

YOUTH'S DEPARTMENT

THE CHILD TO HER MOTHER.

My mother, look not on me now
With that sad earnest eye;
Blame me not, mother—blame not thou
My heart's last wish—to die!
I cannot wrestle with the strife
I once had heart to bear;
And if I yield a youthful life,
Full hath it been of care.

Nay, weep not! on my brow is set
The age of grief,—not years;
Its furrows thou may'st wildly wet,
But ne'er wash out with tears.
And couldst thou see my weary heart,
Too weary even to sigh,
Oh! mother, mother! thou would'st start,
And say,—“'twere best to die!”

I know 'tis summer on the earth,—
I hear the pleasant tune
Of waters in their chiming mirth,—
I feel the breath of June:
The roses through my lattico look,
The bee sails singing by;
The peasant takes his pruning hook,—
Yet, mother, let me die!

There's nothing in this time of flowers
That hath a voice for me—
The whispering leaves, the sunny hours,
The young, the glad, the free—
There's nothing but thy own deep love,
And that will live on high,
Then mother when my heart's above,
Kind mother! let me die!

JEWSBURY.

THE EARLY DAYS OF CHRIST.

Dear young friends—Christ was cheerful, swift, uniform, and persevering in his filial obedience. He left the temple pleasantly at the request of his mother. Having answered the question she asked him, he went with her to Nazareth. Take heed and beware of the beginnings of reluctant obedience to your parents. It is a sin which grows very fast, and if you do not forsake it, God may give you up to strike them. One day (I shall remember it as long as I live,) as I was going up the High Street of Edinburgh, I beheld a woman speaking earnestly to a young man: he wished, and she urged him not, to go into a public house. Persisting in her entreaty, he struck her with his foot. She was his mother! And she hung down her head and left him. You think now, that you could not act his part; but if you do not follow the example of Christ you may soon be as wicked as this young man. The Roman Emperor Nero, who, while a boy, was kind to his mother; Agrippa at length caused her to be put to death! When I see a boy as reluctant to obey his parents as the ox is to go to the slaughter, or a fool to the correction of the stocks, I know not anything will be too wicked for him to do. My young reader, are you one of those who are never willing to be subject to them? Restless, discontented, and rebellious do you always make them unhappy? Have you not often felt for the father of whom the lovely Saviour afterwards speaks? He had two sons. But O! they were far from being obedient! How durst the first say, I will not work in the vineyard? His reluctant obedience on reflection, was, however, better mockery of the second, who answered, “I go, Sir, and went not.”

Anticipate the commands of your parents. When you are very happy and on good terms with them, do you not always know their will before they have time to express it? Show that you love to obey them, that you are not like so many slaves, who only work from necessity, when they are driven to it by the lash. Dear children, pause: reflect on the kind of subjection you should yield to your parents. Be-

gin anew. Taste the happiness which results from obedience, cheerful, and swift, and universal. Be attentive to the least, as well as to the greatest, of their commands for a week or two, and you will be happier than you ever were before. Look to Jesus; carefully imitate his example; and obedience will soon become in you a fixed habit.

Christ was persevering in his filial obedience; the same at thirty-three as when he was twelve years of age. O! what a reproof to old sons who grudge everything they do for their parents. One of this stamp comes to his widowed mother, who is about fourscore years of age, at distant intervals. She has only one child and sixpence in the week from the parish, to which fifteen or eighteen-pence are added, when labour and sorrow do not prevent it; and yet he never asks if she has a morsel to eat! Her grandchildren never come but when they want something from her. But a little girl who is a Sabbath-schooler, and no relation, reads to her every night, and carries her every day fresh water. How you would love this dear child. Follow, I beseech you, her example.

All good children have been like Christ in their filial obedience. Joseph said to his father Jacob, who asked him to inquire after the brethren who had used him so ill, “Here am I;” and off he went to Shechem, and thence to Dothan. Miriam, or Mary, the little sister of Moses, ran from the Nile to tell her mother that Pharaoh's daughter wanted a nurse for him. Samuel rose quickly and cheerfully three times to answer, as he thought, the call of Eli. And had not Solomon been accustomed to obey his mother, he could not have acted such a polite and kind part towards her as we have recorded in 1 Kings, ii. 19. Bathsheba came in to present to him Adonijah's request, “and the king rose up to meet her, and bowed himself unto her, and sat down on his throne, and caused a seat to be set from the king's mother; and she sat on his right hand.” May God bless these examples to you.

THE HEATHEN VILLAGE AND ITS CHRISTIAN INMATE.*

A SIMPLE RECORD OF FACTS.

By a Yorkshire Vicar.

