

and ecstasy, low, clear, minor notes, and his soul thrilled with, inexpressible longing, pity, desire. The music died slowly. The boy put forth his hands as if he would have grasped the invisible spirit. Another sound, divine, yet more familiar, came to him as the choir poured forth their anthem.

For a moment, surely only one brief moment, did the delicious pleasure last, then the inspiration left the lad, the delightful sensation faded, Sefton was a beggar again, a hungry, homeless, helpless waif, seeing with animal eyes, feeling with animal senses. He waited patiently for the wondrous joy to come again, and sometimes as the wind caught the carved pinnacles, the sound sent a quiver of expectation through him. But the wind died away, darkness came on, and Sefton was forced to leave the enchanted spot.

He stole noiselessly away and, dog-like, found the road to the den that had sheltered him the night before. Its inhabitants, pitying, gave him food. They knew the fate of his mother, how, robbed of the poison which was her curse, she had fallen near death. They decided amongst themselves to keep the lad, at least until his mother was released by law or death.

Day after day, Sefton visited that nook between the two buttresses, ignorantly believing that to be the only place where the wonderful sensations that thrilled him could be found. There, in the mild spring weather, his artistic soul awoke to life, as the growing warmth of the season brought into life beautiful flowers, so the daily delight in music brought into existence new senses. He told no one of his strange experiences, he had a vague fear that his great pleasure might be taken from him.

One day, whilst the organ pealed forth a simple theme, a new experience dawned on him, the germs of expression developed. Unconsciously he echoed with his voice the sounds that reached him. No words—simply notes like those of a bird, open vowel sounds like those of an Italian vocalist. Joy, pride, glory—a joy that he could carry away from the enchanted nook, but dare not. A power to prolong the beautiful sensation.

Soon he learned to echo every wave of sound that reached him, and piped with his childish voice an imitation of the organ's grand notes.

One evening he kept up his echo long after the service had ended, and was suddenly awakened from his trance by—"Boy, who are you?"

A tall grey-headed man stood between the buttresses, and blocked the way of escape. "Tell me who you are, my lad? Why do you sing?"

It was the choir master who asked the question. He might just as well have asked it of a nightingale, for Sefton did not know what singing meant.

Something of this pitiable ignorance was seen by the choir master, so he spoke kindly to the boy, and, questioning him, learnt all that Sefton could tell. It seemed much to the master, who was, in all his being, a musician.

He followed Sefton to the filthy den. He learnt all there was to know of the boy's surroundings, learnt that the laudanum drinking mother was already dead, and buried in a pauper's grave. Then, moved by something more than mere kindness, he took the ragged child by the hand, and led him to his own home—to life, to knowledge.

Sefton became the choir master's protégé. He was made acquainted with cleanliness, suitable clothing, plentiful food, and comfort. He learnt what music was, and took in the rudiments of art as he took in new ideas, new hopes.

The novelty of comfortable surroundings, of warmth, rest, contentment, lasted with Sefton only for a moment. They were forgotten as soon as known, accepted without a thought, for all the boy turned to music. It became his life, his soul. No master ever had such a pupil, such a strong inclination, together with such natural capabilities, for art. And Sefton's patron found a reward for his kindness and generosity in the lad's reverence and passionate affection.

With dawning intelligence and experience, a great desire arose in Sefton's heart. It was to sing in the cathedral. To let his