

"Never fear, never fear!" replied his father, laughing. "The poor beast shall live out his days in peace for all me, I promise thee. He does but act after his cattish nature, and we must keep temptation out of his way. Once more, dear child, my blessing be upon thee!"

Jack had begun to feel very manly of late, but all his manliness did not prevent him from shedding a few tears at parting from his father. Nor was Master Lucas himself free from a similar weakness, which disguised itself, however, under a sharp criticism of the style of poor Simon's riding, who his master averred, sat his mule like one of his own meal sacks.

Jack had wiped the drops from his eyes and was walking briskly, when his foot stumbled on something at the edge of the footpath. He looked down and quickly picked up the object which had arrested him. It was a small but thick book, bound in parchment and with brazen clasps, and he had no difficulty in recognizing the book he had seen the stranger reading. He debated a moment as to whether he should open it, but a new book was a rare sight in those parts, and he unclasped the volume. The first words he saw arrested his attention, and he walked on reading as he went, till he was aroused by some one speaking to him.

"So you have found the book my carelessness lost, my fair son! I was coming to look for it, and am right glad to see it safe. But you seem greatly interested."

Jack looked up with wide open eyes, full of interest and a kind of reverential awe.

"Oh, sir, please tell me! Forgive me if I am forward, but do please tell me, is not this book a Bible?"

CHAPTER VII.

THE CHRISTIAN BROTHER.

The stranger paused a moment before answering Jack's question, and scrutinized his face with a searching but not unkindly glance. "Why do you think the book must be a Bible?" he asked.

"Because I find words here like those I have heard before, and which I was told were in the Bible. Here is the very tale which my uncle told me of the young man who left his father and his home and went away to waste his goods with riot in a far country. And here are those other words, 'Fear ye not them which kill the body, and be not able to kill the soul!' Oh, sir, is it not really a Bible?"

The stranger dismounted from his horse and walked slowly along, by Jack's side, leading the animal by the bridle. "My dear boy," said he gravely but kindly, "will you tell me from whom you have learned so much of Holy Scripture? Nay, I will not ask if it be a secret!" he added, seeing Jack hesitate. "I am a stranger, and cannot reasonably ask you to trust me at sight. Nevertheless I will trust you as far as to answer your question. This book is a part of Holy Scripture—that part called the New Testament, which contains the life and sayings of our Lord and the letters of His Apostles, newly translated and done into English in order that plain men may read that which it concerns their salvation to know. It is hoped that in time we may have the whole Bible in English, but the New Testament is put forth as being the most important for Christian men."

Jack walked on in silence still looking at the precious volume. "I would give all I have," said he at last, "for such a book as this!"

"Would you indeed?" said the traveller. "That is verily in accordance with Holy Writ, which saith, 'the Kingdom of Heaven is like a treasure hid in the field, that which a man found and hid it, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all he hath and buyeth that field.' But dear boy, you are but young and tender, and the possession of this book hath its dangers. There be many who look upon it as the work of the devil and his servants. Sir Thomas More himself, albeit in many respects a good and wise man, would gladly burn both the books and their authors and readers. Such risks are not for children like you."

"But, sir, craving your pardon, does not this very book say we are not to fear them which kill the body?" asked Jack. "Did not the man in the

parable you have just spoken, sell all he had to buy the treasure hid in the field?"

"Even so, my son!"

"My uncle's father was burned for having in his house and reading an English Bible," pursued Jack: "and he went to his death with joy. Oh sir, I have so longed and prayed to see an English or Latin Bible."

"Aye so! You can read your Latin Bible," said the stranger. "You are then a scholar!"

"No great scholar as yet, though I can read Latin well enough!" said Jack modestly. "I took the gold medal at Bridgewater grammar school, and Sir William Leavett says I can go to Oxford in another year if my health fail not. I came to keep sheep with my uncle here in Holford, because I was sickly with over much study, but I am quite well now!"

"And was it your uncle or father from whom you parted just now?"

"My father, sir. My uncle lives in a cottage just under the hill yonder where you see the top of the great oak."

"And you are of Bridgewater and know my good cousin, Sir William Leavett?" said the stranger. "I purpose to visit him before my return. Is the good father well?"

"Quite well sir, my father says. He is indeed a good man, and beloved by gentle and simple among his own flock. He has promised to come and see me one day, but his hands are always full of business, what with the school, and the poor and sick of the parish, and the Greek studies which he much affects!"

"Aye, does he so? And you, do you know any Greek?"

"But very little, sir, only the letters and a few declensions. My father is somewhat afraid of Greek, because one of the monks, Father Francis the Sacristan, who sometimes comes to see us, told him that Greek was a heathen tongue with magical power, and not fit for Christians to learn. He said he was cast into a deep sleep by trying to make out the form of the letters, and so forgot to ring the bell for evensong," said Jack gravely, but with a certain mischievous sparkle of fun in his eyes. "But Father Francis is fat and likes a brimming cup of ale, or spiced wine, and mayhap it was something else than the Greek which put him to sleep!"

