

knew best; but I was mistaken. The gardener's knife was keen, but necessary. I am satisfied. Oh, master, forgive my murmuring, and rejoice in my fruitfulness."

The master walked on, and as he rejoiced in the goodly show of rich and ripening fruit, a voice which often speaks to the listening ear in the time of reflection and solitude said softly to him—

"I am the true vine, and My Father is the Husbandman. Every branch in Me that beareth not fruit He taketh away, and every branch that beareth fruit He purgeth it (or pruneth it), that it may bring forth more fruit. Herein is My Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be My disciples."

A tender branch had been cut from him, and his heart had felt deeply the pain of the knife, and the loss which its sharp stroke had made. But he bowed his head now in peace, and said, "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Thy sight."

### THE OFFICES OF CHRIST.

**C**HRISt executes the office of a Prophet in our calling; of a Priest in our justification; and of a King in our sanctification. Let us, then, hear Him as our Prophet, rely on Him as our Priest, and obey Him as our King. Think not the worse of Him for His manger or His cross. As He ceaseth not to be man in His highest estate, so He was God in His lowest. His words were oracles, and His works miracles. His life was a pattern; His death a sacrifice; His resurrection glorious; His ascension triumphant; His intercession prevalent; and His coming again will be magnificent. All the angels in heaven adore Him, and all the devils in hell fear Him, and all the sons and daughters of Adam must stand before Him.

Mason.

### IT IS WELL WITH THE CHILD.

**S**ORROWING mother, "It is well" with the child. The spirit has returned to God who gave it, and now communes with its Creator, of whose greatness, and wisdom, and glory it knows infinitely more than the profoundest philosopher or the holiest divine. Your boy is safer and happier with his Father in heaven than with you on earth. And who can tell from what evil he is taken, and from what bitter anguish you are preserved—anguish greater in his life than now wrings your heart in his death? He is gone where innocence has no snares, where there exist no temptations to beguile, and where no foes invade. Your child may have stolen your heart from Jesus, who did not intend that His precious gift should supplant Himself in your love.

It is well with him; and is it not well with you? The vacant place is occupied with a sympathising Saviour; the stricken heart turns to Him who smote it; and the ensnared and truant affections, severed from the idol they had worshipped, find their way back again to God.

It is well that your heavenly Father has dealt with you thus. It is well that He condescends to instruct you, though it be by suffering. Twice gracious has thy God been to thee—gracious when He lent the blessing, a little flower to gladden you with its presence, and now to cheer you with its memory; and gracious in taking it away, transplanting it to a holier soil and sunnier skies, beneath whose influence its infantile faculties and young affections have expanded and ripened into more than an angel's intellect and a seraph's love. "It is well with the child."

### WAKASA, A JAPANESE NOBLEMAN.

**I**N the year 1854, an English fleet of war came into the harbour of Nagasaki. This was before any treaty with England, and such an event created great excitement. A large force of troops was gathered to watch the vessels and prevent any trade or intercourse with the people. The commander-in-chief was named Wakasa; and he was accustomed to go out in a boat to see that all was right and no secret communication was attempted.

On one of these excursions he discovered in the water a small pocket Testament, which was quite unlike any book he had ever seen, and he was very anxious to know its contents. After considerable inquiry he learned from some Dutch interpreters that it told about God and Jesus Christ. This only increased his curiosity to understand it all, and having heard there was a translation in China, he sent to Shanghai and procured a copy.

Having returned to his home at Saga, he began the study of the Testament, and induced four others to join him. One of these was a brother named Ayabe, and another a retainer named Molino.

In the autumn of 1862, Ayabe came to Nagasaki for further instruction, and was taught by the Rev. Dr. Verbeek. During the following spring this man came to Dr. Verbeek at night and warned him of danger to himself and family if they did not leave at once. It is probable that this caution saved their lives, as they fled to China and remained there until the serious troubles which followed were ended.

When Dr. Verbeek returned he found that Ayabe had received some Government appointment, which removed him from Nagasaki, and it seemed that all his labours and prayers were to be in vain. But not long after, Wakasa sent Molino (who had learned to read English) with instructions to read over and get explanations of such portions of the Scripture as they could not understand, and he was also to procure any books that would be helpful in their efforts to know the Word of God. In this manner the Bible-class was carried on for nearly three years, the faithful messenger making the two days' journey to Nagasaki, and returning in due time with the desired knowledge.