

sure whether he might become a Christian or not, but he would write to the Porte (the Turkish Government) and ask them. He did so, and the answer returned was, that the young man was at liberty to choose what religion he chose. This decision is of very great importance, because the Jews now will be allowed to profess Christianity when they are convinced of its truth. Formerly, no Jewish subjects of the Porte could become Christians without being exposed to most violent persecutions.

Fire!—A House On Fire

It was Christmas morning, in the year 1838, that I was awakened from my sleep at four o'clock, by the fire-bell. The policemen were passing from street to street, and springing their rattles or ringing their bells. Such sounds as these, in the still darkness of a winter's night, are anything but pleasant to the people of a large city. Our first question is, "Where is it?" and if we are told it is in Union-street or High-street, we begin to think of some friends who live in the street, and hope they are all safe.

Well, on that occasion I rose and opened the window, and looking towards the end of the street, I saw a strong light reflected on the window-panes of the houses opposite. I was quite sure that a great fire was raging at a very short distance from me. I dressed myself quickly, hastened to the spot, and to my dismay I found it was in the house of an old and valued friend. The fire had commenced in a bedroom on the first floor, and that part of the stair-case was in full blaze. It was impossible to get up stairs, and I knew that there were seven or eight persons to be saved.

In a few minutes a long ladder was brought and placed against one of the second floor windows, and in a few minutes more I had the satisfaction of seeing six persons descend the ladder.

Some of them in their fright had rushed to the window in their nightdresses; others, more calm, had partly dressed themselves, and saved besides some articles they most valued.

Now it is a remarkable thing, and often noticed, that persons who would turn giddy upon a ladder on common occasions, have had great courage, and been able to carry burdens they could scarcely lift at other times. We may be sure in any sudden danger, that if we trust in God, he will give strength according to our need.

But while the firemen were trying with all their might to put out the fire with their different engines, it was found that two persons were missing: one a servant girl, and the other a young man named Albert, of whom I shall have more to say presently.—The poor girl had been to the window, but her terror was such that she did not know what she was about. She rushed from room to room, all of which were filled with dense smoke, and at last sank down exhausted, and was consumed and buried in the ruins.

But what about Albert? Ah! there is a sorrowful story about him. Albert was a young man of 22. I knew him when he was a little boy, and a fine little fellow I used to think he was.—Albert had a fault, and a sad fault it proved to be.

He was inclined to be idle. He would saunter away hours in the day, and when school time came, he often turned down a lane and tried to learn his lesson, but finding some boys at play, he would join them, and not go to school at all. And this practice caused him to tell many a falsehood to his poor mother.

Now, there is no harm in a game at marbles, or at ball, or peg-top, but there is a time for everything, a time to play and a time to work. Albert's mother loved him very much, and she often talked to him about being diligent, and striving to get on—many a time did she repeat to him that