

An Answer to Prayer.

The following account is vouched for by the man whose dog was God's agent in the hour of the narrator's need:

'One winter we lived on a lonely New Hampshire country road, only one large farm house being near. One morning, the weather promising to be fair, my husband and little son left me to go to a neighboring town ten miles away, expecting to return at night. I did not mind being alone, as I was busy about the house; but toward noon I noticed dark clouds rapidly rising, and the wind began to blow, and soon snow-flakes covered the ground. Still I did not feel anxious, but kept a watchful eye down the mountain road, although I knew it was hardly time to expect my loved ones to return. The darkness came on swiftly, and the storm increased in violence, until it seemed as if the roof of the house would be torn off—every old shingle apparently vying with its neighbor in its hurry to be gone.

'Hardly daring to breathe, but longing to scream, I lighted a fire in the great fireplace, and the flames threw their ruddy glow over the room. As I began to realize that I was all alone, I grew more frightened and I thought "I cannot stay here all this night alone." Not only was the storm to be dreaded, but early in the day, I had seen two most vicious looking men go by on their way to the village. I knew that they lived in an old shanty below us. They had called once to seek shelter from a slight shower; and I thought they would surely think we would give them shelter from such a storm as this. I did not know what to do, for they were never known to come away sober from the village.

'I made up my mind to go to my neighbor's house. When I opened the door the wind nearly took me off my feet, and, blinded by the snow and sleet, I hastily shut the door and went back into the lighted room. But I could not rest. I wandered from room to room, and it seemed as if I should be insane from fright, for never before had I experienced a mountain storm. I have passed through many storms since then; but that stands out with a prominence which will not allow it to be ever forgotten.

'Going to the window and peering out into the darkness, I suddenly felt prompted to pray—not for my family's return, for I hoped they were sheltered from the storm—but I prayed, "Give me strength, O Lord, to overcome this fear!" And before I finished my prayer it was answered. Above the roar of the storm I heard, under my window, the barking of my neighbor's huge dog. I let him in, all covered as he was with snow and he walked over to the fire, and lay down, and looked up into my face with an almost human intelligence, as if he would say, 'You needn't be afraid; I'll take care of you.' With a thankful heart I lay down and slept sweetly all night.

'The owner of the dog told me the next day that in all the years he had owned him never had he known him to leave his mat at night; but for two hours they had tried to keep him in, and at last fearing they would get no sleep if he stayed, they opened the door and he bounded away into the storm toward our house.'

The lady adds: 'Now by what instinct was he guided? Did he know that the one who had fed and petted him was in deep trouble? I believe then, and believe now, that God sent him.'

Why not? Is it the first time that He has interfered for man's welfare? Some things are recorded in the Scripture which are very similar to this in some particulars.

'Is His arm shortened that He cannot save, or is His ear heavy that He cannot hear?' This verse breathes the same sentiment:

'Ye winds of night, your force combine;
Without His high behest
Ye shall not, in the mountains pine,
Disturb the sparrow's nest.'

—Rev. W. J. Worth, in 'Zion's Herald.'

A Story of the Wind and a Gospel Leaf.

There is a story which you may like to hear, told by a colporteur in Mexico, Senor Cortez, of a man who came one day to the market stall where he was selling Bibles. The man looked into a New Testament and became interested. On pretence of going to bring the price of it he left his cloak and took the book to his priest, whom he met coming that way. The priest told him the book was 'false,' and was about to tear it to pieces, when the man said, 'But it is not paid for; I left my cloak as security.' Then the priest handed him a coin to pay for the book. 'But the coin is false—mere lead,' said Cortez, refusing to accept it. Then the priest, coming up, said, 'But your books are false, too.' 'Very well,' said the colporteur, 'let us go to the judge and settle both questions at once.'

The priest, however, decided to pay good money and tear up the book before the crowds of people who had gathered round. The wind carried the leaves about, and many were picked up and read. That was on June 14.

