

in on that terrible day, when the powers of darkness conspired against the Son of God. He would reason thus with himself: If I do not comply with the wish of the Jewish nation in this matter, they will enter an action against me before the judgment seat of Cesar, and have me deposed from office and put to death for being an accomplice of offence of treason. On the other hand his conscience was goading him; for he believed Jesus to be innocent; and also that entreating message from his wife. So, after this terrible question, What shall I do with Jesus? had perplexed him for a while, he decided to condemn Jesus and to try to shift his responsibility. This latter he could not do. That little manoeuvre of washing his hands before the multitude and declaring himself innocent of the blood of that just person, could in no way effect the legality of the sentence which he was about to pronounce against Jesus. Although the Jews were willing to assume the responsibility in this case, yet there was an act to be done by the Governor which they could not do. And it was a very accountable one. The Jews, like everybody else, had sins enough of their own to answer for. No man, or body of men, can answer for the sins of others. So Pilate had to do something with Jesus, and he, as every other man, must be held accountable for himself. No person can possibly shift his responsibility off upon others. For every one shall answer for himself before God. Now, wherever the Gospel of Christ is proclaimed, every one who has come to the year of accountability, has something to do with Jesus the Christ; we all have something to do with Jesus. We are accountable beings, and we have all sinned against God. Jesus the Christ is presented to us in the Gospel. He is presented to us as the Son of God, our loving Saviour, who loved us and gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto Himself "a peculiar people, zealous of good works." Our existence in this world as accountable beings, and the facts and commands of the Gospel being presented to us in the Divine testimony, bring us into this position, that we must have something to do with Jesus. We must either justify or condemn Jesus. This responsibility we cannot shift off upon others. Each must decide for himself. No one can act in this matter for another. Each should ask this serious question, What shall I do with Jesus? Shall I receive Jesus as my Saviour? Or, shall I reject Him? I must do one or the other. It is an awful fact that God's unspeakable gift is either received or rejected by every accountable person that hears the Gospel. Every individual either justifies or condemns Jesus. This is what men do with Jesus in this world. They either condemn Him to be crucified or they release Him. It is the privilege of every one to choose life or death. But how does each man now pass sentence upon Jesus? Answer: By his actions, either in obedience or in disobedience to the Gospel, he pronounces this terrible sentence. A life of obedience to the Lord Jesus, justifies Him and His cause as far as our judgment can extend. Or, a life of disobedience to Him, condemns Him and His cause, as far as our judgment can extend. Our obedience or disobedience to Him will determine the verdict so far as we are concerned. This we are doing, whether we are aware of it or not. We are either for or against Jesus. And our life tells which side we are on. Our pretence to innocency will not change the sentence we pronounce against Jesus, any more than the act done by Pilate changed the sentence pronounced by him. The great question then for each to answer before God, is this: "What shall I do then with Jesus?"

Dear reader, time is short, and delays are dangerous; decide soon if you have not decided which side you will be on. There is no neutral ground in this awful question. The Lord's turn to pronounce sentence upon us will soon come. What will the Lord Jesus then do with us? J. B. WALLACE.

## THE FAMILY.

### THE HAPPY MAN.

O happy he whose lot is cast  
Where gospel echoes sound;  
Where superstition's sway has past,  
And light and peace abound.

Whose willing feet, from day to day,  
The path of peace have trod—  
By wisdom's bright and steady ray  
Is upward drawn to God.

Whose faith is built on nothing less—  
Free gift to mortals given,—  
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness,  
For Life—for God and Heaven.

Who measures out life's little span  
In faith and work sincere,  
With love to God, and good to man,  
Has tasted heaven here.

—D. McDUGALL in *N. E. Evangelist*.

### FINDING FAULT WITH THE MINISTER.

BY REV. S. GOODALL.

Three of John Powell's boys went to the Moor Road Sunday-school in Woolborough.

It was the rule of the school that on the Sunday mornings all the scholars, except those in the infant class, should go to chapel, and a portion of the gallery was set aside for their use. Those children, however, whose parents belonged to the congregation were allowed to go and sit with them, and as John Powell was a seat-holder his boys went and sat with him.

But of late John had attended very badly. He had got out of humor with the minister, and there were some other things about the chapel which did not please him. I am afraid the fault lay chiefly with John himself. His temper was naturally not one of the happiest, and for a good while—at any rate about chapel matters—he had allowed it to get the better of him.