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Auburndale, Mass., writes: "I recommend K.D.C. very strongly; in my case it has proved singularly efficient; when I could find nothing else to give relief in was a prompt remedy. I should be unwilling to be without it."

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Sunshine.

What a blessed thing is the sunshine! surely it is God's best gift to His people. It floods the earth with its glory, irradiating all things: it streams through every chink, in silver bars, illuminating darksome places. What cheeriness it brings to the heart weighted with care or sorrow! What a brighter outlook for everything, than when skies are overcast and gloomy, and the face of God seems turned from us. It requires some faith to see the silver lining. And winter sunshine! Here it is; its brilliance filling the pure, crisp air; the snow reflecting it like a huge silver shield, dazzling to the eye and refreshing to the senses. How like unto the sunshine is the light of God's Word—God's Love!—searching and probing every thought of the human heart; melting with its genial and insistent glow, all the harshness, bitterness, and all unloveliness which find lodgment therein; and enkindling to fuller beauty the goodness and sweet charity which are also found. Oh! treasure it while it is yet yours—this double sunshine. Let it beam on your heart, which will unfold to it in fullest beauty, yielding itself up to the gentle influence and radiance. 'Twill make the waste places blessed places, and the barren place to blossom as the rose.

Is your digestion weakened by la grippe? Use K.D.C.

Peace.

"How are the mighty fallen, and the weapons of war perished."

Sing on, sweet bird, thy thankful psalm of peace,
Sing on to Him who maketh wars to cease;
Armed men came trampling down the corn and flow-
ers,
Silenced thy mirth, and scared thee from the bowers,
And where God's beauty held its ancient reign,
Hate maimed and murdered, and thieves stripped the slain.

Sing on! Once more, by His eternal love,
Where swooped the vulture, coos the happy dove—
Where shot-torn banners swayed 'mid battle cries—
The fruit-trees blossom 'neath the deep-blue skies—
The shepherd whistles where the soldiers fell—
Once more 'tis Eden, where it seemed as hell.

Sing to us men that Death shall die, and Life
And Peace prevail, and Victory after strife,
Sing on, sweet bird, sing to our Faith and Hope,
That they shall conquer, who with sin shall cope—
"Peace at the last"—proclaim it in thy song—
For all who love the right and hate the wrong.

—Dean Hole.

Answer of Unanswered Prayer.

There is always an answer to unanswered prayer. Prayer is any petition we make to God. It may be uttered; it may be unuttered. The heart may be on its knees when the rest of the body is not. Lips may not move in prayer, yet prayer be said—said in the solemn silence of the soul. But many of our prayers are so unwise that to all appearances they go unanswered, but, really they are all answered. There are foolish prayers prayed every day; the ear of God is besieged with just such praying, no doubt. He tires not, nor wearies of it all, for He answers all such mortal folly and answers it in a truly Divine way. He is the Father, the all-Father and the ever-Father. The wisest of us are ignorant babes prattling at His knee, or else forgetful altogether of Him, playing with toys and baubles. His fatherhood changes not; His plans for us cannot change; His laws are His will and is it not taught us to pray, Thy will be done? And, so, if it be right He will do what we want anyhow; if it be the thing for us, He was going to do it anyway; if it be all this, He will not wait to be told so by any of us; but when what we ask is wrong or silly, He still answers us by refusing the thing asked for, so that every prayer unrequited to has its reply and God is justified as the hearer and answerer of prayer. The gift asked might have proved an injury, not a good; not allowed to be harmed by it, we have been blessed of heaven; the petition has been heard, considered, and a higher thing bestowed than perhaps we ever dreamed of. As I shave, some lad, pleased with the pretty steel, may beg for it—a prayer, this: I answer the prayer by putting the razor away off where he cannot reach it. Oh, how often we silly men are little boys begging for shiny razors—God smiles in pity, and in truest pity, and truest love answers the unanswered prayer, by withholding the thing we beg for, and which would only have cut and wounded us. We asked for imaginary blessing, and He gives us a real one.

The only way to cure catarrh is to purify the blood. Hood's Sarsaparilla purifies the blood and tones up the whole system.

Practising the Piano.

The length of time for practice must depend upon the health and the circumstances surrounding the pupil. As much time as possible should be given to daily practice, and two hours, at least, should be devoted to that purpose. The best time of the day is the morning, as the mind is freer and the body is in a refreshed condition. Difficulties are attacked with more courage, and their intricacies more easily comprehended and overcome than in the later part of the day. Practice amounts to very little if the body and mind are tired. Persistence in practice under these conditions—through a mistaken sense of duty—is often injurious to the health, and certainly fails of any musical accomplishment. To those not in delicate health one hour is not too long for a sitting. In sitting at a piano, the stool should be of sufficient