

THE DEVIL AND BILLY BRAY'S 'TATORS.

I was goin' to tell the story that I heard from dear old Billy Bray. He was preachin' about temptations, and this is what he said,—

"Friends, last week I was a-diggin' up my 'tators. It was a poor yield, sure 'nough; there was hardly a sound one in the lot. An' while I was a-diggin' the devil came to me, and he says, 'Billy, do you think your Father do love you?'"

"I should reckon He do," I says.

"Well, I dont," says the temper in a minute.

"If I'd thought about it, I shouldn't ha' listened to him, for his 'pinions ben't worth the leastest bit o' notice.

"I don't," says he "and I tell 'ee what for; if your Father loved you, Billy Bray, he'd give you a pretty yield o' 'tators; so much as ever you do want and ever so many of 'em, and every one of 'em as big as your fist. For it ben't no trouble for your Father to do anything; and he could just as easy give you plenty as not. An' if he loved you he would too."

"O' course I wasan't going to let him talk o' my Father like that, so I turned round 'pon him. 'Pray, sir,' says I, 'who may you happen to be, com n' to me a-talkin' like this here? If I ben't mistaken, I know you, sir, and I know my Father too. And to think o' *your* comin' a-sayin' that *he* dont love me! Why, I've got your written character home to my house, and it do say, sir, that you be a liar from the beginnin'. An' I am sorry to add that I used to have a personal acquaintance with you some years since, and I served you as faithful as ever a poor wretch could; and all you gave me was nothing but rags to my back, and a wretched home, and an achin' head—an' *no* 'taturas—and the fear o' hell to finish up with. And here is my dear Father in heaven; I've been poor a servant of his his, off and on, for thirty years. And he's given me a clean heart, and a soul full of joy, and a lovely suit o' white as'll never wear out; and he says that he will make a king o' me before he've done, and that he'll take me home to his place to reign with him for ever and ever. And now *you* come up here a-talkin' like that!"

"Bless 'e, my dear friends, he went off in a minute, like as if he had been shot—I do wish he had—and he never had the manners to say good-morning."—*Daniel Quorn.*

PEDEN'S PRAYER.

A distinguished English historian thus describes the sufferings of the Church of Scotland during the dark days of persecution, two hundred years ago. They were "hunted down like wild beasts, tortured till their bones were beaten flat, imprisoned by hundreds, hanged by scores, exposed at one time to the license of soldiers from England, abandoned at another time to the mercy of bands of marauders; yet they stood still at bay in a mood so strange that the boldest and mightiest oppressors could not but dread the audacity of their despair." However accurate