

READY WHENEVER HE COMES.

"There's mother on the move already! What is she getting up so soon for?" said Martha Wilson to her sister Fanny, as she heard footsteps descending the stairs in the early morning.

"Farmer Hargreaves is going to give her a ride to market with him. He generally takes one of his own people, but to-day none of the family want to go, so as he knew that mother wants a day's shopping sometimes, he offered her the spare seat in his cart."

"But he will not be starting for hours yet. How ridiculous it is of mother to turn out so soon! She will have plenty of time to tire herself in town, and would have been better for an extra hour's sleep, instead of getting up that much earlier."

"It is tiresome," replied Fanny, "for if the mother is downstairs it will not do for us to lie in bed and let her get things ready for herself;" and she at once began to dress.

Martha followed her example, not very willingly, for both sisters agreed in thinking that but for their mother's over-anxiety they might have enjoyed an extra hour's rest. But conscience would not allow them to leave the good mother unassisted, so they made all possible haste to join her below-stairs.

"Why, mother, you are up too soon," began Fanny, as she entered the kitchen and found the fire already lighted. "We should have had breakfast ready for you in good time if you had stayed quietly in bed till your regular hour."

"But Farmer Hargreaves is coming, my dear," said Mrs. Wilson.

"I know that; but he never goes off to market at this time of morning," said Martha. "He generally passes at about nine o'clock. It is only an hour's drive, and there is no business doing before eleven."

"He mostly does pass about nine," agreed Mrs. Wilson.

"What time did he say he would call for you?" asked Fanny.

"Well, my dear, that is just what I cannot tell you. He said he would come, and he's quite certain to keep his word, if he is living and well. But I quite forgot to ask what time, and I suppose he forgot to tell me without asking. So I said to myself, 'I'll be soon enough. It will do me no harm to wait a bit here in the house; but I must be ready whenever he comes.'"

"It's not likely that just this morning he will be starting ever so much sooner than usual," persisted Fanny, resolved to convince her mother that she had made a mistake.

"Don't be put out about it, my dear," replied Mrs. Wilson. "You may be right, and may have to wait, perhaps an hour. But I shall feel quite comfortable, because by being ready in such good time I shall be on the safe side. I had not meant to call you girls, for I could have managed very well; but I could not have been comfortable in my bed thinking that Mr. Hargreaves might be coming and finding me unprepared for my journey."

"And I hope you don't think we could have lain comfortably in our beds after we heard you moving about, mother," said both the girls, for they were good, dutiful daughters to their widowed mother, though apt to think sometimes that she was over-anxious and fidgety.

So they took the work in hand and got all tidied up and the breakfast on the table without loss of time, whilst the mother put on her better gown, and made herself ready for the drive to market.

Mrs. Wilson took her meal comfortably and without stint of time, and was able to read a few verses of God's Word and offered a prayer with her children according to daily custom. Only all was done just an hour earlier than common.

The three had risen from their knees, and the widow was glancing round to see if there was anything lying about to remind her of business to be done in town, when the sound of wheels was heard.

"I believe Mr. Hargreaves is coming," exclaimed she; and sure enough she was right. The wheels stopped at the little gate, and the farmer's youngest boy, whom he had brought so far for the purpose, ran up to the door to ask, "Is Mrs. Wilson ready?"

The widow answered by making her appearance and going towards the gate.

"Good morning, Mrs. Wilson," said the farmer. "Here you are, I see, as fresh as a daisy, and with every pin in its place. I

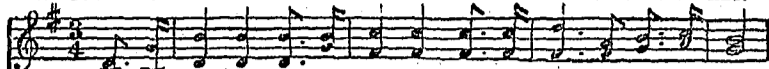
Out of Darkness into Light.

"I am the Light of the world: he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness."—JOHN viii. 12.

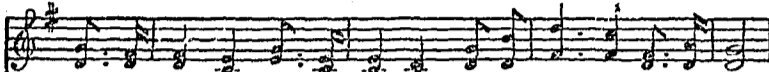
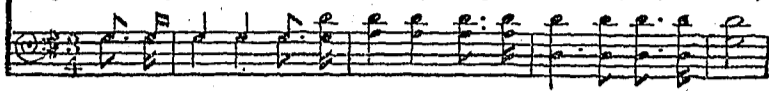
W. O. LATTIMORE.

(TEMPERANCE HYMN.)

IRA D. SANKEY.



1. Long in dark-ness we have wait-ed For the shin-ing of the Light;
2. Now, at last, the Light ap-pear-eth, Je-sus stands up-on the shore;
3. No-thing have we but our weak-ness, Nought but sor-row, sin, and care;



1. Long have felt the things we ha-ted, Sink us still in leep-er night.
2. And with ten-der voice He call-eth, "Come to Me, and sin no more!"
3. All with-in is loath-some vile-ness, All with-out is dark des-pair.



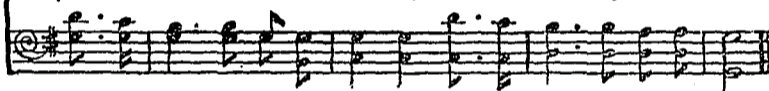
CHORUS.



Bles-sed Je-sus, lov-ing Sa-viour! Ten-der, faith-ful, strong and true,



Break the fet-ters that have bound us, Make us in Thy-self a-new.



All our talents we have wasted,
All Thy laws have disobeyed;
But Thy goodness now we've tasted,
In Thy robes we stand arrayed.
Blessed Jesus, loving Saviour!
Tender, faithful, strong and true,
Break the fetters that have bound us,
Make us in Thyself anew.

