

FAMILY DEPARTMENT.

WILLIE.

A TRUE STORY.

Willie was playing by Grandmother's bed,
Four-year-old Willie, with sunny hair;
Laughing and playing in childish glee,
Suddenly climbed he on to a chair,

To look at the picture above his head,
A cross of wood, and One hanging there,
Nails driven fast through the Hands and Feet,
A thorny crown on the death-damp Hair.

Soberly down he stepped to the ground,
Soberly up he climbed on the bed.
'Granny, who is the Man on the Cross?
And why did they put Him there?' he said.

Then Granny, she spoke of the Saviour's love,
Told how He came to earth from heaven,
To die for us on the cruel Cross,
To die that our sins might be all forgiven.

And Willie listened, the baby face
Still for a moment to childish awe;
Then he heaved a little sigh of distress,
And back he went to his toys on the floor.

Nay, the child was off on some further quest;
Granny heard his feet on the attic stair.
But he soon came back with determined face,
Climbing once more on the wooden chair.

His little hands were now firmly clasped
Round his father's hammer, a strange, rough toy;
Granny cried anxiously from her bed,
'Oh, what are you doing with that, my boy?'

'Granny—He was so good and kind
To come from heaven to this earth below;
I want to take out the cruel nails
From His Hands and Feet; they must hurt Him so.'

'Oh, Willie darling, you can't do that;
But try to be good, and true, and sweet;
And so, perchance, with your baby strength,
You may loose the nails from His Hands and Feet.'

—Banner of Faith.

BESSIE'S EASTER MORNING.

BY MARY CADWELL FISHER.

It was late one afternoon, and the dense crowd of eager men pushed and jostled each other in their haste to reach the wharves. The roar and rattle of the drays, carts and stages that blocked the street drowned the voices of the multitude, and the oaths of the impatient drivers, cursing the delays.

A handsome coupe, drawn by superb horses, covered with gay trappings, dashed into the jam of vehicles, forcing its way to the boat, when suddenly the horses stopped, reared, then plunged forward, urged by the lash of the angry driver. A quick jolt startled the sole occupant of the carriage, but he passed on unmindful of the scream that pierced the air.

Every moment of time was worth untold gold to the great Wall street magnate.

Some few of the hurrying multitude paused a moment to inquire what had happened.

Only a little street waif crushed on the crossing. No one knew or cared to ask who she was. A big policeman waved back the crowd, and gathered her limp form in his arms, thinking she was dead, but found life was still left in the bruised body. He called an ambulance, and took the poor little one to the nearest hospital.

"Ah!" said the good doctor, as he found the terrible injuries, and stitched the gaping wound in the head, cut by the cruel hoofs, "it were better she had died, than live to be a suffering cripple."

One leg was broken, and her spine was injured fearfully. One cold, blue hand held in a tight grasp the neck of a black bottle, which had been broken in the fall.

The matron gently took off the filthy rags, washed the dirt and bloody stains from the unconscious child, and laid her tenderly in one of the little cots that stood in a long, white row in the sunny upper room, filled with little sufferers.

The drawn, pale face, pinched features, and scanty, ragged garments, told a pathetic story of hunger and neglect.

The poor child, indeed, knew nothing else. The blessings of home, and mother's love, had never shone upon her pathway. Left worse than an orphan by a mother who died by the

hand of the child's drunken father, she was taken by "Old Suke," a wretched woman, who shrewdly foresaw that the baby's pretty face and taking ways would prove a fortune to her. Many a coin found its way into Old Suke's withered hand, as she stood at the crossings, with the prattling child in her arms, and begged for a few pennies for the "Love of Heaven, to buy bread for a poor motherless baby, whose father was soon to be hung for his crimes."

As little Bess grew older, she taught her to lie, beg and steal. The old hag lived in a foul cellar, in an alley swarming with miserable creatures, who lived in moral darkness, under the shadow of the cross, and in the very midst of Christian light. Bess knew nothing of love, virtue or goodness, and the nearest approach to happiness the forlorn child had ever felt was when, after a day of unwonted success at begging, she was allowed to go to her wretched bed, without hard words, or still harder blows, from the old termagant.

For two days after the accident occurred she lay wholly insensible, but on the third morning she opened her eyes, moaned with pain, muttered a few words, and slept again, but soon awoke, and stared in bewilderment at the strange place, then staring, with sudden recollection, said:

"Where is the bottle? Oh! I have lost my money. I must go back right away. Old Suke will be so angry with me, and I am afraid she will kill me."

The nurse tried to quiet her fears, and told her no one would harm her, and that she should never go back to Suke again.