In December, Cortez offered his books to a woman sitting at her sewing machine by a window in the same city; she said she wished only one book, which she did not suppose he would have—a religious book about the ten virgins. He showed a large New Testament opened at the parable, and she bought it without any hesitation. He could not but ask how she had come to be looking for it, she replied, taking a single leaf out of her prayer-book, 'My boy found this in the plaza some time ago, and as it has only part of the story, I have been looking for the whole book.' The leaf was of the size of the Testament torn up in the market in June.—'Bible Society Gleanings.'

Suggestions for the Two Flags.

A BAND OF HOPE ADDRESS.

(It is suggested that two small flags should be shown to the children: a Black Flag, and a Red, White, and Blue.)

Two flags to show you to-night. Who would care to fight under this—(Black Flag)—when we might choose such beautiful and bright colors as these? (Red, White and Blue.) Trace the use of flags in battle. In very ancient times a pole was carried with a bunch of hay or straw at the top. Specially useful in the time of the feudal system, when each baron took his own retainers and servants to the war. The flag, or standard, was the rallying point; the care of it was a place of honor, and the capture considered a disgrace. In the war in the Soudan, we heard much of the Khalifa and his Black Flag. How nobly it was defended. In the battle of Omdurman, our soldiers, with the deadly fire of long range carrying guns, mowed down the ranks of the Dervishes, who, nothing daunted, rushed on file after file, to destruction. Fiercest part of fight round the Black Flag, a dead man was found with his stiff arm still twist-

ed round the pole; all around were heaped the bodies of the slain, one on the other, in horrible confusion. The Black Flag proved to be the flag of Death. There is a Black Flag waving in our land—also the Flag of Death; for under it lie killed and crushed hundreds of thousands, not only men, but women and children. The Black Flag waves over the public house and the gin palace. Those that die for it lie crushed and bleeding—there is no mercy. Not only the strong men, but weak women and helpless children are dragged down, and give up their lives under its dark, fluttering folds. It waves over England to-day—over the homes that are broken up, the lives that are ruined, the children that are starved, the hearts that are broken. It waves over the prisons, the lunatic asylums, the work-houses; for it is drink that helps to fill all these, far more than any other cause.

Look at the other flag—Red, White and Blue. Perhaps some boys here wish some day to be 'Soldiers of the Queen,' and enlist under these colors. Let them not fight under the Black Flag as well. Remember what Lord Roberts said, when taking the chair at a meeting of the Army Temperance Association: 'That it is better for a soldier to be a teetotaler, because he can bear the change of climate more easily; if wounded he recovers more quickly; and when leaving the army it is easier for him to obtain employment.'

Look at these three colors separately.

First, Red.—Red, color of danger. Illustration: Signals on the railway line; wrong signal, frequent cause of accident and death. Story of the sixteen school girls bathing, and cut off by the tide; in great danger; but one had courage to climb the cliff and flutter a red garment; it was seen and understood; a boat was put off and they were saved. Where there is danger courage is needed to meet it. Danger of temptation to boys and girls starting in life. Temptation from others to break the pledge; to be led away from the good teaching learnt at home and at church and Sunday school. Often the first step is fatal, because, though the red warning signal of danger is shining, there's no courage to meet it.

2. White.—Color of purity. A clean, pure heart needed for courage. The courage that is only skin deep will never stand. Only safe way to meet danger is with prayer, 'Create in me a clean heart, O God.' Then we can fight bravely: God will give us His armor and His weapons.

3. Blue.—This is heaven's own color. What a pleasant world this seems when the bright sky of blue is spread above it. Blue is the true temperance color, too; on our medals and badges we wear the 'Bit of Blue.' Perhaps some have heard a recitation called, 'The Bit of Blue.' A man who had been a drunkard comes home with a steady step and wearing on his breast the bit of blue.

Red, White and Blue.—Never let us be ashamed of the flag we fight under. Never give up the beautiful colors of Courage, Purity and Temperance, for the Black Flag of Drink—the Flag of Death.—Mercy Stratton in 'Temp. Monthly.'

The Sum of It All.

The boy that by addition grows,
And suffers no subtraction,
Who multiplies the thing he knows,
And carries every fraction,
Who well divides his precious time,
In due proportion giving,
To sure success aloft will climb,
Interest compound receiving.
—R. P.