

Good Friday.

We look away from the sunshine
That cometh after cold,
To think of a Spring-day darkened
O'er a wondrous scene of old;
Of the nailed hands that wore full of grace,
Of an anguished love in a dying face.

Oh, what was in that Sufferer,
That we scarce can bear to think,
Even to-day, of the bitter cup
That our Saviour had to drink?
He holds us close, with an aching love,
And our hearts cry out for our Friend
above.

For, though we think of Calvary
With tears of grief to-day,
And follow him, as patiently
He walked the dolorous way,
Until on the cross he drooped his head,
Yet we seek not the living among the dead.

We know that he lives forever,
And if earth were dumb with woe,
No silence would fall on the angels
For the days of Lent below,
And we who weep for sin may raise
To him to-day a song of praise.

And so 'tis not all sorrow,
Though the day with shade be dim,
There are undertones of triumph,
Heard through our solemn hymn.
Once on the Cross Immanuel died,
But he keeps perpetual Easter-tide.

He bids the hopeful daisies
Look up and laugh to-day;
The lark at early matins
Sing out a joyful lay;
And we pour forth our grateful love
To the living King who reigns above.

We seek his gift of pardon,
We bend our heads to take
His gracious benediction,
And then, for his dear sake,
Go forth some weary ones to cheer,
And bid them know the Lord is near.

MARIANNE FARNINGHAM.

DICK'S EASTER OFFERING.

"WHY do they bring flowers at Easter, Miss Ray?" asked Dick of his Sunday-school teacher.

The superintendent had just expressed a desire that all who could should give flowers to decorate the room for Easter Sunday.

"Because," she answered, "it is a beautiful way of showing our belief in the resurrection of our Lord and our hope in the blessed future life which he has purchased for us. As Christ was imprisoned in the tomb, so things lovely in nature have been imprisoned in the grasp of winter. And as he broke the chains of death and the grave, so the leaves and flowers break through fetters of winter, and we bring them to make sweeter our rejoicing in the glory of Easter-day."

"I wish I had some flowers for next Sunday," said Dick to himself. But he had none at home, and no means of getting any, for he could not take a cent from the small sum he had earned by running errands and doing odd bits of work out of school, which was to be added to the Easter fund for missions.

On Saturday morning he lingered near a greenhouse, looking wistfully at the flowers within, all so lovely in their waxy white or soft colourings. People inside seemed very busy, and he at

length ventured in and asked if he could do anything.

"No; we can't be bothered—stop though!—yes, you can carry this basket up to Judge Ward's."

He did it and some other errands, for for which he was paid six cents. They were very new bright ones, and he was glad to have them to add to his store, but he looked longingly at a little rose-bush which grew in a pot. It was very small, and had but one white rose on it—and they had so many others. "Could I have that instead?" he asked, hesitatingly, of the sharp-featured woman.

"That! It's worth five times the money. What do you want with such?"

"I want to take it to church for Easter," said Dick, very humbly.

"The likes of you to be bothering with such nonsense! You'd better keep your money for yourself, and let those that can give to churches. What good do they do, I wonder—except," she added, with a laugh, "to bring us a little more custom from folks that have such silly notions?"

In the afternoon Dick's teacher called for his Easter money—it was to be added to what the others had, and sent in as one offering. He brought the tin cup in which he had kept it, and poured it into her hand. "But you're not going to give this gold-piece, are you?" she said, holding up one of the coins.

"Gold-piece! Isn't it a cent?" asked Dick, in great astonishment.

"No; it's worth two dollars and fifty cents, don't you see?"

"Somebody has given it to me by mistake, I suppose," he said.

"I suppose you can easily find out who it belongs to," said Miss Ray, as she wished him good-by.

Two dollars and a half! Dick could not help thinking how many things such a large sum would buy for himself and for his mother. He began trying to persuade himself that perhaps some one might have really intended to give him the money, or, if not, that it would be impossible for him to find its owner. And for one hour the tempter almost had his way with poor Dick. But then better thoughts came. How could he go to Sunday-school—and on the day when children gathered with bright faces and innocent, happy hearts to celebrate the Lord's triumph over sin and death—with a burden of sin on his soul? Just as twilight settled down, he appeared at the florist's door.

"No; there's nothing for you to do now," said she, sharply; "and I haven't time to waste on boys."

"Please to look just one moment, ma'am," he said, holding out the gold-piece. "Didn't you give me this with the cents you paid me?"