Thou hast saved us—do Thou keep us,
Guide us by Thyine eye divine;
Let the Holy Spirit teach us,
That our light may ever shine.
Blessed Jesus, be Thou near us,
Give us of Thy grace to-day;
While we're calling, do Thou hear us,
Send us now Thy peace, we pray.

am very glad to see you ready, for I was half afraid you might not be. I quite forgot to say last night that I must start at eight instead of nine, because I had an uncommon deal of business to get through. There's one man in particular that I never can catch unless I get to town before most of my neighbors. And having to go soon is another reason why I am able to give you a lift this morning. My wife is extra busy at home, and could not have left till later."

"I'm very much obliged to you for taking me at all," said Mrs. Wilson. "It is a great convenience, with a station a mile and a half off. I am glad I was ready, for, not knowing the proper time, I said to myself, 'I'll be soon enough, and then I shall be on the safe side.'"

"That's it!" said the farmer, with a smile on his ruddy face. "And would you believe it? it was knowing your ways that made me come round at all, though I had promised. I said to my wife, 'Mrs. Wilson doesn't know what time I start, but she's just the woman to be ready the earlier on that account.' If it had been any one of a lot of neighbors I could mention, I should have known it would be of no use to go near their doors. They would have reckoned what hour I mostly start at, and aimed to be ready by then; and even after all, three out of six would have kept me waiting. But I felt that you were not of that sort, so I came and found you ready, and here we are on the road to market. To anyone else I should have sent my respects, and as I found I must start too early for them, I would give them a lift some other time."

Thus spoke the farmer to his passenger.

Mrs. Wilson's girls, looking after their mother, said, "She was right after all. If we don't know the time, it is best to get ready soon enough, then we are on the safe side."

There is One who has said, "Be ye therefore ready also, for the Son of Man cometh at an hour when ye think not." There is one journey all must take. There is one call to which no one can turn a deaf ear, yet no one knows when it will sound for him. It is no use to say, "I am young, it is not likely the call will come before middle age;" or "I am in the prime of life; I will expect the call when I am old." There is a command for you to obey; take good heed to its warning, then the time at which the call comes will matter little: "Be ye also ready."—*Friendly Greetings.*

IN THE AUTUMN of 1830 a travelling book-peddler, who afterward became a successful publisher and the head of a firm whose name is well known in the United States to-day, came to the door of a log-cabin on a farm in eastern Illinois, and asked for the courtesy of a night's lodging. There was no near inn. The good wife was hospitable but perplexed, "for," said she, "we can feed your beast, but we cannot lodge you, unless you are willing to sleep with the hired man." "Let's have a look at him first," said the peddler. The woman pointed to the side of the house, where a lank, six-foot man, in ragged but clean clothes, was stretched on the grass reading a book. "He'll do," said the stranger. "A man who reads a book as hard as that fellow seems to, has got too much else to think of beside my watch or my small change." The hired man was Abraham Lincoln; and when he was President, the two men met in Washington and laughed together over the story of their earlier rencontre.—*N. Y. Independent*

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Question Corner.—No. 14.

BIBLE QUESTIONS.

1. We read of three persons gathering sticks; one was put to death, one was rewarded, and the other was called a god. Who were they?
2. Who hanged himself because his advice was not followed?
3. Who married a third wife to please his parents?
4. What King of Israel was taken among thorns and bound with fetters?
5. Who sold fish on the Sabbath day?
6. How many knives did the children of Israel bring back to Jerusalem from Babylon?

A BIBLE ACROSTIC.

Of virtues three, but one just name?
What term of bliss can Christians claim?
Where found Noah's Ark a resting-place?
What sure hope has our sinful race?
What courtier said, "Thou art the man"?
What Bible stars in heaven's plan or span?
In what are victors fain to choose?
What fault in all,—all should disuse?
And tender trait all men imbues?
What must be,—minus which, all is nought?
What results from where Cupid wrought?
Now, be correct, and sum up all,
And tell what an angel said to Paul.

ANSWERS TO BIBLE QUESTIONS NO. 13.

1. Daughter of Pophersab, priest of On; Gen. xii. 45.
2. Babel; Gen. x. 10.
3. Pharaoh; Ex. i. 12.
4. Oboliel; Jud. i. 12, 13.
5. Chorazin and Bethsaida; Luke x. 13.
6. Treas; 2 Tim. iv. 3.
7. Tadmor; 1 Kings ix. 18.
8. Rabbath; 2 Samuel xi.

SCRIPTURE ACROSTIC.—Love worketh no ill to his neighbor. Romans 13. 10. 1. Lois. 2. Olinth. 3. Virgins. 4. Elymas. 5. Wages. 6. Olivet. 7. Rabb. 8. Kish. 9. Eunice. 10. Tarsus. 11. Honey. 12. Naaman. 13. Oil. 14. Ivory. 15. Jaban. 16. Levites. 17. Timothy. 18. Og. 19. Hebron. 20. Ishmael. 21. Siloam. 22. Nain. 23. Ephesus. 24. Israel. 25. Goshen. 26. Mt. Hor. 27. Barnabas. 28. Onesimus. 29. Rome.

CORRECT ANSWERS RECEIVED.

Correct answers have been received from H. E. Greene, Lillian Greene, Jean Beattie, Jennie Lyght, Frank Carruthers, and Albert Jesse French.

"A NICE LITTLE PRIZE."

GENTLEMEN,—I write to acknowledge the receipt of the *Northern Messenger* prize, "Uncle Tom's Cabin." I think it is a very nice little prize, and take pleasure in reading it. Hoping that your number of subscribers may continue to increase,
I remain, your friend. L. L.
Richmond, Va.

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