Nobody will wonder that John's boys by-and-by took advantage of his absence, and that they stopped away from chapel when Sunday-school was over. Sometimes they went to a church where there was fine music, and sometimes they rambled about in the fields. Mrs. Powell went on the Sunday evenings when she could get there, which was not always, on account of the young children, and John sometimes went with her. I think he seldom missed going to some place of worship, now and then he took the boys with him. When he did not do that it was understood they were to go with their mother, but very often they got out before service time and went where they liked. A mother has a poor chance with a lot of strong-willed boys when she is not supported by the authority of the father.

The superintendent of the Sunday-school, Mr. Bolton, who sat in the chapel where he could see John's pew, soon saw that the boys were often absent, and he noticed also that John himself attended very badly. After some thought he determined to go and see him about it.

Mr. Bolton went rather late one evening, when he was pretty sure the children would all have gone to bed, for, of course, he did not want them to hear his talk with their father.

He found John and his wife sitting by the fireside. I doubt whether John was specially pleased to see him, but Mrs. Powell was. They had both a tolerably good idea of the purpose of his visit.

After a few words of kind inquiry, Mr. Bolton said, "I have come about the boys, John."

"Indeed, sir," said John. "I hope there is nothing wrong, and that they have not been behaving badly at the Sunday-school?"

"No," replied Mr. Bolton. "I am glad to say that, so far as their behaviour at the school

is concerned, I have no fault to find. I wanted to know, however, if you were aware that when you and Mrs. Powell do not happen to be in your seat at chapel they are very seldom there either."

"I reckon, sir," said John, "that if they are not there they will be with the scholars in the gallery."

Which, of course, showed plainly that John did not know much about what his boys did on Sundays.

"No," replied Mr. Bolton. "I am quite sure of that, for I looked for them there, and saw nothing of them."

"Well," said John, "the fact is I don't care much for Mr. Crawford—that was the minister—and I don't think the lads do either, and so I did not insist on their going to chapel. There's no good in forcing them to go where they don't like."

"I don't see," replied Mr. Bolton, "how you could very well insist upon their going when you did not go yourself. But may I ask you how old your boys are?"

"Let me see," said John. "I just forget, Mary, how old are they?"

"Ned," replied Mrs. Powell, "will be thirteen next birthday, and that will be the sixth of next month; Harry is eleven and Ben is nine."

"Well, now," asked Mr. Bolton, "don't you think that's rather soon for you to leave them do as they like in this matter? A time will come when they will have to think and act for themselves about it, and when neither you nor anybody else will have any right to control them—but that day has not come yet. For a long time, it seems to me; it will be your duty to say where they shall go, and to have them beneath your own eye in the house of God."

"But what am I to do," said John, "when they don't care for Mr. Crawford?"

"I should like to know how it is they don't care for Mr. Crawford," said Mr. Bolton. "Is not this it: 'The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge'? Have they not heard you talk against Mr. Crawford, and has not that set them against him? Besides, you yourself are so often absent."

"That's just it, Mr. Bolton," said Mrs. Powell; "and it's what I've said to John many a time. He's come home on a Sunday and found all sorts of fault, when the children were there. 'Little pitchers have long ears.'"

"I was afraid it was so," said Mr. Bolton. "Now let me say—I am sure you will forgive my freedom—that you can scarcely have thought what harm you were doing. The good which people get from a minister's services depends quite as much on their respect and love for him as on what he says—I often think a great deal more. If, then, you have taught your boys not to like Mr. Crawford, you have in so far prevented his doing them good. Besides, whether you intended it or not, you have taught and encouraged them to forsake the house of God; and if they grow up in the habit of doing that, it will be very sad for them, both for this world and the next."

The tears stood in Mary's eyes but she very wisely left the thing between Mr. Bolton and her husband.

John felt the force of what Mr. Bolton said more than he was willing to admit; still he thought he had something to say for himself.

"There's a good deal of truth in what you say, Mr. Bolton, about our not being likely to get good from a minister if we don't like him. Now that's my case with Mr. Crawford. What can I do?"

"Whatever you do, or not," said Mr. Bolton, "don't talk against him before your children. But there are two things you may do. The first is this; I should be very sorry to lose you, and your family from the chapel, but you had better leave us, and go where you can enjoy the ministry and profit by it, and take all your family