

JIM'S MOTHER.

"Are you going out again to-night, Jim?" Mrs. Johnson asked, as her son rose from the table in haste.

"I promised to go up the river with Joe Clark and his friends," Jim answered, rather sullenly. A little sigh escaped his mother.

"What's the matter now?" he asked. "Can't a fellow go for a bit of a spree after he's done his work, without you looking like that? What's the harm, anyhow?"

"There's no harm in going up the river, Jim. Of course, not—I never meant to say there was; but what I don't like the sound of is the 'bit of a spree.' That's where the harm comes in."

"It doesn't do for everybody to be as strait-laced and fidgety as you are, mother. The world would never go on if everybody made such a fuss about a fellow taking a glass of beer now and then with the rest."

"You know how I hate the very name of a glass of beer, Jim, and of all it leads to. I don't know much about Joe Clark, but if all his friends are like himself, I am sure you would be far better away from them."

"A fellow can't always be tied to his mother's apron-strings," Jim answered, trying not to see the flush that rose to his mother's pale cheek, or the tears that stood in her eyes. Mrs. Johnson began to clear the tea-things away quietly, seeing it was not the time for further argument.

Jim flung himself out of the door presently, intent on having his own way, and showing his mother he was not going to be treated like a child. Sadly she watched him out of sight, and then went upstairs to her room and shut the door. Then, and not till then, could she give way to her grief, and shed those tears in secret that he who seeth in secret never fails to mark.

Her heart was very full of anxious fears about this son who was going astray. He had got into touch with a bad set of companions, who were gradually leading him further and further away from God and goodness. She poured out all her fears into the Heavenly Father's ears; then rose from her knees strengthened and quieted. Nothing was impossible with God, nothing touching His kingdom that God would not do in answer to believing prayer, and she felt assured that in some way or other He would work out a deliverance.

"Hello, Jim! here you are. We're just ready to start. Here, hand that hamper this way, will you? Rowing's such dry work, we shall want some ale before we get to Hibble Island, and there, you know—not a licensed house about the place." Jim got hold of the hamper, and was just about to follow it into the boat when a violent pain seized him, and he turned sick and faint.

"Now then, look sharp. Those fellows'll be here in a minute. I say, whatever's the matter? You look queer. Ain't you well?"

"Not very," gasped Jim. "It'll go off in a minute. I don't know what it can be. I never felt like it before."

"Here, take a swig of porter. That'll put some color in your cheeks."

"No, no!" cried Jim, with sudden reluctance. "Take it away! take it away! the smell of it makes me sick."

"Better get a cab and send him home," cried Will Fleming, coming on the scene just then. "It's no use taking a chap like that aboard."

"Yes, yes!" Jim panted. "Get me a cab. I must go home. I'm ill."

Mrs. Johnson met the cab at the door with white, stricken face. She saw at once it was not drink, but illness that made Jim reel so unsteadily into the house, and sent for the doctor.

"Your son is very ill," was the doctor's verdict. "Had there been any delay, his life could not have been saved."

When she had got him comfortable in bed, she went away by herself for a few minutes, and shut the door.

"Ah, Lord," she cried, "Thou hast never failed me yet! Thou wilt not fail me now. The way is dark. I cannot see how Thou art leading me, yet I know Thou art leading me aright. Save my boy! Save his soul, Lord; and, if Thou seest best, raise him up again from this sickness, that it be not unto death."

For some days Mrs. Johnson prayed

incessantly. Then the crisis came, and slowly, very slowly, Jim crept out of the Valley of the Shadow of Death, back to life again. But her faith never faltered.

"I have been a bad lot to you, mother," he said one day, when he lay with wide-open eyes watching her as she moved gently about the room attending to his wants. "Hardly worth the trouble I've been to you."

"Oh! hush my boy," she cried—"hardly worth the trouble I've had, when you are worth the Saviour's blood being shed!"

"I'm not worth that, either," he said, in a low voice. She whispered tenderly:

All the fitness He requireth is to feel your need of Him.

Jim covered his eyes a moment. "Mother," he said, after a pause, "you've been praying for me, I know. Were you praying for me that night I meant setting off up the river with those fellows?"

"Yes," she answered, "I was, Jim." "Then, mother, your prayers are answered," he said. "I've done with the old lot forever. I've come to Christ with my sins, and He's washed them away. I'm going to live for Him now."

Jim's mother touched the lad's forehead with her lips, and from her full heart rose a song of thankfulness.

—Mary E. Kendrew, in The Christian, London.

MISCHIEVOUS MINISTERS.

By C. H. Wetherbe.

