

Family Department.

Diptychs for the Festival Days of St. Stephen, St. John and the Innocents.

BY THE REV. J. H. VAN BUREN.

Steadfastness.

He upward looked, as one who stands just on the verge of heaven,
Then, parting, prayed that they who stoned might not be unforgiven;
Trausfigured like an angel's was his face, and mien amazed,
Beheld God's glory gleaming there while steadfastly He gazed.
God grant that we with steadfastness of purpose, heart and mind,
Toward Himself thro' life and death may ever be inclined;
That so in us the glory that from His right hand doth shine,
May be displayed in characters transfigured and divine.

Love.

Revealed to this one, lo! the throne of God's unflinching grace;
Resplendent realms of Paradise, and heaven's most holy peace
Proclaimed by Him, th' evangel of God's everlasting love
Constraineth us to fairest homes in Zion bright, above.
God grant that we on whom are cast Thy beams all bright and blest,
Like you belov'd disciple, may be sheltered on Thy breast;
And yet may walk in truth and love, with calm, untroubled heart.
Until at length Thy throne appear and visions all depart.

Purity.

A cry goes up in Rama! Rachel weeping for her young,
With woe uncomforted, heart, in bitter anguish wrung:
Yet these, the first to feel the edge of persecution's sword,
Have by their guiltless death become a glory to their Lord!
O Thou who ledst a little child, and set him in the sight
Of those who sought pre-eminence, direct our hearts aright;
All vices kill and mortify, e'en by Thy chastening rod,
That we, among the pure in heart, may glorify our God!

HOME, SWEET HOME

BY MRS. WALTON.

CHAPTER XII.—CHRISTIE WELL CARED FOR.

(Continued.)

"I enclose a check which will pay his expenses for the present. I should like him to go to school for a year or two and then I intend, if the boy desires to serve Christ, to bring him up to work as a Scripture reader amongst the lowest class of the people in your neighborhood.

"I think I could not perpetuate my dear wife's memory in any better way than by carrying out what I know were her wishes with re-

gard to little Christie. No money or pains will I spare to do for him what she herself would have done, had her life been spared.

"Kindly excuse me for troubling you with this matter; but I do not wish to defer it, until our return, lest I lose sight of the boy. The dismal attic where Christie and his old master lived was the last place my dear wife visited before her illness; and I feel that the charge of this boy is a sacred duty which I must perform for her dear sake, and also for the sake of him who has said, 'Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.'

"Believe me, dear Mr. Wilton, yours very sincerely,

"GERALD LINDSAY."

"Christie," said the clergyman, "the dear Lord has been very good to you."

"Yes," said little Christie, "old Treffy was right; wasn't he, sir?"

"What did old Treffy say?" asked the clergyman.

"He said the Lord had some work for me to do for him," said Christie, "and I didn't think there was any thing I could do; but he's going to let me, after all."

"Yes," said the clergyman, smiling; "shall we thank him, Christie?"

So he knelt down by Christie's bed, and little Christie clasped his thin hands and added his words of praise:

"O Jesus, I thank thee so much for letting me have some work to do for thee; and, please, I will stay outside the gates a little longer, to do something to show thee how I love thee. Amen."

"Yes, Christie," said the clergyman, as he rose to go, "you must work with a very loving heart. And when the work is over will come the rest. After the long waiting will come 'Home, sweet Home.'"

"Yes," said Christie, brightly, "'there's no place like Home, no place like Home.'"

CHAPTER XIII.—CHRISTIE'S WORK FOR THE MASTER.

It was a hot summer's afternoon, some years after, and the air in Ivy Court was as close and stifling as it had been in the days when Christie and old Treffy lived there. Crowds of children might still be seen playing there, screaming and quarrelling, just as they had done then. The air was as full of smoke and dust, and the court looked as desolate as it had done in those days gone by. It was still a very dismal and a very forlorn place.

