

Children's Department.

A HAPPY LITTLE GIRL.

DEAR CHILDREN,—Would you like to know who was the happiest child I ever saw? Listen to me, and I will tell you.

The happiest child I ever saw was a little girl whom I once met travelling in a railway-carriage. We were both going on a journey to London, and we travelled a great many miles together. She was only eight years old, and she was quite blind. She had never been able to see at all. She had never seen the sun, and the stars, and the sky, and the grass, and the flowers, and the trees, and the birds, and all those pleasant things which you see every day of your lives; but still she was quite happy.

She was by herself, poor little thing. She had no friends or relations to take care of her on the journey, and be good to her; but she was quite happy and content. She said when she got into the carriage—"Tell me how many people there are in the carriage. I am quite blind and can see nothing."

A gentleman asked her if she was not afraid.

"No," she said, "I am not frightened; I have travelled before, and I trust in God, and people are always very good to me."

But I soon found out the reason why she was so happy; and what do you think it was? She loved Jesus Christ, and Jesus Christ loved her; she had sought Jesus Christ, and she had found Him.

I began to talk to her about the Bible, and I soon saw she knew a great deal of it. She went to a school where the mistress used to read the Bible to her; and she was a good girl, and had remembered what her mistress had read.

Dear children, you cannot think how many things in the Bible this poor little blind girl knew. I only wish that every grown-up person in England knew as much as she did. But I must try and tell you some of them.

She talked to me about sin; how it first came into the world when Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit; and it was to be seen everywhere now. "Oh," she said, "there are no really good people. The very best people in the world have many sins every day, and I am sure we all of us waste a good deal of time if we do nothing else wrong. Oh, we are all such sinners; there is nobody who has not sinned a great many sins."

And then she talked about Jesus Christ. She told me about the agony in the garden of Gethsemane; about His sweating drops of blood; about the soldiers nailing Him to the cross; about the spear piercing His side, and the blood and water coming out. "Oh," she said, "how very good of Him to die for us, and such a cruel

death! How good He was to suffer for our sins!"

And then she talked about wicked people. She told me she was afraid there were a great many in the world, and it made her very unhappy to think how many of her schoolfellows and acquaintances went on. "But," she said, "I know the reason why they are so wicked; it is because they do not try to be good; they do not wish to be good; they do not ask Jesus to make them good."

I asked her what part of the Bible she liked best. She told me she liked all the history of Jesus Christ, but the chapters she was most fond of were the three last chapters of the book of the Revelation. I had got a Bible with me, and I took it out and read these chapters to her as we went along.

When I had done, she began to talk about heaven. "Think," she said, "how nice it will be to be there. There will be no sorrow, nor crying, nor tears. And then Jesus Christ will be there, for it says: 'The Lamb is the light thereof; and we shall always be with Him; and besides this, there shall be no night there; they will need no candle nor light of the sun.'"

Dear children, just think of this poor little blind girl. Think of her taking pleasure in talking of Jesus Christ. Think of her rejoicing in the account of heaven, where there shall be no sorrow nor night.

I have never seen her since. She went to her own home in London, and I do not know whether she is alive or not; but I hope she is, and I have no doubt Jesus Christ has taken good care of her.

Dear children, are you as happy and as cheerful as she was?

You are not blind, you have eyes and can run about and see everything, and go where you like, and read as much as you please to yourselves. But are you as happy as this poor little blind girl?

Oh, if you wish to be happy in this world, remember my advice to-day; do as the little blind girl did—"Love Jesus Christ, and He will love you; seek Him early and you shall find Him."

MEMPHIS.

If you look at a large map of Lower Egypt, such as you can buy just now at railway stalls for sixpence, you will see opposite Cairo, on the edge of the Great Desert, the Pyramids of Djeezch, and further south the Pyramids of Sakkarah, and alongside of these latter, "The Ruins of Memphis," to which you can go by railroad from Cairo in half an hour or so. Memphis was the greatest city of ancient Egypt, the capital where Pharaoh lived with his Court, and whither the infant Moses was taken when he was adopted by Pharaoh's daughter. In the Bible Memphis is

again and again mentioned under the name of Noph. Thus Isaiah writes, "the Princes of Noph are deceived;" and Jeremiah, "The children of Noph have broken the crown of thy head;" and Ezekiel, "I will cause their imagines to cease out Noph, and there shall no more be a prince in the land of Egypt." But Memphis was also renowned for its great Necropolis or Cemetery, which stretched for twenty miles along the borders of the Lybian Desert, and contained the Pyramids, great and small, within its limits, these being built, as you are aware, as tombs for their mummies by the Pharaohs. Remembering this you will better understand the force of a passage in the Prophet Hosea, in which he threatens his rebellious countrymen—"Egypt shall gather them up, and Noph shall bury them."

