

give a hope which shall perish. In many, it cheers on in sin, and only keeps back from the way in which Christ calls them. The meaning and power and aim of the Saviour's work are forgotten. He is kept in reserve, as it were, like a life-boat, only to be used when the ship is going down. Alas, the ship often strikes, when souls are sleeping: it is too late! They are not ready; after a fearful effort, or else before they have had time to rouse themselves, they sink, as if no means of escape had ever been provided.

The work of Him who died, and rose again, and ascended, was not, in the first place, to fill heaven with pardoned sinners. It was to fill this world with new-born men, who might show in them the power of the life of the Crucified, and who might enter on the heavenly state, prepared for it by a daily growth in holiness. Christ did not die to make sin safe, and a life of loving faith needless. It was not His plan to leave men to form hard habits of sin, through years, and to fit them for heaven by a swift miracle, or by slow discipline in an after state. It was His plan to give him will and power to beat down the evil in him, and to put away the evil around him, and grow, day by day, ready to take his place among the just. Christ died and lives, that earth might become like heaven; that men even now might learn and know much of the blessedness of freedom from sin and its curse. It was no part of his plan to make men free to become devils, and turn earth into hell, and to have before them, all the while, a hope of heaven. True it is that His hand is not shortened that it cannot save the worst, even at the last. He can call the dead soul to new life with His word. He can raise one out of whom the spiritual life has only just departed. He can awaken him who is being carried out as it were, to be left to hopeless decay. He can take him from the hands in which he seems to lie helplessly, and give him eternal life. And He is still able to save when the soul has lain long in corruption, and the hope of those even who love him most on earth has gone. He can work miracles, and He does. He renews what has been lost and worn away. He wins hearts which the world and sin have hardened. He changes, as it were, the very substance of the soul by His Almighty grace. But this is not the rule. The rule is that as men live so they go on when they die, and he who has sown thorns all his life cannot hope to gather wheat when the reapers come. The rule is that each day of obedience to grace leaves its mark on the nature, which lasts; and that each day of rebellion, nay, each act of rebellion against grace, hardens, and makes stiff in evil.

Christ His own self bore our sins, that we being dead to sins might live unto righteousness. When did He mean us to become dead to sin? Is it in the world to come? Is it after sin has been followed to weariness, and all relish for it has been lost? Is it in the lonely hours of sickness, when it is too late to undo the evil of a godless example? No; Christ bore our sins that, even now, we might live by the faith of the Son of God. He meant us now to cease from sin, as if all in us on which evil lays hold and which clings to evil were dead. He meant us, in newness of life, to shew the power of the living Christ as our Righteousness.

EVERY-DAY WORK.

Those who wish to bestow the years of their life upon God must also give Him the days, the hours, and the moments.

Look around, then, you who are yearning to be employed in the service of your God, and try to realize what He has given you to do to-day, and do not look beyond it. Strength is promised according to your day, but not according to your morrow. Every-day work requires every-day grace, and every-day grace requires every-day asking. Just try the experiment, then, for once—no matter what your occupation may be, no matter how distasteful to your natural disposition—so long as it is your duty. It may be the arithmetic lesson taught to the little child, or the wearisome drive with the complaining invalid, or the petty and fatiguing duties attendant upon your household concerns, or the routine of the shop, or the counting-house, or the writing-office: whatever it is, take it first to God. Before you begin, kneel and implore His blessing. Ask Him for a spirit of patience and meekness in contending with all the little wearisome difficulties and annoyances connected with it; ask Him to enable you not only to bear the daily cross, but to "take it up," denying yourself, and following the footsteps of the Lord Jesus. Then put your whole might into it—the might that you have borrowed from a Mightier than yourself, for that is the secret of real work. Do it as if your Master were standing before you; do it as you would have cast the net into the sea, as you would have fastened together the tent, as you would have laboured in the carpenter's shop, had you lived in the early days with Christ and His Apostles. Do not offer to God the blind, and the lame, and the maimed things of your mind; do not offer a spirit dreaming of the great

things which you could do, or may do at some other time, but offer to Him your wakeful, rejoicing, present energies, and you will find how brightly the day beams upon you, how sweetly the night gives you sleep, and how gratefully your heart swells with a sense of God as a Father, as well as of His benignity as a Master.

We think it was John Newton who went one day to visit a Christian brother, and found him busily engaged in his occupation of tanning. The man attempted to apologize. "Just so, my friend," said his pastor, "may your Lord find you when He comes; it is the work He has given you to do, and He expects you to do it diligently."

"I FOLLOWED HIM."

"You've come very regularly to church for the last three years, since your husband's death," said the vicar of — one day to a poor widow; "but I don't think you ever used to come before; how was that?" "Why, sir, you see, he was no scholar, and never went anywhere on Sundays, and I followed him."

