

he stood looking out of the window in his mother's room. It was not long since last winter, that it seemed quite new and strange to him to see everything covered with white—the garden, the trees, the fences all of the same colour. There stood old "Leo," looking more like a white bear than like a real good-natured dog as he was; but he took good care to shake all the snow off his grey overcoat, before turning in to his comfortable corner under the seat by the front door.

"I am sure somebody has been out," said Redward.

"Why?" asked his mother.

"Oh, because I am," said Redward, again; "I see their footprints."

"Couldn't the footprints have come of themselves?" said his mother. "I want to talk to you a little about them."

"Why no," said Redward, laughing, and half thinking to himself that his mother did not ask very wise questions; "and besides, mother, there are the tracks of a waggon."

"But," said his mother, "couldn't the tracks have come of themselves?"

"No, mother," said the little boy, "I do not think anybody could have made them without a waggon. I am sure some one has been out."

"You are right, dear boy," said his mother. "You are right to be sure about it. It is right to feel sure about some things, and I want to have you think now about some great and very important things about which we may be sure. We may be sure that there is a God. We see the sun, the moon, and the world we live on. We see ourselves and all the animals and things around us, and we are as sure that they could not have come of themselves as we are that those footprints in the new snow could not have come of themselves. Somebody must have made them. No one could have made us and everything around us but God."

"We may be sure that the Bible is true. Wicked men would not have written such a good book, if they could. Good men would not tell a lie, and say it was God's Holy Word when it was not. The Bible says of itself, that the testimony of the Lord is sure. Testimony means here what God says in the Bible."

"The Bible tells us, 'Be sure your sin will find you out,' that means that God knows all the wrong things we do, and will punish us for them, unless we are sorry for them, and ask to be forgiven for Jesus' sake, who died for us on the cross."

"We may be sure that Jesus Christ is able to forgive our sins and take us to heaven, because He is the Son of God. When He lived on the earth, He did a great many wonderful things, such as no one but God could do. He made the deaf people hear, and the blind see. He made the sick well all at once, and even brought the dead to life again. So we have reason to say, as Peter, one of His disciples, did, 'We believe and are sure that Thou art the Christ the Son of the living God.'"

"The older you grow, the happier it will make you to know that you may be sure of these things; there is a God; the Bible is true; Jesus Christ is able to save."

#### A RHYME OF THE YEAR.

January! January!  
Though cold, you have no law,  
You make us freeze  
Just when you please,  
And then you go and thaw.

February! February!  
I think it's very queer  
That on the way  
You lose a day,  
And find it in Leap Year.

Oh, windy March! you are too loud,  
You do make such a noise,  
You frisk about,  
Now in, now out,—  
It's worse than girls and boys.

Cry-baby April come along,  
You never can tell whether  
She's going to smile  
Or cry a while—  
She has such funny weather.

Then little May comes tripping in.  
Uncertain as her name is;  
We May have snow,  
The wind May blow,  
Or May be lots of daisies.

#### BESSIE'S GIFT.

"Home so early!" said Mrs. Redfern one bright morning in early spring, as her little daughter opened the cottage door and entered the clean, comfortable kitchen.

"Yes, mother dear," replied the child, seating herself in the rocking-chair; "we have a whole holiday. Mrs. Marsh has just heard the result of our last examination, and she is so pleased with it that she has given us a whole holiday; isn't that good news mother?"

"Very good news, Bessie," replied Mrs. Redfern, smiling lovingly at the bright happy face.

"What are you going to do love?"

"Ah, that is just the question. I want, if you don't mind, mother, to go to Fernbank wood, and get some primroses for you."

"Isn't too far for you to walk dear?"

"Oh no, mother; only say I may go, and I will go at once, and—"

Here Bessie paused as she caught sight of a large basketful of clean linen which her mother had placed under the table.

"You might stay and help mother fold and mangle those clothes," whispered a little voice to Bessie.

"But I don't want to," said Bessie; "it isn't often that I have the time to go to Fernbank wood, and—"

"What is the matter, Bessie?" asked Mrs. Redfern suddenly, all unconscious of the struggle that was taking place in her child's heart.

"Nothing now, mother dear," replied Bessie, cheerfully. "I have just remembered something—remembered how hard you work and how little I can help you, because I am away at school all day, and have lessons to learn at night; but I can help you a little to day mother, and you will let me do so, will you not? That will be better than going to Fernbank wood."