Memphis was the centre of Egyptian worship. Here was the great temple of the god Ptah, so called because he was considered to be the "opener" or "originator" of all things. From him came all the laws and customs and traditions of men; hence he was called the Lord of Truth. According to the ancient myth he was the Creator of the egg, out of which came the sun and moon. He was represented by the Apis, or Sacred Bull of Memphis. This creature, which was originally born of a white cow, was required to have a black hide, a white triangle on his forehead, a light spot, eagle shaped, on the middle of his back, and under his tongue a mark like the scarabaeus, or sacred beetle. When such an animal was found he was installed in the shrine of his predecessor, and fed on mashes of fine flour, milk, and honey cakes. It is a curious fact that the tomb of the Apis which died during the reign of Rameses the Great, and at whose embalming and funeral solemnities Moses, as one connected with the Royal family of Egypt, must have been present, was opened only two years ago in the Serapeum at Memphis by the great discoverer, Mariette Bey.

I could tell you a great deal more about Memphis and its temples, its gods and their worship; and very interesting is the account which learned men give us respecting the funeral ceremonies of those old Egyptians, which show most clearly that, in spite of their idolatry, they had very correct notions about justice and mercy, obedience and truth, and fully believed in a future state of retribution and immortality. But as all this would take up too much space, I will just tell you two stories connected with Memphis. How far they are true I must leave you to judge. I only relate them as I find them in the Newspaper (*The Jewish World*) from which I have been collecting the above account of Memphis and its god.

My first story will remind you of Cinderella: it is the legend of Rhodope and King Menkara who

built the third Pyramid. In the days of this King, who was the third of the first dynasty of Pharaohs—a fair Egyptian maid, Rhodope by name, was bathing in the Nile, when an eagle swooping down, carried off her slipper, and flew off with it to Memphis, where the king happened to be sitting on the seat of justice, and dropped it into his lap. Admiring the smallness of the slipper, and struck with the incident itself, the king directed search to be made for the owner. When she was found he was so pleased with her beauty and cleverness that he made her his queen; and he so tenderly loved her, that after her death he raised, as a perpetual memorial of her, the third Pyramid, which is known as that of Menkara, whom the Greeks called Mycerinus.

My second story is about no less a person than Moses; and as it comes to us as a Jewish tradition, it may possibly have had some foundation in the facts of his early history. But on the other hand the Jews may have only invented it of him, much as the ancient Greeks feigned prodigies about the infant Hercules; and some of the early Christians even ventured to ascribe miracles to our Blessed Lord when He was quite a child. The legend runs thus:—

When Moses was still a child, his foster-mother brought him into Pharaoh's presence, as the king was seated, crowned and sceptred, in the Hall of the Great Palace at Memphis. The king took the infant on his knees in order to caress him. The child resented this, and putting forth his hand took the royal crown off Pharaoh's head and placed it on his own. Now, not only was this removal of the crown punishable, but the act itself was regarded as most inauspicious or unlucky. Accordingly the wise men of Egypt counselled that the infant should be put to death. But the daughter of Pharaoh pleaded that it was only the play of a child that was attracted by the glitter of the crown. If so, said the wise men, we will try if he has intelligence or not. Forthwith they brought in two plates, one containing sparkling jewels and glittering gems; the other filled with coals of fire, all glowing. These were put before the infant: if he chose the jewels, he was to die; if the coals, he was to live. Moses was about to stretch forth his hands to grasp the jewels, when lo! his guardian Angel guided them to the fiery coals, which he took and put to his mouth. Thus continues the legend, was caused that impediment in his speech, from which, according to tradition, he suffered, and to which he is said to refer when, in reply to the message of the Almighty to go and speak to the children of Israel, he answers, "I am slow of speech and of a slow tongue."

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