

Additional Lessons.

BY MARY A. LATHBURY.

[It is suggested that five minutes be given each Sunday to the simplifying and singing of the verse for the day, reviewing the preceding verse or verses as the weeks go by.]

LITTLE HYMN STUDIES—III.

"How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In a believer's ear!
It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,
And drives away his fear."

REV. JOHN NEWTON, an English clergyman, died nearly a hundred years ago, but this beautiful hymn of his can never die, for it is a part of his own spirit, which is immortal. He wrote other hymns, but none so sweet as this. He was the friend of Cowper, a greater poet, and together they made a hymn book called *Olney Hymns*. When he was a very little child he was left motherless, and when only eleven went to sea with his father. He became a very wicked youth, but his praying mother had given him to God and to the ministry when he was an infant, and when shipwrecked and near death he gave himself to God in answer to her prayers. He had taken the name of the Lord Jesus in vain thousands of times, probably, but he came to love and honor it above all names, and to give it to the world in this beautiful hymn. One only has to be a believer in Jesus to know the sweetness of his name, for only to the believing soul can he give himself. It was when tossing on a wreck between a stormy sea and sky that John Newton first believed, and it soothed his sorrows, healed his wounds, and drove away his fear, and it has done this for thousands since that day.

"It makes the wounded spirit whole,
And calms the troubled breast;
'Tis manna to the hungry soul,
And to the weary, rest."

Did anyone ever speak or act so unkindly to you that you carried home a heavy heart and found it very hard to keep from crying? But there at home was mother, and with your head on her shoulder, and her arms around you, you did not care any more; your heart was made whole, and the feelings that had been troubled, like waves in a storm, all at once grew calm. That is just the way it is when the Christian turns from his troubles and prays to the Lord Jesus and reads his word. Then he is at peace. Did you ever think that the soul as well as the body may feel hunger? If one who loves his Lord is a long time in the world he grows homesick—hungry to hear the holy name spoken, and spoken reverently and lovingly. The soul may also grow very tired of the things that have to

be done in the way of worldly business, and long for a little chance to read the word and to pray, or to be where Christians worship. These things bring rest to the soul.

"Dear name! the rock on which I build,
My shield and hiding-place;
My never-failing treasure, filled
With boundless stores of grace!"

A lady was once very ill of a fever, and among strangers. She was too ill to think very much, or to try to remember anything, but as she lay alone in her room this beautiful stanza came flowing through her mind from somewhere, she did not know where. It was as if an angel had said it close beside her. How dear that name was to her then; and perhaps an angel did whisper it into her mind, for it is written, "He shall give his angels charge concerning you." Sometimes we feel as if we have no safe place to be and we are afraid of what the next day may bring us, but if we are sure of Jesus we feel like one whose house is builded on a rock, far above the stormy sea; or like one who is in a safe refuge, or fort, when there is war outside.

Then again we may feel very low in both body and mind. We may have no money, and at the same time feel poor in spirit, and as if we are of no use in the world. Then, if we believe in Jesus, he shows us that our own riches, whether of mind or of estate, are worth very little compared with the riches of his love which we may freely have. He is both the treasury and the treasure.

"Jesus, my Shepherd, Saviour, Friend,
My Prophet, Priest, and King,
My Lord, my Life, my Way, my End,
Accept the praise I bring!"

John Newton had studied God's word and found out some wonderful things before he wrote these lines. He adds ten more names to the name of Jesus, and there are many, many more in the Bible. First he calls him his Shepherd, and you know David says in the twenty-third psalm, "The Lord is my shepherd," and Jesus said in the tenth chapter of John, "I am the good shepherd." He also calls him Saviour, because "he shall save his people from their sins;" and Friend, because he is called "the friend of sinners;" and Prophet, because among all the prophets he was the greatest for he knew all things. Then he is our great High Priest in the temple of the heavens, and in our little temples, or churches, on earth. He is also the "King of kings, and Lord of lords," "the Way and the Life," and the End that we all must seek if we would be happy forever.