

FOOTSTEPS.

"Leaving us an example, that ye should follow His steps."—1 Pet. ii. 21.

One day in the winter, when the ground was covered with snow, the parents of little Mary saw on the ground little footsteps; they traced the marks along in the snow till they came to an old barn; and so they found that their little darling had been to that barn soon in the morning.—What did she go to the barn for? She had read in the word of God, "Enter into thy closet, and, when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret." She knew that a closet meant some closed-up place where she might be alone, and, as she could not find a place to be alone in the house, she went out into the barn and shut the door, to be alone with God. I wish all young persons would tread in her steps. I do not mean exactly that you should take some snowy morning and walk in the snow.—But I mean that you should every morning, summer and winter, come to your little closet. A barn will do, a bedroom will do, anywhere that you can be alone to pray unto your "Father that seeth in secret."

But we have a better example, an example that will serve us in everything.—There is One who has walked upon this earth and is gone to heaven, who desires that you, dear young ones, should go to the same place; and so He has left His footsteps for you. See: put your feet in the same steps and you will arrive where Jesus is. These footsteps are traced in the New Testament. Let us look for them.

I. The first of these footsteps is HUMILITY. You never see pride or vanity, haughtiness or envy, in Him. He was the meek and lowly One. He says, "Learn of me." One day his disciples, as they walked, were talking about a question that often comes uppermost in most minds,—*Who should be the greatest?* When the walk was at an end, Jesus asked them what they had been talking about on the way. Almost ashamed, they told Him; when He took a little child, set him in the midst, and bade them look at that child. I think it was a sweet child: very lovely,

because humble. It did not despise others whose clothes were not so good. It did not strive to get the best place. It felt itself to need instruction and support, and looked up in its weakness into the Saviour's loving face, as if asking Him to take care of it. It was humble like Jesus himself, lowly and meek. Such would Jesus have His disciples to be. That is the first of Christ's footsteps.

II. The next footstep is LOVE. Love brought Him from heaven to earth, and love in the heart will carry us from earth to heaven. Heaven is the world of love, and love is one of His footsteps. Happy is he that treads therein.

III. Another footstep is OBEDIENCE.—When a boy, His parents found Him in the temple, and He said, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" and then He went home and was subject to His earthly parents. He said, "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me, and to finish His work." Every step of His life was one of obedience.

"My dear Redeemer and my Lord,
I read my duty in Thy word;
But in Thy life the law appears
Drawn out in living characters.
Such was Thy truth, and such Thy zeal,
Such deference to Thy Father's will,
Such love and meekness so divine,
I would transcribe and make them mine."

IV. I will mention one other footstep of Jesus which claims especial attention. It is difficult to step here, but if you follow Jesus, you will mark His steps of SELF-DENIAL. Mocked, derided, beaten, crowned with thorns, crucified, His disciples trod in His steps. And shall we repine because of the little self-denial that is required of us! Let every one say,—
"Blessed Jesus."

"Be Thou my pattern; make me bear
More of Thy gracious image here,
Then God the Judge shall own my name
Among the followers of the Lamb."

INCONSTANCY.—Be not unstable in thy resolutions, not various in thy actions, nor inconstant in thy affections. So deliberate that thou mayest persevere, Mutability is the badge of infirmity.