

GRACE BEFORE MEAT.

V. The eyes of all wait upon Thee, O Lord.
R. And Thou givest them their meat in due season.
V. Thou openest Thy hand.
R. And fillest all things living with plenteousness.
V. Glory be to the Father, &c.
R. As it was in the beginning, &c.
Bless, O Lord, these Thy gifts which we are about to receive of Thy great bounty. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

GRACE AFTER MEAT.

V. All Thy works praise Thee, O Lord.
R. And Thy saints give thanks unto Thee.
V. They shew the glory of Thy Kingdom.
R. And talk of Thy power.
V. Glory, &c.
R. As it was, &c.
Thanks be to God for these and all His bounties bestowed on us. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

CHURCH BELLS.

We have received a copy of the catalogue of the Cincinnati Bell Foundry Co., of Cincinnati, Ohio, containing descriptions and prices of church, school and fire alarm bells, and over 1,800 testimonials from purchasers in the United States and Canada. The testimonials are from every State and Territory and a large proportion of them from ministers, and speak in highest terms of the bells. The prices are comparatively low, and within reach of even feeble communities. Churches needing bells—and none should be without—will do well to write for the catalogue, which is offered free to all who may apply.

PHIL SORREL'S AWAKENING.

"Who is the man with the pipe in his mouth, leaning against the bricks?"
"Only old Phil Sorrel, the Sunday watchman. He's nobody."
"Only old Phil Sorrel!" But I had better explain.

It was on a July Sunday morning when I heard this unflattering description of myself, which was unfortunately true. I was old Phil Sorrel, a day labourer, thankful to earn a couple of shillings on God's holy day of rest by keeping watch over the materials and workmen's tools used in building the first house on some land in a lonely spot in Essex, which had recently come into the market. I had only tramped down from London during the previous week, and had been fortunate in securing work in this unlikely place. When I started I little thought of falling in with such a good chance, but for once fate had been kind, and I was again earning regular wages. When I left work early on Saturday, I was so tired that I lay down under a tree and slept for hours. When I awoke I saw undulating fields, stretches of woodland, and some pretty hay-making scenes, amongst which lay the intrusive bricks and timber, which our master hoped to convert into "a desirable country residence."

It was very still on that Saturday evening, and as it was long since I had been in the country, it brought unusual thoughts to my mind. Old memories crowded over me, and so, instead of going off to a public house, I just sat still and watched the sunset, for I new I must be clear headed if I meant to earn any money next day. And so it happened that on Sunday morning I was sober and at my post, as I had promised the master, and it was his boy who spoke such unwelcome home truths.

He looked a gentleman did the outspoken little chap, and made me think of my own early days when I was young Phil Sorrel, with the world before me and a white page on which to indite my story. It was pretty well filled up now and sadly soiled in the using. To think it should ever have come to this, and I have fallen so low that a mere passing Sunday-school boy should say, "He's nobody!"

Hardly true, though, after all. Far, far better be nobody than a man with a history like mine.

The country folk were curious about the new house, and many strolled by to see how it was getting on. I suppose all that any of them saw in the Sunday watchman was an elderly man in soiled working clothes, whose face bore traces of a vicious past and a dreary present; but I saw some one very different in the workman's clothing.

I saw a man of education and talent starting out on a professional career, encouraged by the approval and confidence of his friends. I marked the first departure from the path of honour and virtue, and followed him along the road of ruin till I rested with him here, almost at the end of his journey. I was the child of gentle parents, and educated as a gentleman. From an assured position I sank to "Gentleman Phil," "Drunken Phil," and down, down, till I ended by being a school-boy's "nobody." I—after all my dreams of youthful ambition and opportunities of success—a mere nobody!

As the hours passed by my thoughts grew intolerable; it was not that I repented of my sins so much as that I mourned over my lost chance of being somebody, and doing something worthy of the name which I had so long disgraced.

If you have ever been in such a plight as mine you will sympathize with my irritation when I saw a group of well-dressed people cross over the road for the purpose of looking at the new house. They were evidently on their way to evening service. One gentle girl grew pale as she met the look of wretchedness which I flashed at her as she fluttered by in her delicate summer dress.

Half an hour later I saw a prayer-book bound in ivory lying on the grass, which one of this party must have dropped; and, tired of my own miserable thoughts, I opened it, and read—

"When the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive."

Save! Was there any salvage from a wrecked life like mine?

"He shall save his soul alive."

How shall he do it?

"When the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right."

