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about three thousand six hundred feet in the distance. Jericho is now a miserable Arab village.

(1) *A Procession from Jericho.* Numbers of people from Galilee were passing through by this route, not liking to pass through Samaria, they generally travelled down on the east side of the Jordan, crossing the river near Jericho. Here they would rest awhile before undertaking the steep six hours climb leading to Jerusalem. Somewhere close to the gate there sat a blind man. Bartimeus by name, a beggar; he and a companion in misery were accustomed to beg from the passers by. There is a slight difficulty in the three accounts given by the evangelists which the intelligent teacher will do well to master. St. Matthew says two blind men were healed as Jesus left Jericho, St. Mark and St. Luke mention but one, the former stating that he was healed as Jesus went out of Jericho, the latter that the miracle took place as He came in. Probably Bartimeus was the best known; it has been suggested that he cried to our Lord as He went towards Jericho, but that he was not healed till later when Jesus having paid His visit to Zacchoeus was leaving; and that meanwhile Bartimeus had been joined by the second man.

(2) *A Pause in the Procession, Jesus standing still.* They were accustomed to hear crowds go by, every now and then, some one would give them something. To-day, however, Bartimeus is impelled to ask the reason for the passing multitude, St. Luke xviii. 36. They tell him that "Jesus of Nazareth passeth by," verse 37. This is evidently the first time he heard of our Lord's arrival; he had probably heard of the Prophet of Nazareth and of His miracles. He thinks thus, if He would but have compassion on my pitiable state, then he cries out loudly, "Jesus, Son of David have mercy on me." This title shows that he believed that Jesus was the promised Messiah. Had he not heard in the Synagogues that the Messiah would open the eyes of the blind, Isaiah xxxv. 6, xlii. 7. If we are correct in thinking he cried out to Jesus on entering Jericho, we must conclude that for some wise reason He did not immediately grant his request testing his faith by the delay. If this be so we can better understand the people endeavouring to stop his cries, St. Mark x. 48, they might think that if He had not healed him at first, it was a liberty to address Him again. Besides here was the King of the Jews going up to enter Jerusalem as the Messiah of His nation, and was He to be interrupted and annoyed by a beggar. Ah, but this may be his last chance, so instead of suffering himself to be silenced, "he cried the more a great deal." But how different the Kings thoughts, Isaiah lv. 8, 9. He never turned from the cry of one who really needed His help, and He does not now, verse 49. He stands still and commands that he be brought to Him; then those who would have silenced him at once change their tone, "Be of good comfort, rise, He calleth thee." How happy Bartimeus was to receive such a message, at once he casts away his flowing robe which might hinder his footsteps and comes quickly up to Jesus, verse 50. Jesus asks him what he wants, "Rabboni, that I might receive my sight," he gives Jesus the most reverential title that he knew, using the same word that Mary Magdalene used, St. John xx. 16. And is he refused? verse 52, see also St. Matt. xx. 34. Jesus touched their eyes and they were healed, and with recovered sight they followed Jesus glorifying God, as St. Luke mentions. Thus we see Bartimeus gained everything he wanted simply because he believed Jesus had the will and the power to do what he asked Him. Perhaps, too, his strong faith was shown in persevering petition, like that of the Syrophenician woman, St. Matt. xv. 28.

(3) *Jesus stands still now.* He is the same as then, Heb. xiii. 8. There is no contempt in His look, no man too bad, He came to seek and to save the lost, but there must be a real persevering cry, and it will reach God's ears, Psalm xviii. 6. He will listen and help us. What is the key to open the doors of heaven? see St. John xv. 16. Prayer. Our access to God's throne is "through Jesus Christ." Jesus is passing by to each of us, 2 Cor. vi. 2. Let us cast away all that keeps us from Him, what have we to cast away? Rom. xiii. 12; Heb. xii. 1. Let us come to Him when He calls. Bartimeus did not loiter. He is calling now, Rev. iii. 20. If we do this we shall have what these blind men wanted, a sight of Jesus, Isaiah xxxiii. 17. Then let us follow Him as Bartimeus did.

Family Reading.

KNOWLEDGE BY HEART.

Why, General, you will soon know that verse by heart."

A nobleman in his study could not help making this remark to a friend who was sitting there with him. There was a fair prospect from the window

of hill and valley; and when all was still you might hear the murmur of a waterfall, and the breaking of the waves upon the shore; but it was none of these things which engaged the attention of the General. Whenever he came into the room his eyes were always fixed on a verse which hung as a motto over the mantel-piece, and this was what it was:—

"In peace let me resign my breath,
And Thy salvation see;
My sins deserve eternal death,
But Jesus died for me."

The General had not been a religious man; he had been a brave soldier. You have heard of the battle of Waterloo: he had fought there, and had served his country well, but had never thought about his God. If his friend the nobleman tried to talk to him about serious things, he always managed to turn the subject. But do you know this simple verse had been God's message to his soul. I dare say his host had been praying for him, and now the prayer was answered.

For the reply the General made to the above remark—"You will soon know that verse by heart"—was brief but very emphatic. "Yes, I do know it by heart now." And nobody after that could have had any doubt that what he said was true. He lived a good and holy life; and in writing to his friend, he always ended with quoting the verse which had been so blessed to him. And when by-and-by he went home to Jesus, these words were the last upon his lips.