The woman's face changed. "I do believe it's that gold-piece!" she said, taking it. "Yes, my boy; it was paid me this morning, and I knew I must 'a' paid it out by mistake. Well!"

she went on, looking curiously at him, "who sent you back with it?"

"Nobody, ma'am."

"Then why didn't you keep it? Nobody would have known."

"God would have known," said Dick, looking soberly up at her. "And tomorrow's Easter Sunday, and Miss Ray says that if we belong to Christ he must rise in our hearts and reign there as he rose out of the grave to reign in heaven."

"So that's what you learn in Sunday-school, is it?"

"Yes, ma'am. Good-night."

"Wait a minute—here's a flower that's left over. Wouldn't you like that for to-morrow?"

Dick's eyes shone at sight of the beautiful lily. But he drew back a little. "Not to pay me just for doing what was right?" he half questioned.

"No," she said, more earnestly. "Not to pay you; only to make right seem a little pleasanter, and because you've made me think more of Sunday-schools than I ever did before."

And Dick was surely the happiest boy who carried a flower to church on Easter morning.—*Young Folks' Friend.*

DR. COKE'S TRACT.

ALL young Methodists who read the PLEASANT HOURS ought to know that Dr. Thomas Coke was the first bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America. Francis Asbury was elected bishop at the same time—December, 1748—and was ordained by Bishop Coke. On one of his journeys, while attempting to cross a river, Dr. Coke missed the ford, and, getting into deep water, was nearly drowned; but, catching hold of a bough, he succeeded at last in reaching land in safety. After drying his clothes in the sun, he continued his journey, and met a man who directed him to the nearest village, and told him to inquire for a good lady's house. This he did, and was hospitably received, every kindness and attention being shown him by his hostess. The next morning the Doctor took his leave of his new-found friends, and went his way.

After about five years, he happened to be again in America, and while journeying to one of the States in company with several other gentlemen, a young man desired to speak with him alone, and asked him if he remembered being in a certain part of America five years before?

"Yes, I do," replied the Doctor.

"And do you recollect that, in attempting to cross a river, you were nearly drowned?"

"I remember it quite well."

"And do you recollect going to the house of a widow lady, in the village near?"

"Yes, indeed; and never shall I forget the kindness she showed me."

"Then do you remember leaving a tract at that lady's house when you went away?"

"I do not recollect that," said the

Doctor. "But it is very possible that I may have done so."

"Well, sir," said the young man, "you did leave a tract in the house. That lady read it, and the Lord blessed the reading of it to her conversion. It was also the means of the conversion of several of her children and neighbours; and now there is quite a little company of believers in that village. But I have not yet told you all. I am one of that lady's children and was converted through the blessing of the Lord upon my reading that tract; and now I am seeking to win others to Christ."

PERILOUS ROCKS.

N. M. WILLIAMS.

NOT all rocks are safe places. Some of them are among the most dangerous places in the world. In January, 1876, a fearful gale swept over the Eastern States. Narragansett Bay, usually so quiet and beautiful, was roused to fury. In the harbour of the town where I lived, a schooner was seen dragging her anchor down the bay toward the ocean. Not many men would have ventured from the shore to save her. But, yonder is a boat! It carries the young man in whose care the vessel had been left. The fury of the waves makes it impossible to board it. Dashed wildly about the bay, drenched by the ice-cold waters, chilled to the vitals, the man is thrown at length upon a well-known rock. Two long hours, amid the howling blasts of the gale, he offers prayer for deliverance. He is indeed upon a rock; but the rock will be his grave, unless some courageous ones shall soon bring him help. A life-boat is launched. Many an anxious eye is watching it, as four brave men, in peril of their own lives, row toward the spot. God crowns the effort with his blessing, and the imperilled man is restored, half dead, to his home. As at length he became able to walk the streets, and we heard him tell the story of his rescue, it gave us a more impressive view of the fact that there are rocks which are perilous places for human souls. Theatres, houses of ill report, the card-table, novels stuffed with exciting scenes of passion and murder, the liquor-room, are full of evil and death. Nor is it less true that he who rejects, or overlooks the necessity of Christ's substitutional, vicarious sufferings, and trusts in his own morality for acceptance with God, is in peril equally great. Jesus Christ, accepted in penitence and faith, is the Rock, and the only Rock which is safe for sinful man. False doctrine, truth diluted with error to make the truth more acceptable to the skepticism of the age, are destructive of man's highest interests. May the young members of the churches make the needful distinction between the rocks which are perilous and the Rock which is safe.

"LOVE is the fulfilling of the law."