



THE LEPERS.

What the Traveller Said at Sunset.

BY JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER.

The shadows grow and deepen round me;
I feel the dew-fall in the air;
The muzzin of the day evening thicket,
I hear the night-truth call to prayer.

The evening wind is sad with farewells,
And loving hands unclasp from mine;
Alone I go to meet the darkness
Across an awful boundary-line.

As from the lighted hearths behind me
I pass with slow, reluctant feet,
What waits me in the land of strangeness?
What face shall smile, what voice shall greet?

What space shall awe, what brightness
blind me?
What thunder roll of music stun?
What vast processions sweep before me
Of shapes unknown beneath the sun?

I shrink from unaccustomed glory,
I dread the myriad-voiced strain;
Give me the unforgotten faces,
And let my lost ones speak again.

He will not chide my mortal yearning
Who is our Brother and our Friend,
In whose full life divine and human,
The heavenly and the earthly blend.

Mine be the joy of soul-communion,
The sense of spiritual strength renewed,
The reverence for the pure and holy,
The dear delight of doing good.

No fitting ear is mine to listen
An endless anthem rise and fall;
No curious eye is mine to measure
The pearl gate and the jasper wall.

For love must needs be more than knowledge;
What matter if I never knew
Why Aldebaran's star is ruddy
Or colder Sirius white as snow?

Forgive my human words, O Father!
I go Thy larger truth to prove;
Thy mercy shall transcend my longing;
I seek but love, and Thou art Love!

I go to find my lost and mourned-for
Safe in Thy sheltering goodness still,
And all that hope and faith foreshadow
Made perfect in Thy holy will!

Charity to Lepers.

It is not certainly known whether the modern leprosy as it exists in Palestine is the same as the disease of that name mentioned in the Bible, or a disorder of a different kind. The symptoms described in Scripture are indeed less violent than those now seen, but it is supposed by some writers that only the earlier symptoms are mentioned in the Bible, and that what is now seen is the later and loathsome form of the disease.

Lepers are still found, as in the days of old, sitting by the way-side begging. Travellers are sometimes cautioned not to go too near them, lest they take the disease. When, therefore, any one wishes to give alms to the lepers, who sit at a distance imploring help, he does not go close to them and put his money into their hands, but from where he is standing he throws it to the place where they are, as you see represented in the picture. He pities the poor creatures, but he is afraid to get too near them.

How different this from the conduct of Jesus. At one time, when He was in Galilee, "there came a leper to Him, beseeching Him, and kneeling

down to Him, and saying unto Him, If Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean. And Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth His hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will; be thou clean." Mark i. 40, 41.

He who had power over unclean spirits, and could restore the dead to life, was not afraid of contamination from leprosy. Others showed their pity by throwing alms from a distance; He manifested His compassion by touching him.

There is no sinner so vile that Jesus is unwilling to come near him. It is thought that if the leper should touch a man he would give him the leprosy, and make him as loathsome as himself; but Jesus could touch even the leper and make him clean. Whom Jesus touches He blesses; and if we, sinful as we are by nature, only ask Jesus for help, He will make our souls pure from the leprosy of sin.

The Expressman's Foo.

BY LAURIE LORING.

"WHAT will you take, Wallace, for that pair of leaders?"

"Can't be bought."

"Pretty near perfect, then, aren't they?"

"No; not pretty near, but quite;" and Ferd Wallace, the expressman, smoothed the glossy coats of his favourite horses with evident pride.

"They do look it," exclaimed his neighbour, Mr. Morse, who was an extensive shoe manufacturer, and before whose shop the horses stood. "Tell you what, Wallace, I'll lay you down a clean thousand for the pair."

"You may lay me down two thousand, if you wish," said Mr. Wallace coolly.

"Will that bring them?" quickly asked Mr. Morse. This wealthy manufacturer had long coveted the expressman's handsome grays.

"No; and you haven't money enough to do it, either," answered Wallace, as he vaulted lightly to his high seat. Gathering the reins in his hand, he glanced with a quick, practiced eye at his horses. The four grays were beautiful blooded creatures any man might be proud to own; but the leaders were a trifle more glossy—a trifle more daintily-stepping. They stood with arched necks, champing their frosty bits, feeling their master had taken the reins, yet not a step was taken. Their delicately-poised ears were awaiting the word of command.

"You see," continued Mr. Wallace, who was usually a man of few words, "that pair of horses have got the hang of the business so well that they could almost express it without me. I'll wager you fifty dollars that they'd come straight out of Boston if I wasn't on the team."

"Better try it some of these snapping, cold nights," answered Mr. Morse, with a laugh. "It'll be no boy's play driving out to-night, for instance."

"Very likely," answered the expressman, glancing carelessly at the cold, gray sky. "But I always take a bottle of blood-warmer along with me;" and he touched his breast pocket significantly. "Nothing like raw brandy to brace up a man and keep out the cold," he added, preparing to start on. "In winter it is as much a part of my stock in business as my horses."

"What is so good to keep out the cold?" asked Mr. Rockwood, the minister, coming up in time to catch the last sentence.

"O, the poison you temperance folks are raving about," said Mr. Morse, with a laugh.

"Do you really believe, Mr. Wallace, that whiskey or brandy does ward off the cold?" asked Mr. Rockwood, quickly.

"I've tried it, that's belief enough for me," was the brief reply. He spoke to his horses, then turned to the minister, calling out with a pleasant nod of good-bye, "And I shall probably try it to-day, and every day this winter. There's proof of my belief, if you want it."

Mr. Morse and Mr. Rockwood watched the beautiful light-stepping horses for a moment, then Mr. Rockwood said emphatically: "I suppose the poor fellow thinks he's right—pity, isn't it?"

"O, Wallace'll come through all right," answered Mr. Morse, lightly. "He never takes more than is needful to healthily brace himself."

The minister shook his head. "Much better were it, could there be wayside inns where teamsters and travellers might call and buy a quart of hot beef tea. That would be even better than the best flavoured coffee. But I tell you it is the devil's own strength only that men get from alcoholic liquors. I suppose that nine out of every ten men who are frozen to death might have lived if they had been sober."

The day grew bitterly cold. Long before Mr. Wallace reached the first tavern where he was accustomed to stop, he had taken out the bottle of "blood-warmer." As he drank down the fiery liquid, he smiled grimly at the remembrance of the minister's words. "Tell me it don't keep out the cold! I'm warmer already, my much-mistaken and reverend friend."

Acting upon this honest belief, he nearly drained the bottle before stopping. But it was easily realenished at the tavern. This comforting stimulative was repeated more than once before he reached the city; yet he did not forget to care well for his horses, even though he himself felt that the weather must be "moderating." He was quite capable of attending to his business, delivered his packages safely, then went down to one of the market eating-rooms and ordered a comfortable dinner. With the last glass of his beer he felt cozy and drowsy, and it was with a big sigh he once more donned his overcoat and went out again to his duties.

It was nearly four o'clock when he left Boston. It had already been snowing an hour; yet he mounted to his high seat and spoke to his horses with scarcely a thought of the weather. Not many miles were travelled over, however, before he was compelled to realize what was before him. Every separate flake of snow seemed a fierce, fiery little imp intent on piercing every particle of unprotected flesh with his sharp lance. And the whirling blast