Nor had the verse done its mission yet. The nobleman was one day telling its story, when a young officer was present who was quite careless about his soul. He turned away apparently without a thought, but not long afterwards he was taken ill, and rapid decline set in. He sent for the nobleman, and when he came, stretched out his hands with a beaming face. He told him how those lines had come back to him, and how under God they had been the means of leading him to a Saviour. He no longer feared death, for he could truly say "that Jesus died for me." Yes, he too like the General knew the verse "by heart."

How often you use the words! You have a lesson to learn, and you go up to your teacher; and if you say it right off without mistakes he says, "Very good, you have taken pains, you have got it by heart."

But after all it was only in your head, and head and heart are sometimes a long way apart. That head of yours is a many-chambered house, and we would like all the chambers to be full of pleasant riches; but the heart is quite another thing; the head thinks, but the heart feels; and when the General said he knew the "verse by heart," he meant that he not only knew, but felt it to be true. God's Spirit had made the truth real to him that his sins deserved eternal death, but that in Jesus all those sins had been washed away.

GOING HOME.

Well do I recollect, some years ago, when duty had called me away with my regiment to a foreign land, an event which, from the melancholy circumstances attending it, has been graven on my memory. It was the height of summer, and a tropical sun had just set, and a cool refreshing sea-breeze floated over the parched and burning land. A fever peculiar to the climate had prostrated many of all ranks, and proved fatal in some instances; and amongst the convalescent was a young officer in whom I had taken a great personal interest. His strength, however, not recruiting as rapidly as could be wished, the medical authorities advised him to return to England.

Just as the mess bugle had sounded, and I was preparing to dress, he came in in high spirits but with tottering step, to tell me that, as that very evening a steamer was expected, he had obtained leave to embark, and he heartily wished me goodbye. His last words were, "I am going home to-night; and perhaps the steamer will come in before you leave the mess; if not, see me off."

It was midnight before we left the mess-room, and on walking to my quarters I found a lamp burning in my friends room. I looked in and found him sleeping soundly, but apparently breath-

ing very loudly. I went up to him, and found all my efforts to awaken him unavailing. I immediately summoned the doctor, and to my horror all my worst fears were realised, for he at once pronounced him to be dying.

All that medical skill could suggest or that friendship could devise was done, but he never recovered his consciousness; and strange enough, three hours after I had discovered his state, and just as the signal gun was fired to announce the arrival of the steamer in which he had engaged his passage, his spirit passed away. He was gone home. His soul had winged its flight to glory. He had lived to Christ on earth, and he was now at home in the mansions which Christ had prepared for them that love Him.

A blood-vessel bursting in his sleep had caused his untimely end; but by his bedside lay the Bible, which he had just read before he slept that fatal sleep. He had gone from worshipping in a foreign land to worship evermore in the home of his heavenly Father, where no partings ever take place. Earthly friends were expecting him in an earthly home, for he was "the only son of his mother, and she was a widow," but it was decreed that that meeting should never be on earth. Not till the resurrection morn shall that re-union take place.

Should such a sudden summons come to you, dear reader, as it did to him, would you in like manner journey to that home where he now is? The summons will some day come. The little infant that nestles on its mother's breast, the youth whose pulse beats high, and before whom, like to this young and promising officer, the visions of a long life seem to unfold themselves; the middle-aged who have trodden the path, and done battle with the storms of life; the aged whose gray hairs testify to their soon approaching end; all alike may any moment receive this summons.

If you have laid up your treasure in heaven, no summons can be sudden to you. Sudden death is unpreparedness for death. To the ungodly, to the unprepared, such an end is indeed awful to contemplate. But to them who are living to God, such a death can never be sudden, unlooked for; for it is but a translation from prayer to praise, from anticipation to fruition, from a state of pilgrimage and exile to a home where all is joy and peace and love.

Reflect, then, on these things. Strive to learn a lesson from this young Christian officer's early and sudden made grave; for the Son of Man cometh in an hour ye know not. "Watch ye therefore; for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cock-crowing, or in the morning: lest coming suddenly He find you sleeping."

THE EASTER GUEST.

I knew thou wert coming, O Lord divine,
I felt in the sunlight a softened shine,
And a murmur of welcome I thought I heard,
In the ripple of brooks and the chirp of bird;
And the bursting buds and the springing grass.
Seemed to be waiting to see Thee pass;
And the sky, and the sea, and the throbbing sod
Pulsed and thrilled to the touch of God.

I knew Thou wert coming, O Love divine,
To gather the world's heart up to thine;
I knew the bonds of the rock-hewn grave
Were riven, that, living, Thy life might save.
But, blind and wayward, I could not see
Thou wert coming to dwell with me, e'en me;
And my heart, o'erburdened with care and sin,
Had no fair chambers to take Thee in.

Not one clean spot for Thy foot to tread,
Not one pure pillow to rest Thy head;
There was nothing to offer—no bread, no wine,
No oil of joy in this heart of mine;
And yet the light of Thy kingly face
Illumined for Thyself a small, dark place,
And I crept to the spot by Thy smile made sweet,
And the tears came ready to wash Thy feet.

Now let me come nearer, O Lord divine,
Make in my soul for Thyself a shrine;
Cleanse, till the desolate place shall be
Fit for a dwelling, dear Lord, for Thee.
Rear, if Thou wilt, a throne in my breast,
Reign, I will worship and serve my guest,
While Thou art in me—and in Thee I abide—
No end can come to the Easter-tide.

—Mrs. M. L. Dickinson.