The parish committed to my charge is singularly circumstanced. Its extent is great, but its population scanty and widely-scattered. Between the church and one of the hamlets, a brook common intervenes, which in winter is impassable. And this obstacle, added to their distance, four miles, from the sanctuary, had, from time immemorial, rendered the dwellers at E—t perfect strangers to its walls, save when compelled to have recourse to its services for the purposes of baptism, marriage and interment.—This state of things seemed fraught with evil; and an early opportunity was taken of inspecting the distant outpost. The sun shone brightly in the firmament. The breeze blew freshly across the common. The herbage was luxuriant beneath my feet. The cattle seemed, after a long and biting winter, to revel in the abundance that teemed around them. The lark sang his gay and happy carol in mid-air, as if inspired by the life and light of the scene beneath him; and all things, methought, spoke of the goodness and beauty of One who “giveth all things richly to enjoy, and whose tender mercy is over all his works.”

I reached the hamlet. Neglect was everywhere apparent. The children were noisy and squalid; the cottages dark, dirty, and unwholesome. The language and demeanor of the people were harsh and bearish. The sabbath was little revered. The education of the young totally uncared for. The plague-spot of ignorance was painfully visible in every direction. It was a heathen settlement in a Christian land!

The apathy, the extraordinary and insurmountable indifference with which they met every suggestion which had for its object the introduction of a better state of things amongst them, surpassed belief. They were the “living dead.” One exception there was, and only one, to the prevailing torpor, in the person of a decrepit, feeble, and very aged woman, who, living in a wretched hovel with her old partner,

* From the Church of England Magazine.

almost as infirm and helpless as herself, maintained an air of activity, cheerfulness, and kindly feeling, which strangely contrasted with the sullenness of those around her.

“’Tis a rough sea I am riding on,” was her reply, when I adverted to this circumstance, “but I’m buoyed up within. I’m poor—and I’m aged—and I’m infirm—and I’m afflicted—oh, how deeply and heavily afflicted!” and the tears, as she spoke, coursed down her furrowed cheeks, “but, blessed be God, I’m superior to them all! I’ve a Bible, and praised be his holy name, I can read it! I had a son, such a one as falls to the lot of few. He was the joy of my heart and the delight of my eyes. While he lived, I never knew want. I loved him too well, and God took him. Yes! he took away the desire of mine eyes at a stroke. He left me one morning in perfect health, and the next was brought to my door a stiffened corpse. I trust he has found mercy with his heavenly Father, for he was one of the best of sons to his earthly one. Ah! you look as if you thought I was praising him too highly. But no! faithful and true was he in every relation of life.—What he was as a servant, you may guess from the fact, that from the hour of his death his master and mistress adopted the little one he left behind him, took him into their service, and promised to provide for him. ’Tis a sad story, told in few words; but somehow, sir if you’ll have patience with me—I think it relieves me to repeat it and weep over it.—’Twas madam’s [mistress’s] birth-day; and as usual, it was kept. All the servants had a holyday; and my poor lad, as gardener, was invited to make merry with the rest. He’d a good mistress; and right willing was he to wish her as many years of happiness as might please the Lord to send her. His own good lad, were to be but few!” and again she wept, and bitterly. “I weary you; but I’ve not much more to add. He left the half for his home towards the dark hours, and the night was bitterly cold. Whether for once he had exceeded—or whether the sharpness of the season had brought on any fit—or whether from the darkness of the night he had lost his way and was unable to regain it, we could never learn.—He was found on the common in the morning, stiff and lifeless.—Poor lad; he was starved [frozen] to death! And now,” she continued, in an agony of distress with which it was impossible not to sympathise, “pray for me! You are a man of prayer and praise; it is your duty, your calling, your occupation. Pray for me,” and she wrung her hands convulsively, “that mine may be ‘a godly sorrow that worketh repentance;’ pray for me, that I may ‘not sorrow as those that have no hope.’ I am calmer now, she resumed, after a pause; “but you may judge what I have suffered. Had I not been able to read I must have gone mad!”

“But the consolation of prayer, under all and such circumstances remained to you.”

“No; I tried to pray, but in vain. My prayer strive as I would, became murmurs. It was long before I could pray,—long, very long.”

“Still, the service of the sanctuary would have comforted; and some church there must have been within your reach?”

“None,” replied she, mournfully; “and as for these people—Kilhamites they call themselves—the noise they make, the shouting, the crying, the roaring, would have been agony to me. They think ‘be heard for their much speaking;’ while I felt I must ‘commune with mine own heart, and in a chamber, and be still.’ The truth I must and will speak. The power to read kept me from madness. My Bible alone saved me. Nothing that man could say to me could soothe me. But God can, and when I read, ‘as many as I love, I rebuke and chasten; be zealous therefore and repent.’” [Rev. 19.]

“May his consolations abound towards you and more, to your last hour!”

“Amen, amen,” said she fervently. “But I mentioned somewhat of having a service here. Let me hear the good old Church prayers once more. We are a careless, drunken, heathen hamlet. There are no hearts so stony that God’s word cannot soften, and no understandings so dark which his grace cannot enlighten. Peace be with you, sir; and me, I go to read and pray.”