

ALWAYS THE FARTHING READY.

Poor Mrs. Lewis had been laid up for many weeks with a severe attack of bronchitis. She was a widow with three little children, whom she supported by needlework; so that when at the beginning of winter she fell ill, it was hard to say how the daily bread was to be provided. But kind friends came forward to help; ladies for whom she had worked sent her beef-tea and other necessaries; a sister living in another part of London took charge of two of the children, leaving only the eldest, a little boy of eight, who was useful in waiting on his mother, and bringing her medicine from the dispensary. At last she began slowly to mend; and one day her District visitor, calling to read to her, found that the invalid had received the doctor's leave to sit up for a few hours the following day.

"I see," Miss Annesley said, "you have had your wants supplied. What a nice warm shawl that is!" It was made of crochet-work in dark blue wool, and was large enough to wrap across the chest and tie at the back.

"Yes, miss; I told my little girl you'd be sure to notice it; it's every bit her work, and you see how it goes just where the cold might strike me. But there's more comfort in it than that: it brings home to me, like a sermon, what the Bible says about trusting in God and not worrying about to-morrow."

"May I have the comfort of the sermon too?" asked her friend.

"Well, miss, it was like this. The day the children were coming back to me, and I was feeling troubled about how we should get along, my Jenny came running in all out of breath with a great parcel, and she threw it on my lap and put her arms round my neck, and said, half laughing and half crying, 'It's for you, mother, and it's all my work;' and when I opened it there was this very shawl.

"'But,' I said to her, 'Jenny, my child, how did you get the money for the wool?'

"'I got it a farthing skein at a time, mother,' she said; 'and as soon as ever I'd finished one skein, there was always the farthing ready to buy another. Sometimes aunt gave me the farthing change when I went errands for her; once I picked one up in the court, and everybody said it wasn't theirs; then a lady who came to teach work at the school gave us a penny each for hemming dusters; but I only had a penny twice: it oftenest came just by farthings, and I liked it best like that.'

"So I asked her why; and she said, 'It was oftener something to be glad of, mother, and then just to look out where another farthing was to come from. I think God sent them, mother,' she said. 'It's because of the farthing skeins there are so many knots, but I thought you'd be able to sew them down.'

"However, miss," added Mrs. Lewis, "I'm inclined just to leave the knots as they are, to keep me in mind how here's a fresh help ready whenever the last is used up. I'm finding it so, miss; what with

coals sent to me, and bread tickets, and work beforehand that I needn't hurry with, there's something to thank Him for every hour of the day."

"Yes," answered her visitor, "it is such a cheering thought that our daily thanks and praise are dear to our Father in heaven, so that for His own sake as well as ours He would have us live by the day. As we read in Ezra, 'That which they have need of, let it be given them day by day without fail, that they may offer sacrifices of sweet savour unto the God of heaven.' It is that we may have, like Jenny, 'something oftener to be glad of;' it is to teach us to say, 'Thy mercies are new every morning;' 'Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits, even the God of our salvation,'—that our supplies are sometimes sent, like the money for Jenny's wool, 'a farthing at a time;' and most surely we shall reach our home above to tell, like Jenny, how in one way or another, for every time of need, there was 'always the farthing ready.'

COMMON MAXIMS IMPROVED.

WERE men but as wise for eternity as they are for time, and did they spiritually improve their natural principles for their souls as they do naturally for their bodies and estates, what precious Christians might men be! For instance:—

1. *To believe good news well founded.* Why, then, is not the Gospel believed, which is the best news, and best grounded news in the world?
2. *To love what is lovely, and that most which is most lovely.* Why, then, is not Christ the beloved of men's souls, seeing He is altogether lovely?
3. *To fear that which will hurt them.* Why, then, are not men afraid of sin, seeing nothing is so hurtful to them as sin?
4. *Not to trust a known deceiver.* Why, then, do men trust Satan, the old serpent, the deceiver of the world?—*the world*, and its deceitful riches?—*their own hearts*, which are deceitful above all things?
5. *To lay up for old age.* Why, then, do not men lay up for eternity treasures of faith and good works, against the day of death and judgment?
6. *He that will give most shall have it.* Why, then, do not men give their love and service to God? Doth not He bid most?
7. *Take warning by others' harms.* Why do not men take heed of sinning from the sufferings and torments which others undergo for sinning?
8. *To have something to show under men's hands, because they are mortal.* Why, then, will not men have something to show under God's hand for their security to salvation, seeing, not God, but they are mortal?

Ah! if men did but walk by their own rules, and improve their own principles, what a help would it be to godliness! But, alas! God may complain of us as of His people of old: "My people do not consider."