When the girl, on her way home, again approached me, I was prostrate before God in an agony of repentance and supplication, with her open prayer book in my hands, and it was wet with tears. Surely it was the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, who prompted her to read in a low, pitiful voice—

"To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgivenesses, though we have rebelled against Him; neither have we obeyed the voice of the Lord our God to walk in His laws which He has set before us."

It does not take long to run up a house now-a-days; our job is nearly finished. I shall be sorry to leave the peaceful spot where God, in His infinite mercy, had compassion on me by turning me from sin to Christ, in whom, and by whom, I walk in newness of life.—F. C.

A GLAD HEART.

In one of the fashionable squares at the West End of London there is a house which a short time ago required certain slight alterations in the interior. The owner, a wealthy and titled lady, was living in the house at the time when the workmen were engaged in their task, and one day the master carpenter had occasion to consult with her about the work to be done. He was shown into the room where the lady was sitting among her dainty and luxurious surroundings—costly draperies, rich furniture, rare works of art, books and flowers. But the lady herself looked listless weary as she leaned back in her lounging chair and gave her orders.

"Stay a moment, Mr. Rowe," she said, as with a respectful bow he was preparing to leave the room after learning her wish on the matter in question.

Mr. Rowe paused, and waited to hear what the lady had to say.

She did not speak for a minute, and then the words came with a strong hesitancy, as though she almost repented of uttering them.

"Perhaps you can help me," she said, "to solve a problem which has been in my mind all day." Then she paused again.

"I could not sleep last night," she said presently. "I am troubled with sleeplessness, and sometimes I cannot rest at all. This morning I was looking out of my window at dawn, and almost before it was properly light your workmen came along the square to this house. I heard their voices and their laughter—for they were actually laughing!—What have they to be happy about? In this house we never laugh. Tell me what it is which makes the difference?"

Mr. Rowe thought it was the hardest question he had ever had to answer. "They are good, honest men, my lady," he said, "and I suppose they are contented."

"Yes, that is it," replied my lady; "but content with what? They have no luxuries, no refinements; life for them is a mere drudgery—they have to work from dawn till dark to earn a bare subsistence. I have not a want ungratified which money can satisfy; I have nothing to do but to enjoy myself, yet they laugh and are happy, and I—I tell you I never laugh. I find life dull and monotonous and weary. What is the reason of this difference when things ought to be exactly the other way?"

"I cannot tell you, my lady," replied Mr. Rowe, "more than this: so long as he has work to do, and health to do it, a good workman is as content and happy as a man can be. He asks no more than regular work and fair wages."

"I don't understand it," said my lady. Then, as she appeared to have no more to say, Mr. Rowe bowed respectfully and left the room.

And my lady was left to her meditations. Where did her thoughts lead? Clearly happiness did not come from wealth or position, from birth or education. That they should be happy, these poor workmen—wanting nothing but "regular work and fair wages"—was a puzzle to this lady, on whom fortune had heaped her gifts and who was not happy. She was realizing for the first time that it is not the gifts of the finite world which bring content or satisfaction, but that amid hard work and poverty the glad heart and cheerful countenance may testify to their cheerful presence.

Do we understand what makes life happy? Do we realize that to work honestly, patiently, and bravely day after day, at the work which is given us to do, following the example of him who sanctified work, to do all to the glory of God, and by his grace to give our lives to him, that this is happiness and peace, the joy which the world cannot give nor take away?

MAINTAINING HIS FAITH.

The following tender incident, related by A. H. Baynes, will touch a responsive cord in many a christian heart: "I shall never forget as long as I live that day when in the glow of the eventide, as the sun was sinking and as the mists were creeping over the land, I walked with one of our native brethren by the riverside, and saw a light in the dim distance, when he said to me, 'Yonder is the only Christian in all that great town.' Ten years ago he received Christ into his heart; his father and mother turned him out; his friends forsok him; his neighbors persecuted him, and all these years he has stood his ground, scarcely getting food to eat. During all these ten years he maintained his christian character, unspotted in the midst of the heathens around him, and the native brother said to me, 'Now his business is reviving, because people say he sells the best things, and always means what he says.' I entered his humble bamboo hut and sat down upon the ground by his side, and as I discoursed about his loneliness and his sadness, the tears sprang into his eyes, and he said, 'No, I am never lonely; for as Christ was with the Hebrew children, and as He was with Daniel in the lions' den, so all these years has He been with me.'"—From "India," by Rev. J. T. Gracey.