

## Family Department.

### SUNDAY AFTER ASCENSION DAY.

BY REV. J. ANKETELL.

*The end of all things draws nigh.*—Peter iv: 7.

O Spirit from the Father forth proceeding,  
With God the Father and the Word still One;  
Fulfil within us by Thine interceding,  
Thy work begun.

Forsake us not as orphans void of pity,  
Dear Jesus, risen and ascended Son;  
But lead us upward to Thy heavenly city  
Where crowns are won.

O King of glory, Who Thy Son hast lifted,  
With Songs of triumph far above the skies,  
Send down the Holy Ghost, with comfort gifted,  
And bid us rise.

This world's vain glory hastens to an ending;  
Our hearts make sober; let us watch to prayer,  
With gentle love to others condescending,  
Their souls our care.

We wait on earth in awe and expectation,  
As did Thy holy ones on Olive's mount,  
To hail the long expected revelation,  
Of Thee, life's fount.

Upon the dove's divine celestial pinion,  
To Christ, our Master, let us upward soar;  
To Whom be praise and glory and dominion  
Forevermore.

O Spirit from the Father forth proceeding,  
Sweet Spirit of the Father and the Son,  
We kneel before Thee ever interceding—  
Thy will be done!

### THE LORD'S PURSEBEARERS.

#### CHAPTER VIII. (CONTINUED.)

There had been a crowd of squalid spectators to watch the little funeral set off in a mourning coach; Joanna and Tatters inside with the small coffin on the seat opposite, while Roger sat beside the coachman. There was one corner in the cemetery where none but little graves were dug. These tiny, solitary graves, with no larger ones among them, touched Roger to the very heart, as they lay side by side, with a little tombstone here and there, almost as if in childish mimicry of the older people who had laid down the burden of life, and were resting in bigger tombs close by. Joanna clung to his arm weeping, for to her also belonged a little grave in the peaceful churchyard at Comptonthorpe; but Tatters' eyes were dry behind the handkerchiefs he held to them, as she congratulated herself on the success of her imposition, and busily calculated what these new-found relations of old Isaac Chippendell would do for her.

But to her bitter disappointment it proved that Roger Chippendell was neither able nor willing to maintain her in luxurious idleness. With some inward repugnance, for which he blamed himself, Roger offered her a home in his cottage; but when she heard what sort of a place it was, and how far away from any village or town, there was no charm in it for her. She said that if she stayed in London, she would be more likely to hear of her father and daughter, and she promised faithfully to communicate at once with Joanna when she did so. In the meantime Roger engaged to pay the rent of a decent room for her in the house of a city missionary, a generosity for which Tatters was by no means grateful, and before long he heard that she too had disappeared, having gone back to her old haunts and her old way of living.

#### CHAPTER IX.

##### BARGAINING WITH THE LORD.

The sun of the short December afternoon had long been set when Roger Chippendell and Joanna returned home from their weary day at the East End, in the midst of squalor and degradation such as they had never dreamed of before. They both knew what earning their own bread by honest work meant; but it had not crossed Roger's mind, still less his daughter's, how swift and easy is the descent from honest work to shameless beggary and crime, when once a man or woman stops over the low barrier which stands between them and the downward path.

The wretchedness they had left behind haunted them; and amidst the dim shades they had seen, crowding together like ghastly spectres, there was the distinct, family, and still beloved form of his twin brother to Roger Chippendell. He had trodden the miry streets where Isaac's bare feet had fallen on the pavement, and had seen the loathsome dens where he dwelt in his old age, when but a few brief years separated him from the shameful grave to which he was hastening. There was a young girl, too, who was growing up to be the companion of the flaunting, brazen women he had seen at every street corner.

With heavy hearts and silent lips they walked along Silverdale Road, and ascended the flight of steps leading to Joanna's pleasant home. How full of comfort and luxury it was! Every little want, almost every fanciful desire had been foreseen and provided for. Peter Clapham had taken a pride in beautifying his house, and had made it as perfect as his own practical knowledge as a builder and an unsparing outlay of money could make it. A soft light from tinted globes round the gas jets lit up the handsome hall as the door was opened for them, and fell upon sundry packages strewn about it.

'Peter's come home!' cried Joanna, suddenly forgetting her trouble.

'Mr. Clapham went out again immediate,' said the parlor maid in a tone of chilling dignity; 'he had business in the city, and hopes you and Mr. Chippendell will not wait dinner for him, as he may be kept late.'