Many a church has been badly harmed by employing a man for pastor who was so unbalanced, conceited and arrogant that he caused various complications, contentions, alienations, and divisions among the people. And this kind of a man is likely to be fine looking, fluent in speech and full of blarneyish sentiments. He is such a man as suits the desires and wins the support of the young people of a church, and for this reason the older ones hastily conclude that he is just the man that they need. The former editor of The Christian of Boston wrote as follows: "We have collected an instance of a man who, we believe, abandoned his profession of faith in Christ, devoting himself with more or less energy to a political, secular and legal career. After pursuing this course for years he, for some reason, was led to turn his attention to religious matters, and, with his experience in political life, was soon among the leaders of his denomination. Hoary-headed ministers who had become grey in the service of the Lord, and whose garments were grown threadbare while they toiled and preached the Gospel to the poor, were shoved aside to make room for this well-dressed, conceited, rash, unstable, headstrong, imprudent and inexperienced man, who had been living in a backslidden state, serving the devil and making money, while they were preaching the perishing and toiling to save souls." Of course the fellow soon created disturbance in the church and made himself an all-around nuisance. That writer further says:—"He very speedily demonstrated his utter unfitness for the positions to which he aspired, and proved himself more to be dreaded by his friends than by his foes, and most dangerous to those who had the misfortune to give him their confidence and regard; and, after a brief and unsuccessful career, sank back into his previous obscurity." But it was a long time before that foolish church recovered from the effects of their folly. All churches should be prayerfully wise in obtaining a pastor.

THE UNITY OF THE BIBLE

The Bible is a unit. One thought pervades it from Genesis to Revelation. One dominant purpose underlies prophecy and history, parable and poem. Although it took 1,600 years to write the Bible, and although perhaps forty human writers, representing all degrees of social life, intellectual culture and spiritual attainment, were employed in this sacred composition, still a complete unity marks the entire book. There is, indeed, a great difference between the Psalms of David and the Epistles of Paul; but it is the difference between the moon showing us a face and the moon showing us the back of her disk and the moon in the fullness of her beauty; it is the difference between the gray dawn of

the morning and the splendor of noon-day. One thought pervades the book as the diapason pervades, unites and dominates a great oratorio.

The unity of the Bible, considering the manner of its human origin, is one of its great wonders and one of its divine inspirations, it seems impossible to account for its historic and spiritual unity. The charm of this unity grows upon us the more we study the sacred records. This unity is internal rather than external, essential and not accidental, spiritual rather than merely literary.

It is delightful to note this unity in the harmony which marks considerable sections of the Bible. The first three chapters and the last three chapters of the Bible show a harmonious unity to a remarkable degree. Those who have never studied these six chapters with the thought of their harmony in mind will be surprised and delighted at its discovery. In the first three chapters of Genesis we have the first heaven and the first earth ruined by the sin of man. In the last three chapters of Revelation we have an account of a new heaven and a new earth, the tabernacle of God being with men. In Genesis we had the victory of the tempter; in Revelation we have his utter overthrow and his eternal doom. In that first section in Genesis we had paradise lost; in this last section of Revelation we have paradise regained. In the first section of Genesis we had Adam with his new-found bride, and both of them tempted and fallen; in the last section of Revelation we have the second Adam with his holy and blessed bride, the Church, forever and gloriously united. In the earlier section we have death and misery. In the later scripture we have life and felicity.

In the beginning of the New Testament, as in the beginning of the Old Testament, we had the holy and blessed Emmanuel, God with us; and in Revelation the crowning joy of the redeemed in their consciousness of God's presence, their rapturous realization of God once again as Immanuel. This presence is the grand consummation, the glorious triumph, the blessed victory won by the "Strong Son of God."—Robert Stuart MacArthur.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS.

Mon.—Fear of death (Isa. 38:1-21).

Tues.—The Lord of death (Isa. 43:1-2).

Wed.—Looking beyond death (2 Cor. 1:6-18).

Thurs.—The gate to the better life (2 Tim. 4:6-8).

Fri.—An immortal heritage (1 Peter 1:1-6).

Sat.—The promise of Jesus (John 14:1-10).

Quote other Scriptures speaking of life beyond.

Tell of the places where Jesus speaks of death.

What does Christ's resurrection prove to us?

Sunday, December 12, 1909.

Pilgrim's Progress Series. XII. Cross-

ing the River (1 Cor. 15:31-38;

Heb. 2:14-18).

THE BEST VACATION.

The best vacation for all men everywhere and for all time is that ordained by God at the creation. A writer says: "It is neither so long as to be disastrous to business, nor so short as to give no relief. It is not a long vacation for summer time, nor a short one in the winter. It is not one for the master at one time, nor for the servant at another time. It is not one for the mistress to go abroad for weeks and months, while the family remains in the house and day out to take care of the stuff. It is not optional for the rich and compulsory for the poor. But it is just such a vacation as the Lord of all might be expected to provide for beloved children. It does not rest labor for a long period of exhaustion; nor does it thrust the poor long out of employment, till they suffer for want. Six days are exhausting enough at hard labor. One feels tired by Saturday night, and needs a day for vacation. On Monday morning, the exhausted according to the commandment, his vigor is restored. Thus our Heavenly Father has provided vacations for all, distributed throughout the year. He has made these obligatory upon all alike save in cases of mercy and great necessity.