The widow, like her husband, was no scholar; but she learnt after her husband died that, if she could not join in the service with her lips, she could join with her heart, and hear with her ears, and she loved to come. But how much better it would have been if she had led her husband, instead of following him! How much better it would have been if she had remembered the profession which she had made unto God at her Baptism, which was to "follow" Him, Who has promised that where two or three are gathered together in His Name, there He is in the midst of them!

Children's Department.

THE STRAY LAMB.

ONE bright and sunny day,

Upon a grassy hill,

The little lambs were all at play,

Too happy to keep still.

They ran and frisked about

Within their shepherd's view,

Loving their merry games, no doubt,

As much as children do.

But by and by a lamb—

A wilful little trot—

Said to itself, "How tired I am

Of keeping in one spot;

I want some better fun,

Fresh places want to see,

So presently away I'll run,

And they may look for me."

Without a thought of care

He wandered where he would,

And fancied that the change of air

Already did him good.

"This grass is finer far

Than what I left behind;

And O, how pink these daisies are—

Exactly to my mind."

Thus charmed with all around,

The moments quickly fled.

Until, to his dismay, he found

The sun had gone to bed.

The air grew damp and chill,

The little birdies slept,

And over every field and hill

The gloomy shadows crept.

Hungry and tired and cold,

Of unknown ills afraid,

He thought upon his happy fold,

And wished he had not strayed.

Fast poured the heavy rain,

The wind swept roughly by,

And as he sank upon the plain,

He felt he soon must die.

Just then a cheering voice

Fell on his listless ear,

And O, how did that lamb rejoice

To think relief was near!

His own dear Shepherd came

And clasped him in his arms.

Not uttering one harsh word of blame,

But soothing his alarms.

"My little lamb," he cried,

In soft, reproachful tone.

"Why did you leave your Shepherd's side,

And wander forth alone?"

And as he gently bore

The wanderer to his rest,

The lamb resolved it never more

Would think its own way best.

A STORY FOR CHILDREN.

A LITTLE boy once happened to be away from home. He started on his journey homeward, and, after walking some distance, came to a small stream flowing across the road, which he could easily have stepped across. "But no," thought he, "I see there are beautiful flowers along down the stream on this side, and I do love to gather them and play with them, and I have time enough to spare, so I will walk along down the stream, and when I have enjoyed these flowers as much as I like, I will then step across and go home."

But as he wandered on down, the stream gradually and at first imperceptibly, grew wider and deeper. At length he began to discover that the stream had become much wider, but thought he could throw a rail across or find where some tree had blown across, and in that way get over.

"I will gather," said he, "a few more of these beautiful flowers, and select from the water's edge a few of these beautiful stones for the children, and bask in this delightful sunshine, for it looks very dark and gloomy on the other side, and after a while I will cross over, and go home."

Thus he talked and thus he walked, until he found that the stream had become a river. "Now," thought he, "I will cross over the next bridge I come to."

But he passed the bridge. Finally the river was become an arm of the sea, but he must go over. So when the sun is just sinking in the west, and darkness is about to overspread the earth, pallid with fear, he slowly goes into the cold water; now it comes up to his knees; now to his waist (see how he shudder); and now up to his chin, and finally he sinks to rise no more.

Little children, the crossing of this stream is intended to represent the step which you must take, by receiving Jesus as your Saviour, that you may reach that beautiful home in heaven, where your Father awaits your coming. You may think as this boy did, "I will wait a little longer and enjoy the pleasures of this world, and then I will take the step." But remember, every day that you put it off, will make it but the harder, and the stream grows wider, and, it may be, you will find at last that you will have to enter the cold, dark stream of death unprepared.

THE SURETY.

THOMAS NOLAN had been turned out of Sunday-school. He had become so unruly that it seemed impossible to bear with him any longer, and his influence over the other pupils was so bad that it was thought best to expel him. But his parents brought him to the school again, begging the superintendent to take him back, and give him one more trial.

"I should be very glad to do so if I could feel sure of his conduct. But it is a sad thing for such a big boy to set such a bad example. However, I will see," and the superintendent went into the school-room.

"Boys," said he, "Thomas Nolan wants to come back to Sunday-school, and if someone will become surety for his good conduct, I will gladly receive him into the school again."

There was silence for a few minutes. The larger boys shook their heads, for they knew him of old. Then one of the smallest boys said, "Please, sir I will."

"You!" said the superintendent, "you become surety for a boy twice as large as you! Willie, do you understand what it means to become surety for anyone?"

"Yes, sir; it means that when he is bad, I am to be punished instead of him," was Willie's reply.

The superintendent then went out and told Mr. Nolan that they would receive Thomas into the school again, as Willie Graham had become surety for his good conduct.

BIRTHS, MARRIAGES and DEATHS,

Not exceeding Four lines, Twenty-five Cents.

Death.

KIRKBY.—At the Rectory, Collingwood, on the 4th inst., Ernest Alexander, only son of Laurence Holwell and Mary Gascoigne Kirkby, aged 10 months.