

THE LOVE OF CHRIST.

There was kneeling one day in the church a poor collier lad, some ten or twelve years of age. His hair was rough, his clothes were torn and ragged; his feet were bare. His hands were clasped as in prayer; a sad whistful look was on his face. I knelt by his side. "I want to be good," he said, "I want to belong to the Saviour; I could trust Him if only I could be sure that He loves me."

His had been a hard life in the world, poor heart! How should I convince him of the fact of the love of God? I spoke to him of friends and playmates. "Is there any one you have ever known, who, if you had to die, would be willing to die in your stead to save you?" A moment's silence, and then with a sweet smile, he looked up and said, "I believe my mother would."

In that brief pause he had looked back on life, and measured a mother's love. Perhaps there passed before his mind the vision of her toil late at night to mend his clothes, or earn to-morrow's bread, and convinced of the reality of a mother's love, his heart told him it would be strong unto death.

"Then see what Jesus has done," and I spoke to him of the bleeding hands and feet of the Crucified. He bowed his face in his hands, as he said "I can love Him back again, and trust Him too!"

Thus was the victory of the Crucified won in that young heart. So it is ever with us all.—J. H. Lester, Missioner of Litchfield.

PASSING over the Pennsylvania railroad in day trains, when you near the summit of the mountain the employees go through the cars and light the lamps. It seems a strange thing to do at mid day, and a very useless thing. Those dim lamps give no light in a car filled with sunshine. But while you are wondering what it means, your train plunges into a long, dark tunnel, where no sunshine ever penetrates. Then you understand why the lamps were lighted; then you see the use of their light. So it is that the meaning of many of the most precious words of Scripture have to be learned. We see no beauty or bright beam in them at first, when the world's light floods our path. They lie in our memory, and the years come and go, bringing new experience. The light of human joy wanes. Health gives way. Disappointment comes. Sorrow breaks in upon our homes. Some human trust fails. The sunlight that flowed about us yesterday has been put out, and our path sweeps into the darkness. Then the words of God that seemed so pale and commonplace before, like the dim lamps in the noon-day, flash out in full splendor, and pour heavenly light about us. Did those words have no light in them until just now? Yes, the light was there all these years; the text meant just that—all of that—the first time you ever read them. They hung about your head with all this wondrousness of help, comfort and divine revelation, all the time you

were moving along through the lovely valley and upon the mountain side; but it was not till you plunged into the darkness that you saw the brightness. The goodness, the comfort that came so sweetly was not prepared for you new that moment. God laid it up, long years since, in the precious words of inspiration; but you never found it before; the storehouse was unopened till now.

A great many people find the bulk of their anxiety in forecasting future possible needs or trials. Many of these may never come at all, and those that do come will bring with them their own relief. It may not be disclosed in advance, but why should it be? Will it not be soon enough when the shadow deepens for the lamps to be lighted? Will it not be soon enough when the larder is empty for God to send bread? When you get to Marah's bitter waters of sorrow you shall find the tree to sweeten them. Will not that be soon enough? When you reach your Gethsemane and lie in the deep shadows, with the agony in your soul, will not that be soon enough for the angel to come?—Dr. J. R. Miller.

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A. P. BRADLEY, Secretary.

Department of Railways and Canals, Ottawa, 7th February, 1899. 42-3

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