It was already late, so late that all the business in the city was over, except where a few men lingered here and there deeply engrossed in some special work. Peter Clapham was walking up and down the dimly lighted streets near home, but not caring to go in and face the keen and loving eyes of his wife. He had been up to his broker's and heard bad news; worse even than any that had suggested itself to him in the forests of Norway, or on the lonely deck of the steamer. If the speculation failed, and it seemed sure to fail, he would be a penniless man, and a bankrupt; possibly he might be looked upon as a fraudulent bankrupt. A day or two only would decide it.

He felt shaken, and fancied he must look terribly ill. His ordinarily clear brain was bewildered. Until now every scheme he joined had prospered, and he had every the reputation of being a lucky man. He had, indeed, never lent himself to any dishonorable project, though he had taken share in risky ones. The covenant he had made with God had been a sure one. God had prospered him, and he had never failed to give a tenth to him. Of late he had unconsciously reversed the proposition. He had given a tenth of all his income, and God had prospered him. There was a subtle difference in the position. But all at once it seemed as if the bargain was on the point of being broken, through it was not he who was about to break it.

In his aimless wanderings he passed under the walls of the church, where he never failed to worship every Sunday, and the stones of it seem-

ed to cry out against him. The £500 he had borrowed from its charitable funds, intrusted to his safe keeping, must be lost if this speculation failed. The very thought of it made him shiver, and look up with a startled face to the dark mass of building, with its spire almost lost in the murky atmosphere. Surely Judas himself had not begun to take money from the bag as a thief. He meant only to buy that field near Jerusalem, and make it a profitable investment for his fellow-disciples as well as for himself. Yet the last instalment of the purchase money was the price of his Master's blood.

He was a man in the prime of life, in perfect health, and with a shrewd and active brain. Until now there had been no ebb-tide in the flood that seemed bearing him on to fortune. He felt himself a traitor to the cause of Christ, and knew that he had suffered the love of the world to eat away like a canker the love of God in his heart. He was startled at length by the clock of the church near which he lingered striking twelve, and the thought of Joanna's anxiety smote him. It was time to go home. Roger Chippendell, his father-in-law, would be there; the old country carpenter of whom he was growing ashamed. It appeared to him now as if this was the next thing to being ashamed of the Carpenter of Galilee, Jesus of Nazareth. The face and figure of the wise, homely, tender-hearted old man came vividly to his mind, and made the tears smart under his eyelids.

'I'll go to him,' he said half aloud, 'and tell him every thing. Whether I'm ruined or not, I'll tell him all.'

He saw the curtain partly drawn aside, and Joanna's face watching through the window. At the first sound of his step on the pavement she disappeared, and the house-door was flung open to welcome him. He sank down into the easy chair on the hearth, and looked across at Roger Chippendell's tranquil face with the deep-set, kindly eyes gazing back at him.

'Father he said in a broken voice 'I've something to tell you. Sit down here by Joanna, and let me tell you all.'

Roger Chippendell listened, with his gray head bent down, and his eyes fastened on the ground, as Peter Clapham went through the story of the last few months in brief, sharp sentences. And it grew blacker in his own eyes as he brought it out into the light for them to judge him.

'I believed I was a Christian man,' he said, with a deep sigh, 'but I feel as if I was a scoundrel.'

'It's bringing shame on our dear Lord you're most afraid of?' asked Roger Chippendell.

'Ay,' he answered; 'I've heaped scorn upon scorn on men that have been guilty of this sin scores of times. And I've heard folks say, "See your fine Christians that rob the widows and orphans!" If God will only prosper me this once, I'll give the half to him. The ruin is not come yet; and if the market goes up again, I shall find my way home. I'll give half of what it brings me in to him.'

'How can you give money to God?' asked the old man in his quietest tones. 'You make believe that God Almighty is like one of our great city merchants, and cares most for silver and gold. But what is money to him, whether you give a tenth or a half? Have you given him a tenth of your time, and a tenth of your strength, and a tenth of your clever thinking and scheming? Was it only a money covenant you made with him? You ought to have given to him all your heart; did he get a tenth of it?'

Peter Clapham could make no answer. It was money, and money only that he had offered as his part of the covenant with God. The tithe of his time, and strength, and mind he had never thought of giving.

'If I may make so bold as say it,' went on