"Perhaps we might manage both," said Mrs. Redfern. "If you help me this morning, we will have an early dinner, and then you can go to the wood; and if Willie is home early this afternoon (he has gone to town with the carrier), I will send him to meet you."

"Oh, that would be splendid," said Bessie.

"Willie would enjoy the walk. Now, mother, I am going to show you what a little woman I am for work; we shall soon have all these clothes folded and mangled."

With a hearty good will Bessie worked away and soon finished her self-appointed task. Then, after an early dinner, she ran merrily off to the pretty wood of which she had spoken. She had not far to search for the primroses; they grew in great abundance on the mossy banks on either side of the wood, and under the tall trees, still leafless and bare.

"I'm just as happy again as I should have been if I had hurried away this morning without helping mother," said Bessie to herself as she ran here and there picking the fair spring flowers. "Why there is Willie," she added, as she caught sight of her brother coming towards her.

"You did not expect me so soon, I suppose," said Willie; "old John the carrier had very little to do to-day, so we got back early. Oh, Bessie, those are fine primroses!"

"Are they not?" said Bessie; come and help me gather some more, Willie, and then I shall be able to take a large bunch home to mother!"

Very readily Willie gave his assistance; then, when the short, bright afternoon was nearly over, he suggested they should hasten home in case their mother should feel anxious about them.

"Yes, we will go now," said Bessie; "we have gathered a lovely bunch, have we not, Willie?"

"Yes" replied Willie, as they started homewards; then he added—"Oh, Bessie, how Lottie Winfield would like those primroses; she has been ill for several weeks, you know and will not be able to go out and gather any of the spring flowers

herself. Don't you think you could spare some of these primroses for her?"

"No," replied Bessie, "I want these for mother. I'm very sorry for Lottie, only of course I love mother best and I must give these to her."

"Just as you please," said Willie; "we will try to come again soon, and gather some for Lottie."

"Your mother would be pleased for poor little Lottie to have the primroses," whispered the same little voice that had spoken to Bessie that morning.

"But I shouldn't be pleased," said Bessie; "I want mother to have them."

"Even Christ pleased not Himself," whispered the little voice again; "you remember you heard that on Sunday at the Sunday-School."

"Yes, I remember now," said Bessie, then she added aloud—"Willie, you are quite right; mother would like Lottie to have the primroses, I am sure, and we will leave them at her house as we go home. We will just save a few of the primroses for mother."

"Only these for you mother dear, said Bessie, as she gave a small handful of flowers to her mother, as they entered the cottage an hour later; "we gathered a splendid bunch, but we left it at Mrs. Winfield's for Lottie."

"That was right, darling," said Mrs. Redfern; "your gift would be a very welcome one to Lottie, and these primroses are quite sufficient for me. What do you say love? you wanted them all for me. But something seemed to tell you it was kinder to give them to Lottie? That was the voice of conscience speaking, Bessie—telling you what was right. Always be guided by that voice, Bessie; never refuse to listen to it; and remember always as you did to-day, that 'even Christ pleased not Himself.'"

#### THE CHILD'S PRAYER.

Into her chamber went  
A little girl one day,  
And by a chair she knelt,  
And thus began to pray:  
"Jesus, my eyes I close,  
Thy form I cannot see;  
I pray Thee, speak to me."

A still small voice she heard within her soul—  
"What is it child? I hear thee; tell the whole."

"I pray Thee, Lord," she said,  
"That Thou wilt condescend  
To tarry in my heart  
And ever be my friend.  
The path of life is dark,  
I would not go astray;  
O let me have thy hand  
To lead me in Thy way."

"Fear not; I will not leave thee, child, alone,"  
She thought she felt a soft hand press her own.

"They tell me, Lord, that all  
The living pass away;  
The aged soon must die,  
And even children may.  
O let my parents live  
Till I a woman grow;  
For if they die, what can  
A little orphan do?"

"Fear not, my child; whatever ill may come,  
I'll not forsake thee till I bring thee home."

Her little prayer was said,  
And from her chamber now  
She passed forth with the light  
Of heaven upon her brow.  
"Mother, I've seen the Lord,  
His hand in mine I've felt,  
And O, I heard Him say,  
As by my chair I knelt:

"Fear not, my child; whatever ill may come  
I'll not forsake thee till I bring thee home."

One of the saddest things about human nature is that a man may guide others in the path of life without walking in it himself, that he may be a pilot and yet a castaway.