for themselves, and that was their side. Then she said just as soon as they made up their minds to say 'I will,' he put new feelings into their hearts, so that they wanted to do right, where before they hadn't cared, or hadn't thought any thing about it; and all at once they knew that the thing they wanted most was to follow the Lord Jesus, and please

him, and she said that new feeling in their hearts was called being converted, and there wasn't anybody else who could do it only just God; and I know you have been converted."

"Well," said Reuben, after a very thoughtful silence, "I never heard it explained before, but it sounds like Miss Mason's talk, fits right in, and I guess it is all true. I've often wondered what it felt like to be converted; I'm glad I know. I'll tell you what it is, Beth, you do your part, right away, won't you, so He can do his, and then we'll go on together."



BETH AND REUBEN SAT IN THE PARLOR

"Does mother know?" asked Beth.

"No, she doesn't. I wanted to tell you first. Fact is, I don't know how to tell such things. Do you suppose mother will understand what I mean?"

"I guess so," said Beth; "she will have to be told, anyhow; for things will have to be different now, you know."

"How different?"

"Why, every way. We'll have to have reading in the Bible every night and morning, and kneel down and pray, and say a prayer at the table every time we eat."

"How do you know?" asked Reuben, very much startled. "Who would read in the Bible and pray? People don't always do that."

"Oh, they do," said Beth, confidently, "Miss Hunter told me about it; she told me about a bad man who was converted, and he began the next day to read in the Bible and pray, and they all knelt down, and every thing was different; and you know, Reuben, you are the man of our house."

# SHORT.

I MEAN the prayer of the Publican. You can find it in Luke 18:13. There are seven words only in it. "God be merciful to me a sinner." Once Jesus was asked how we ought to pray, and he said "Pray after this manner: Our Father, etc." (Matt. 6:9-13.) It



takes thirty seconds only to say those words. Try it by the clock. Nearly all the Bible prayers are very short. Even Solomon's prayer when his great church, the Temple, was dedicated (1. Kings, 8.) is not so long as you would at first suppose, nor the prayer in John 17.

All earnest prayer is very short; certainly it is usually about just one thing. You can easily see if I am wrong by going to your Bibles. This Publican's prayer was very earnest, yet he asked for but one thing. Blind Bartimeus wanted Jesus to do just one thing for him. A certain father prayed the Lord for only one thing, i. e. to come down to his house and save his child's life. You will find it so all through the Old and New Testaments, with very few exceptions. So you can easily see why Bible prayers are short: they do not ask for so many things at once.

A boy who very much wants to go fishing is very earnest when he comes to his father for permission. He does not care to go hunting, or to a circus, or to play ball. He thinks of one thing only. He asks for that and that only, and how long does it take such an earnest boy to say:

"Can't I go fishing with George Gray to-day?"

When we are really honest and earnest before God in prayer — and we need not go to him unless we are — we shall ask him for one thing that we want just then more than any thing else in all the world. We shall not pray for twenty other things at that time; shall not try to pray for almost every thing, and so draw our prayers out, and out, and out, as the spider spins his web out of his body just as long as he wants to. No one will ever get tired of our prayers if we are in earnest; for they will not be long then. We cannot be very long in asking for one thing, or at most, a very few things.

Short prayers, like this Publican's, are usually very simple. The words are short and plain.

How many would have to go to the dictionary to find out what "God be merciful to me a sinner" means? Just examine the Prodigal's prayer (Luke 15); see how very short and simple every word is. The Lord's prayer (Matt. 6) has sixty-six short words, forty-eight of which have one syllable only.

No one seeing the flames bursting from a house cries, "Conflagration! conflagration!! conflagration!!!"

Prayers grow very long and tiresome because they try to travel through so many long, hard words. Don't use them unless you must. It is not showy words we wish to send to heaven, but a broken heart. Nobody wants to hear our big grand words when we pray. Use as plain little words as you well can; so your prayer will be shorter and much more easily understood.

Pray your own prayer, so you will be short. This Publican's prayer isn't like the Prodigal's. It isn't just like any other. No two persons are just alike. They don't think or speak just the same way, and how can they honestly pray just alike? When one tries to pray just as he hears his minister or elder or father or Mr. Moody pray, he is only repeating over their words. He is losing time. He is doing like a heathen. That is why many pray so long; they are trying to offer their pastor's prayer, and the deacon's prayer, and Mr. Moody's besides their own. Indeed, they sometimes do not get to their own.

This Publican's prayer came right up out of his sorrowing heart. So God who sees the heart was pleased with the prayer, and he answered the penitent man, and sent him home from the Church with a great blessing. He forgave him then and there. Indeed, it mattered not just what words he used and how many, so he was sorry before God for his sins and was willing to say so before all the Church if necessary. Surely you know you are a sinner, and surely you can tell God in your own simple honest way. Will you? Now?

## HIS FIELD.

JOHNNY was twelve years old, and he was always in his place to hear the sermon, and he always felt that some of the sermon was for him, just as much as a piece of the pumpkin-pie after they got home from Church and sat around the dinner-table.

One Sabbath the minister preached from these words: "Son, go work to-day in my vineyard." And he said that every child of Jesus ought to be doing his own work somewhere for the Master.

That sermon stirred Johnny all up. He was attending Sunday-school and nearly all the meetings. But he could hardly call that work. What should he do? Night and day he thought the matter over. One plan of work after another came before him; but somehow none seemed suited to him.

One night as he lay thinking, something — it must have been the Holy Spirit — seemed to say to him: "Take papers to the Reading Room."

Johnny's father received a great many religious papers, and after a few bits here and there were read they were often used by the servant Mary to kindle fires. I suppose Johnny's father had thus used up a ton of these good papers in his life-time.

What if every one had been given to some poor ignorant family, every one getting into a different family, those papers might have been as good as so many angels.

Johnny now told his plans to his parents, and they promised him all the papers, telling Mary not to destroy one. So the next Monday afternoon a package was nicely prepared, and with it Johnny, dressed in his best, started for "his field."

The Reading Room was four squares off. Many wretched-looking men came there to sit and read and talk together, and sometimes they would attend the prayer-meeting in the back room.

As Johnny walked on thinking, "his field" seemed very large and beautiful, for who could tell but some of those evil-looking men would read these papers and become good men.

Mr. Worthington, who had charge of the Reading Room, was much surprised to see our little man walk in and hear him tell his plans of work. He gladly took the papers, and begged Johnny to come very often and bring more. And while they were talking, a man sat listening and looking at Johnny. A poor, sad creature he was; but his gloomy eye lighted up as he took the large clean paper from Johnny's hand.

Near Johnny's home was a neighbor, who also took a good many papers. One day Johnny ventured in and asked if he could have one or more after they were read. And when they heard his story and saw his eyes sparkle as he told of the rough men and that sometimes they would go into the meeting and join in the singing, the neighbor not only promised his papers, but said he would like to go with Johnny to some of the meetings.

But Johnny is learning to play on the organ and sing, and when the leader is not there, Mr. Worthington invites him to take his place.

Thus "his field" is growing larger and larger. Those rough men all know him, and call him "Mister John Morgan," and they beg him to come and see them at their homes. And he goes very often. If I could make good pictures, I would put one right here; it should be one of this dear boy on his way to some sad home. He has a basket on one arm filled with good things for a hungry, or sick, or a cold one. That little book in his other hand is his Testament. He will read a few verses to some poor soul when he distributes his basketful.

"Have you your 'field'?"