"How did I get here?" said the child.

The nurse told her she was picked up in the street, and brought there to be taken care of till she got well.

"Oh, I remember now. I was going for whiskey, and was trying to get across the street, and the great black horses came so fast that I did not see them in time to get away."

Poor Bess was very patient, although she suffered great pain all the time. The doctor said she was so badly hurt that she could not get well, and mortification would soon put an end to her misery.

One day, after a long sleep, she waked free from pain, and lay quietly gazing around in wondering content. The bright, pleasant room, the clean, soft bed, the gentle, low-voiced nurse, seemed like Paradise to the poor child, in contrast to the dreadful place which had been her only home.

Suddenly, she spied a bright-colored card lying on the bed, with a beautiful picture of an angel, bearing a little child in its arms, in its heavenward flight (a kind friend has sent cards to all the little ones). As she lay with it in her hand, wondering what it meant, some one entered the room. Bess looked up and saw a bright, sweet-faced young girl, with a large basket full of fragrant flowers—sweet blue violets, lilies, great red roses, white, pink and yellow rose-buds, scarlet geraniums and trailing smilax. The child looked wistfully at them, and Alice asked which one she would like best. She touched a lily, with its pure white leaf folded round the golden heart. Laying it in the wide, glossy leaf, Alice placed it in the little red hand. Her dark eyes shone with delight as she raised them, eloquent with thanks, to the face bending over her.

Alice told her it was an Easter lily, and the pretty card was an Easter card. Bess did not seem to understand her, and asked what the picture meant. Alice told her she would tell her about it after she had given her flowers to the other little ones. She soon came back to Bess, and sitting down on a low stool by her bed, took the hard, rough little hand in her own, told her that the next day would be Easter Sunday, the day on which Christ rose from the dead. Seeing that the child did not know the meaning of her words, she told her the blessed

story of His death on the cross, and how He rose again on Easter morning, and all the angels sang for joy, that the world was saved from sin by His death. Alice told her how He loved little children, and how, when He lived upon the earth, He called them His lambs, and took them in His arms and blessed them, and when they died they went to live with him in a beautiful, bright home, where there were no cruel, wicked people, no hunger, cold, sickness or pain, where the trees were always green, and the lilies never faded and died, where little children were always good and happy in His love, and God Himself was their Father.

The child listened with awe and wonder as she heard the glad tidings, and begged to hear it again. Alice promised to go again the next day and tell her more of Jesus's love for her. After service she went to fulfill her promise, and, as she went up the long stairway her heart swelled with love for Him who had taught His children love and charity for suffering, sinning fellow-beings.

She found Bessie asleep in death, with a smile upon her parted lips, and her precious lily in her folded hands. She had been cleansed from the stains of sin, and taken from the privations and sorrows of her wretched life here on earth, to the fullness of joy in the "life eternal."

Just as the sun ushered in the day that "saw the Lord arise," the angel came for her and took her to dwell forever with Him who died that such as she might live in the blissful mansion prepared for the children of God, their heavenly Father.

YORK, Easter, 1886.

—The Church.

EASTER LILIES.

BY MARAH.

Beauteous, golden-hearted lilies,
Types of purity and grace.
How each snowy, waxen petal
Lightens up this Holy Place!
Quivering in the gleaming sunlight
Streaming thro' the painted pane,
Lo! each one its glorious beauty
Lifts to God, all free from stain.

Brilliant, pearly-petaled lilies,
Lifting up your fragrant breath,
Incense to a risen Saviour,
Lord of life and Lord of death!
Truly does your waxen beauty,
Lightened by those golden rays,
Seem to us, this Easter morning,
Nature's hymn of joy and praise.

Yes, from dark and gloomy,
'Neath the cold and heavy sod,
She this pure and snowy carol
Raises to the Triune God.
Plainly, too, these gleaming lilies,
With their pure and fragrant breath,
Speak this blessed truth to mortals,
Life is ever lord of death.

Pure and blessed Easter lilies,
Decking now the House of God,
Eloquent of life and beauty,
Springing from the frozen clod!
Ye have brought to me a lesson,
One I fain would ponder well;
Wondrous tales of love and duty
All your gleaming petals tell.

Easter, A.D. 1886.

—Living Church.

A Subscriber renewing writes:—"We like the GUARDIAN very much, and were they better Church people here I could have sent you other names, and will still try to get subscribers. We think ours too good to waste, and send it to a missionary in —. I wish other people would do likewise; so many would be so glad of such good, instructive reading. With every kind wish for the paper."