

THE CHILDHOOD OF JESUS.

In the green fields of Palestine,
By its fountains and its rills,
And by the sacred Jordan's stream,
And o'er the vine-clad hills,
Once lived and roved the fairest child
That ever blessed the earth;
The happiest, the holiest,
That e'er had human birth.

How beautiful his childhood was!
Harmless and undefiled.
O dear to his young mother's heart
Was this pure, sinless child!

Kindly in all his deeds and words,
And gentle as a dove;
Obedient, affectionate,
His very soul was love.

O is it not a blessed thought,
Children of human birth,
That once the Saviour was a child,
And lived upon the earth?

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HAPPY DAYS.

TORONTO, JANUARY 19, 1859.

"ALWAYS PUT GOD FIRST."

In her dying days, Jenny Lind gave utterance to an expression which may well be the motive power of the life of any child of God. It was her intense conviction that her art was a gift of God, to be dedicated to his service. This belief was continually on her lips. "I have always put God first," she said, during her last days. It was this which kindled her enthusiasm for Mlle. Janotha, in whom she found a kindred mind—Janotha, who said to her, "What is this world of which the people speak? I do not know what the world is. I only play for Jesus Christ."

She went to look on the face of a dead friend, and I must tell you her own words:

"It was not her own look that was in her face. It was the look of another, the face of another, that had passed into hers. It was the shadow of Christ that had come upon her. She had seen Christ. I put down my candle and said, 'Let me see this thing. Let me stop here always. Let me sit and look. Where are my children? Let them come and see. Here is a woman who has seen Christ.'"

WHAT UNCLE JOHN SAID.

UNCLE JOHN was an old gentleman who lived with his niece. He had been in poor health for many years. It was not often that he could walk out in the village streets. But he had a great many friends, for he had a kind heart, and was always cheerful and patient.

One day little Nell Joy's papa sent her to carry a note to Uncle John. She was a shy little girl, but when she saw the pale, kind face of the good man, her heart went out in pity for him. She did her errand very prettily, and then she said, "Please, sir, have you got any little girl?"

"No, my dear child," said Uncle John. "There is not one little girl in all this big house."

Nelly looked so scrry, and then she said softly, "I guess mamma 'll let me 'dopt you for my Uncle John, 'cause you see I haven't got any uncle and you haven't got any little girl; and then I can run errands for you, and sing to you, and make it pleasant for you."

How the sun did shine out of Uncle John's dear face! He just shut his eyes for a minute and said softly, as if he was praying, "Are they not all ministering spirits!"

And then he said to Nellie, "Thank you, dear little girl, very much. I should dearly love to be 'dopted.'"

And Nellie wondered all the way home what he meant when he talked to himself.

MABEL and Edith were sisters, and loved each other—as all sisters should. They were also beloved by all who knew them; for they had learned the secret of true happiness—they had given their hearts to the Saviour, and were trusting in him. One day, as they were looking up some of their favourite texts on prayer, Mabel asked: "Edith, what would you do if you called upon Jesus, and he did not answer you?" "I should keep asking," replied Edith. "But suppose he should never answer you?" said Mabel. "Then I should trust him any way." Here is a lesson for each of us to learn.

THE BROKEN PALING.

"You see," said Louise to May, as they sat on the woodpile one Saturday morning, "mamma didn't really tell us not to play in that field; she only just said, 'Don't go through the gate.'"

"But she told us not to climb the fence over, so how else could we get in? I'm afraid we oughtn't to, Louie."

Louise kicked away a chip or two with her dusty little foot:

"There isn't a bit of reason why we shouldn't play there, anyhow. Look at those red leaves over there; they're a great deal prettier than any here. We might just go and get a few of those for mamma, and run right back. They'll be a nice s'prise, and mamma likes a s'prise," added Louise, starting toward the fence.

"But the gate, Louie! Indeed! we oughtn't to!"

"We're not going through the gate; you follow me, and look out for brambles. We'll hurry up and get those flowers, and come right back; and we won't have disobeyed, either, for here's a broken paling. Now, we're not going over the fence nor through the gate; and that's all mamma forbade."

When they came to the red leaves somehow they weren't so very bright, after all, and Louise dragged down handful after handful and threw them away. It wasn't much fun in the field, either. The ground was damp and swampy; Louise got her foot wet, and May thought she saw a snake.

So they clambered through the broken paling again, a pair of forlorn little girls, both feeling that everything wasn't quite right.

The next day Louise woke up very early with a strange feeling in her face and hands, "as if there was such a lot of me," she told her mamma.

When the doctor came and looked at the poor little swollen face and little red hands, he said it was poison from some plants or leaves; but mamma shook her head and said, "There is nothing in our garden that could possibly hurt them."

After Dr. Wells had gone Louise sobbed out her little story, and told about the lovely red leaves and the broken paling. Mamma showed her that the disobedience was the same as if she had really gone through the gate, for she knew all the time that she was doing wrong.

Poor Louise! For many days she had to lie in a dark room; and now whenever she wants to twist one of mamma's commands to suit herself she thinks of the broken paling.—M. S. H.