

quietly downstairs. The sun was flooding the cottage room. He opened the table drawer and got out a bit of paper, sitting down by the empty grate to think out this work which must be done before his death. He had to forgive Jem, or the Lord would not forgive him. He wasn't much of a writer, so he didn't tell of the Voice, or of his alarm. He just asked Jem to forgive him the hard words he said last January, and he ended up—'God bless you!'

Now to the post round the corner. Ting, ting, ting! What was that bell? S. Michael's. And the church door was open. There was a five-o'clock celebration of Holy Communion. It was a saint's day—S. Peter's—though John did not know it.

Surely, surely, he might go in. But he wasn't prepared. He had been with Sarah at Easter, not since, and dreadful things might happen to him if he came unfit to the Holy Table. And then again it was his last day!

Full of distress, but unwilling to turn away, John caught the eye of Mr. Blair, the curate, who had been so good to Sarah in the bad bout she had in the winter. A few words to him, and John stepped softly into a place. Mr. Blair hadn't understood all those hurried words about 'the last day,' but he had gathered enough to show that John was desirous of drawing near in hearty repentance and true faith, and his Master had left these words on record, 'Him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out.' So why should He cast out John?

The holy service seemed to calm the poor fellow. He stayed on his knees till he became suddenly conscious of every one having left the church except Mr. Blair, who seemed to be waiting for him. Well, he had best go home now and tell Sarah the strange news, but she would be sore cut up.

He was mechanically turning homeward from the church door, when the curate stopped him. 'Not going to work to-day, John?'

He paused. Work! He was on a job—it was all but finished. A few hours would

complete Mr. Parker's greenhouse wall. It would hamper the master dreadfully if he played him false, and would it be right?

A moment's consideration, and he answered, slowly, 'Yes, sir, I'm going to work;' adding, to himself, 'If it is my last day, I must do my duty to my neighbour.'

'But your breakfast, man?' questioned Mr. Blair.

'Oh, it don't matter, sir,' said John; 'I ain't much for food to-day.'

'You shall have a cup of my coffee; it's excellent,' said the curate. He wouldn't question John further; he wouldn't interfere with God's work just now.

But John wouldn't turn up the little straight path leading to the curate's lodgings. He couldn't, however, prevent that kind man running out with a steaming cup of coffee and a couple of bits of substantial toast.

'You'll work better for it, man,' he said.

And then John went silently on a couple of miles along the road to his job.

What a morning that was, the morning of the last day! Such thoughts welled up in his mind, such remembrances of old deeds, of carelessness, and sin; 'God forgive me, God forgive me,' said John after each such thought, as he laid brick upon brick—using his trowel almost unconsciously.

At twelve his little girl brought his dinner; a nice little girl of six. She had a posy in her hand. 'For your coat, father; let me stick it in.' Flowers! what did John want with them; he who was so soon to be under the sod? He put away the little brown hand with the nosegay. But Minnie looked disappointed. She had gathered them for father; she loved flowers—this little maid—so dearly. John saw the grieved look. 'The Lord wouldn't have put away a little child,' he said; and he let her struggle with a big pin and his fustian suit.

She danced home, delighted to have made father so smart.

John ate his dinner, after a silent grace, and then he bethought himself of a little book in his coat-pocket—a book that had