

A ROYAL PROMISE.

Some time ago a clergyman was asked to visit a very poor woman who was dying of slow consumption. She was a true child of God, but appeared to have no earthly friends who were in a position to help her in time of need.

The thought of the workhouse infirmary appalled her, and she refused to die within its walls. The authorities declined to grant her any help while she objected to enter the union.

'You are totally unfit to do anything for yourself,' said the clergyman who was visiting her; 'can you think of no friend who could assist you just now?'

'Not one,' replied the poor woman, sorrowfully.

'Think again—there may be one,' urged her visitor.

'Yes, yes, sir; you are right!' exclaimed the poor widow, sudden faith and joy illuminating her wasted features. 'Yes, I have one friend, of whom God has just reminded me.'

'And who is this friend?' asked the clergyman.

'It is Her Majesty the Queen,' replied the poor widow. The clergyman started; he thought the poor, friendless creature's mind was in a weak state—that it was giving way under the pressure of adverse circumstances—that she was raving.

By way of humoring her, he asked her kindly,

'And how is it you are able to count the Queen your friend?'

In reply, the invalid said that Her Majesty, when Princess Victoria, and staying in the Isle of Wight, went out frequently in a yacht, or cutter-boat, of which her son (the widow's), a very delicate lad, was helmsman. She proceeded:—

'The Princess often came and spoke to him, and when he was absent for some days from his post she noticed it, and inquired as to the cause. Hearing that my boy was ill Her Royal Highness graciously asked my permission to visit him. Needless to say, it was given, and when the Royal visitor came to see him she found him in bed very ill.

'After remaining with him for some time, and comforting him with many Divine and gracious words,' she ordered that delicacies, such as would tempt the capricious appetite of an invalid, were to be sent daily from her own table.' (This reminds us of the 'daily provision of the king's meat' spoken of in Dan. i. 5, only that in the present case the royal kindness could be gladly accepted.) 'Then,' resumed the widow, 'after kind words to me and my son, she always left some little remembrance of her visit in the shape of money.'

'And what of your son?' asked the clergyman.

'After much suffering he died, and the Princess, with gentle sympathy, called upon me in my humble home, and did her best to console and comfort me in my grief.'

The Princess, upon leaving the sorrowing mother, kindly said:

'If you ever need a friend, apply to me; and for his sake—your boy's—I will assist you as you may need.'

But the widow allowed the years to roll on, and though she was often in the sorest straits, she never took the Queen at her word—never applied to her for the help she knew she would receive if she did so. She possibly felt it would be presumption in one so obscure to claim the promise of the Queen of England.

Now, in her last extremity, she felt she must remind the royal lady of her promise made years ago; she was the only one on earth to whom she could apply, as she had told the clergyman. He at once wrote to the Queen, stating the facts of the case, and asking if it were true. An answer came almost immediately, saying it was all true, and that Her Majesty was so pleased to be reminded of her promise, and that she would, according to that promise, provide for the comfort of the poor woman during the remainder of her life. What a truly royal answer? This is a beautiful story, but it is to the lesson it teaches that our hearts must turn. A greater than our Queen, even the King of kings Himself, has promised, 'for his sake,' the sake of his Divine and only Son, to provide for us in our need. 'And this is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask anything according to his will, He heareth us,' *The Christian.*

SHUN EVIL.

Whether the dance, the theatre, or the card-table are intrinsically evil or not, the world has taken them for her own and in the estimate of the worldling they are the signs and tokens of conformity to things earthly. A young lady said to the writer not long since, 'I do not believe I ought to be considered a Christian any longer.' 'Why?' 'Because I have become addicted to theatre-going and I love it more than I do the church.' A frank and honorable way of putting it. Certain Christians are just now endeavoring to prove this statement incorrect. They propose to participate in worldly amusements and still remain Christians. Will they have any other than Lot's experience in Sodom? At the best, Lot never won a soul for God. Have you ever heard of a dancing, a theatre-going Christian who was at the same time a genuine soul-saver?

THE HARM OF CIDER.

A speaker was once addressing an audience of boys and girls, and told, among other things, that cider started the appetite for stronger drinks. At the close of the meeting a poor, besotted, broken-down man came up and said to the speaker: 'You did right in warning the boys and girls against using cider. Just look at what I am! It was the cider on my father's farm that made me a drunkard!'

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