

Another and another day came and went, but no clergyman appeared at the sick man's bedside; but on the third an eager summons brought the preacher thither, who was immediately accosted with the anxious exclamation: "Oh, what has detained you so long from me? My mind is in a chaos of doubt and terror; it is as if I were already in hell, or hell in me. For God's sake, say something to relieve me if you can, and to restore the quietude of mind of which your discourses have robbed me. Surely you can mitigate some of the harsh assertions you have made, or suggest some topic of consolation?"

"Verily," replied the clergyman, "I dare not unsay one word that I have advanced, but must continue solemnly to maintain that the Lord God with whom we have to do, is, although a gracious and merciful, likewise a wise, holy, and just Being, who must of necessity both condemn and punish the wicked. And although I assuredly could also tell you several glorious and consoling truths, yet as you are resolved not to hear them, I have no choice but to leave you to linger on in this most unhappy state of mind, until death shall introduce you to your fate on the other side of time. So, though my heart bleeds for you, I can do nothing for you, since you have yourself forbidden my offering consolation."

"Oh, no, no!" exclaimed the dying man, in an agony; "tell me whatever you think can possibly help me. Tell me at least if you know of any way of escape which yet remains open to me."

"Most assuredly I do," replied the clergyman; "but then you must suffer me to speak of Jesus Christ."

"Well then, speak what you will, and of whom you will," cried the dying man, with a short outburst of his naturally impetuous temper; "but show me a door of escape from this begun damnation."

Gladly responsive to this call, the clergyman now proclaimed the glad tidings of salvation through the atoning sacrifice of that very Saviour whom the now trembling sinner had so long rejected and despised, but who was yet his Lord and his God, his Creator and Redeemer, to whom he might confidently turn with all his sins, and casting himself unreservedly on His covenanted mercy, receive from His free favour the pardon and peace he so greatly needed, and which none other could bestow.

"For such sinners as you," continued the faithful preacher, "Jesus forsook the seats of glory, and tabernacled among men; for such as you He shed His precious blood on the cross, and paid the penalty of a world's guilt."

Greedily did the dying man drink in these hope-fraught words; and warmly did his awakened soul welcome the blessed tidings that Christ Jesus receiveth sinners, even the chief. He sought and he found comfort in the faith of Him who came to call, not the righteous, but sinners to repentance; and joyfully recognising in Jesus "the way, the truth, and the life," he accepted Him in all His offices, and, as a sinner saved by grace, calmly yielded up his spirit in blessed hope of a joyful resurrection. Out of Jesus, a holy God can only be the sinner's terror. In Him only can God be our salvation.

THE LITTLE INVALID.

HATTIE had been sick a long time with hip-disease. She could not walk, and suffered a great deal of pain. Her mother was poor, and a very bad manager at home too, for she did not keep her room clean and Hattie's bed nice, nor did she get her the good things to eat which she might. The child's appetite was poor, and she could not eat much, but a cup of tea and a bit of toast, or an egg beaten up with a little milk and sugar, would often taste good to her. But her mother never thought of making any dainty, tempting little dishes for her poor, sick child.

Yet Hattie was always bright and happy. A lady called to see her one day, and brought a custard and some flowers.

"Does the Lord Jesus comfort you all the time, Hattie?" she asked, very tenderly.

"Yes ma'am," answered the little girl.

"Can you trust Him for all the time to come?"

"Yes, ma'am," she again answered, without hesitation.

It was the love of Jesus in this dear child's heart that made her so happy, even in her poverty and pain. And, dear children, it will make you and me just as happy.

LIGHT IN THE VALLEY.

JOHN GREGSON used to live in the hollow of a deep valley formed by towering Welsh hills.

His house had been partly built by himself; and many pleasant little stories he used to tell of the load of stones which Squire So-and-so had allowed him to cart away from the quarry; of the fir-trees which another kind friend had given him; and of the help which his neighbours had rendered in making his humble dwelling water-tight. Attached to the house was a little patch of garden ground, and here, according to the season, the sweetest vegetables bloomed and ripened; and occasionally, though very rarely, a hen or two might be heard cackling, or a pig snoring in its sty.

What was John himself? He was the best scholar, the best reader and writer in the village; he was a good singer, too, and many a winter's evening did he spend in copying out tunes to be practised for the following Sunday.

Through the long, dreary winter months, every Wednesday evening John's summons would be heard resounding through the village. It consisted of four or five vigorous peals of the bell in the old grey tower. By the time his company had arrived, he would have the singing pew as brilliant as a few rush candles could make it, and be ready with what he considered to be the best tunes to the best hymns.

What was John Gregson's occupation? This is the hardest question of all to answer. He was a widower and childless, and his wants were very simple and very few. Milk sometimes, buttermilk more frequently, formed his drink; a few potatoes dug fresh from his garden, an onion, and a bit of