So Christie thought, as he entered it that sultry day; it seemed to him as far as ever from "Home, sweet Home." Yet, of all the places which he visited as a Scripture reader, there was no place in which Christie took such an interest as Ivy Court. For he could not forget those dreary days when he had been a little homeless wanderer, and had gone there for a night's lodging. And he could not forget the old attic which had been the first place, since his mother's death, that he had been able to call home. It was to this very attic he was going this afternoon. He climbed the rickety stairs, and as he did so he thought of the night when he had crept up them for the first time, and had knelt down outside old Treffy's door, listening to the organ. Christie had never parted with that organ, his old master's last gift to him. And scarcely a week passed that he did not turn the handle, and listen to the dear old tunes. And he always finished with "Home, sweet Home," for he still loved that tune the best. And when Miss Mabel came to see him, she always wanted to turn the old organ in remembrance of her childish days. She was not Miss Mabel any longer now, though Christie still sometimes called her so when they were talking together of the old days, and of Treffy and his organ. But Mabel was married now to the clergyman under whom Christie was working, and she took great interest in the young Scripture-reader, and was

always ready to help him with her advice and sympathy. And she would ask Christie about the poor people he visited, and he would tell her which of them most needed her aid. And where she was most needed young Mrs. Villiers was always ready to go.

And so it came to pass that when Christie knocked at the old attic door, it was opened for him by Mrs. Villiers herself, who had just come there to see a poor sick woman. She had not met Christie in that attic since the days when they were both children, and Mabel smiled as he came in, and said to him, "Do you remember the occasion when we met here before?"

"Yes," said Christie, "I remember it well; there were four of us here then, Mrs. Villiers, and two out of the four have gone to the bright city which we talked of then."

"Yes," said Mabel, with tears in her eyes; "they are waiting for us in 'Home, sweet Home.'"

The attic did not look any more cheerful that day than it had done when old Treffy lived there. The window panes were nearly all broken and filled with pieces of brown paper or rag. The floor was more rotten than ever, and the boards seemed as if they must give way when Christie crossed the room to speak to a forlorn-looking woman who was sitting on a chair by the smouldering fire. She was evidently very ill and very unhappy. Four little children were playing about, and making so much noise that Christie could hardly hear their mother speak when she told him she was "no better, no better at all, and she did not think she ever should be."

"Have you done what I asked you, Mrs. Wilson?" said Christie.

"Yes, sir, I've said it again and again, and the more I say it the more miserable it makes me."

"What is it, Christie?" said Mrs. Villiers.

"It's a little prayer, ma'am, I asked her to say: 'O God, give me Thy Holy Spirit, to show me what I am.'"

"And I think He has shown me," said the poor woman, sadly; "anyhow, I never knew I was such a sinner; and every day as I sit here by my fire I think it all over, and every night as I lie awake on my bed I think of it again."

"I've brought another prayer for you to say now, Mrs. Wilson," said Christie, "and I've written it out on a card, that you may be able to learn it quickly: 'O God, give me Thy Holy Spirit, to show me what Jesus is.' God has heard and answered your first prayer, so you may be sure he will hear this one also. And if he only shows you what Jesus is, I am sure you will be happy for Jesus will forgive you your sin, and take away all its heavy burden."

The poor woman read the prayer aloud several times, and then Mrs. Villiers took a book from her pocket and began to read. It was a little, much-worn Testament. It had once been blue, but from constant use the color had faded, and the gilt edges were no longer bright. It was not the first time that same Testament had been in that old attic. For it was the same book from which Mabel's mother had read to old Treffy fifteen years before. How Mabel loved that book! Here and there was a pencil mark, which her mother had made against some favorite text, and these texts Mabel read again and again, till they became her favorites also. It was one of these which she read to the poor woman to-day: "The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin." And then Mrs. Villiers explained how ready Jesus is to save any soul that comes to him, and how his blood is quite sufficient to take away sin.

The sick woman listened eagerly, and a tear came into Christie's eye as he said: "There is no text that I love like that, Mrs. Villiers. Mr. Wilton preached on it in the mission room the second time I went there, and I felt as if I could sing for joy when I heard it; I well remember how I ran up the stairs to this attic, to tell it to my old master."

"And you've found it true, Christie?"

"Yes, ma'am, indeed I have; and Treffy