

THE LAST DOLLAR.

He gave it to his wife with a sigh, yet with a look of resignation.

"It is our last dollar," he said. "But the Lord will provide."

The Rev. James Spring was minister in the little mountain village of Thornville. He was poor, and his congregation was poor. Often before he had been very near his last dollar, but he had never actually got to it until to-day.

"So you've been always saying," sobbed his wife; "but what is to become of us when this is gone? They won't trust us any more at the store; and your salary won't be due these three weeks, even if you get it then. Why do you stay here, James, when the people are so poor?"

"I have no other place to go to; nor money to travel to it, if the Lord opened a way. My work for the present is here. He feedeth the young ravens; He will surely feed us."

"I wish I had your faith, but I haven't; and it won't come to me. Oh! what shall we do, what shall we do!" And she wrung her hands despairingly. "My poor children!"

"Once I was young and now I am old," solemnly said her husband, speaking in the words of the Psalmist, "yet never have I seen the righteous forsaken, nor His seed begging bread."

As if in answer to this pious ejaculation there came a sudden knock at the door. All the while the minister and his wife had been talking, a storm had been raging outside. On opening the door, a traveller, quite wet through, entered.

"I was coming through the forest from Maryland," he said, "and ventured to stop at the first house I see. My horse is in the shed. Do I take too great a liberty?"

"Not at all," answered the master of the house. "We have but a poor shelter, as you see; but such as it is, you are welcome to it; there is a good fire, at any rate." For it was in the kitchen where this conversation took place. Indeed, this humble home boast-

ed no parlor, and the kitchen was dining-room, drawing-room, living-room, and all.

The stranger proved to be a man of education and intelligence, and in conversation with him, the minister forgot his trouble, and was reminded of earlier and brighter days, when intellectual companionship had not been the rare thing it was now, up among these hills.

At last the storm abated, and the stranger rose to go. His host accompanied him to the gate, and watched him till he disappeared behind a turn of the road.

"See here, James," cried his wife, eagerly, when he returned to the house, "I found this on the table, near where the gentleman sat."

It was a fifty-dollar greenback, wrapped hastily in a bit of paper, that looked as if it had been torn from a pocket-book, and on the inside of the paper was written the verse of the Psalmist, which, it was now apparent, the traveler had overheard.

"I thought he was writing the direction he asked for," said the minister. "He means it for us. Thanks be to the Lord! Did I not say, my dear, He would provide?"

His wife burst into tears.

"God forgive me!" she said, "I will never doubt again. The Lord surely sent this stranger to our aid."

"And He will still provide," replied her husband. "Whatever my lot be, here or elsewhere, in Him I trust."

A month afterward a letter, a rare event, came to the Rev. James Spring. It was as follows:

"Rev. and Dear Sir: The church at Maryville has unanimously called you to its pastorate. The salary is fifteen hundred dollars and a good parsonage-house." The letter concluded by saying: "The writer of this first came to know you by your hospitality to him during a storm a few weeks ago. He overheard you, in a moment of great distress, speak with such full faith, that he feels you are just the person for this charge, and on his recommendation this call has been made."