

"NOT ASI WILL, BUT AS THOU  
WILT."

(ST. MATT. XXVI. 39.)

Passive in Thy hands, O God,  
I My will to Thine submit;  
Knowing that, beneath Thy rod,  
Thou wilt do whate'er is fit.

Bitter though the cup may be,  
Yea, as wormwood, or as gall;  
If that cup be sent by Thee,  
To the dregs I'll drink it all.

Oet, O Father, hear My prayer,  
Thou wilt grant Me all I ask;  
to die I must prepare,  
Fit, oh, fit Me f i thé task.

a My body, on the tree,  
Let Me hear the sins of all,  
And the ransomed then shall see  
What Thy mercy since the Fall.

Let My blood, which soon shall flow,  
Plead with Thee in realms above,  
Pardoned sinners then shall know  
All Thy goodness, all Thy love.

THE LITTLE THINGS.

The Rev. Peter Goss to the Curacy of St. Bede's, Ditchly." The Rev. Peter Goss laid down the paper. The brief notice was all it held for him that day. Politics or general news, what were they in comparison! He sat over his untouched breakfast, wrapped in bright visions of the coming years. Already he saw the eager listening faces raised to his as he imparted learning, instruction, or counsel from his well-furnished stores, the ever-increasing respect and admiration as they came to realize the mighty efforts he would put forth in their behalf, and how the fame thereof would spread through the surrounding parishes, until—ah! there were vast possibilities shrouded in that "until."

It was Saturday morning when the announcement appeared, and the following Saturday, late in the afternoon, the Great Northern Railway deposited the newly appointed curate in Dufford station, that being the nearest point of communication to the future field of action.

"Not particularly cheerful as to scenery," he observed to himself, as he gazed out of his venerable four-wheeler, at the flat fields enveloped in drizzling mist; and even that limited view was swallowed up in darkness, when, after an hour's drive, his chariot drew up at the rectory gateway. In a note from the rector he had been requested to call immediately upon his arrival; that was one reason. Another, still more potent one, was that he had not the slightest knowledge of the locality, or of where he was to find a habitation that night.

He was shown into a large dimly-lighted room. It felt oppressively warm, after the fresh chill air outside. Across one end was a folding screen, and under the shadow of it, in a deep leather chair, sat the rector. A frail, delicate-looking, elderly man, evidently a confirmed invalid. He held out his hand with an apology for not rising, and Mr. Goss, trying to reduce his voice and movements to a modulation suitable to the subdued atmosphere, sat down by the tiny table, and upset it with a resounding crash against the fender.

He picked it up with a dismayed apology. The invalid lay back with closed eyes.

"Do not distress yourself, but I must beg you to be very careful; the least noise upsets me now; my nerves are exceedingly weak."

Mr. Goss again expressed his contrition, and then sat still and waited for his recovery. The silence was broken by the door opening and closing softly; there came a light footfall across the room, and a lady made her appearance from behind the screen.

"His wife," decided Mr. Goss at the first glance, "No, his sister," at the second, as he noted the strong resemblance between the two. Neither could have been much beyond fifty, but she wore her years with the better grace, and all

the strength and capability seemed to have fallen to her share. She waited for an introduction, and looked at the curate with quiet searching eyes, as she shook hands across the unlucky table.

"I came in to explain the arrangements a little, in case my brother should not feel equal to it," she said, in a low distinct voice. "We thought that you might not object to occupy the rooms your predecessor has vacated; they are over a little confectioner's shop, but I believe, comfortable, and, in a place like Ditchly, it is most difficult to meet with suitable accommodation."

What a shock! had he come to this! Was the first step on the way to greatness to be taken from a confectioner's?

Miss Barry explained a little further, and the rector gave him a few general directions about the morrow's services, and then, remembering the waiting chariot outside, he rose up and took his departure.

The little confectioner's was not far distant. His landlady-elect came from behind the counter and greeted him warmly. She was one of his flock, she told him, as she led him up the corkscrew staircase to the tiny sitting-room. Then she went away to see about some tea for him, and the curate sat down by his own hearthstone and regarded his new quarters.

Hitherto he had not considered upholstery a subject worthy of any man's attention, but as he looked from the gorgeous druggist and scarlet curtains to the china dogs and peacocks' feathers on the mantelpiece, he was conscious of an inward irritation that never wholly wore away whenever his eyes chanced to fall upon them a rash.

Nevertheless, he put it aside as a trivial annoyance when, after his tea-tray had gone down, he drew out his sermons for a final re-reading before the morrow. There, at least, was unalloyed satisfaction; carefully written, brimming with fervour, eloquence, and classic references, surely this first seed was not unworthy of the sowing; it must bring some fruit. Very hopefully he spent the rest of the evening over them.

Sunday morning, half-past ten precisely, the new curate passed out of the little vestry into the reading-desk. Prayers and lessons, he read them well and earnestly, and then, while the hymn was being sung, he lifted his head and looked round at his congregation. Alas for his hope! his heart died within him. Rows of solid, ponderous faces, with precisely the same vacant expression, or rather want of any. Was it possible that one gleam of intelligence had ever lit them up in the whole course of their existence? Were these the men and women he was to study and sympathise with and labour for? These? And then the singing ended, and he had to stand up and deliver his sermon; deliver it to ears that would not catch one shade of the finer meaning, even if they understood the language, which he did not feel at all sure about. He fancied he saw a flicker of quiet amusement in Miss Barry's face as she shook hands afterwards, but she only inquired if he had had any trouble in finding his lodgings, and hurried away.

There was one exception, a big grim-faced man in the front seat, who had contemplated him with a kind of patronising attention throughout the entire service, an attention that Mr. Goss could by no process of reasoning flatter himself contained an element of admiration.

He asked his landlady about him, when she brought up his tray. "That's Dale, the blacksmith, sir; he's a Radical; and the people do say that he don't believe in the Bible either," she added, with suppressed awe. "He's given a deal of trouble to all the other curates, but he won't stay away from the church."

"All the other curates." So he had had many predecessors. Well, he did not wonder; the wonder would have been that any man should stop, even without the additional incubus of a Radical blacksmith who did not altogether believe in the Bible. In an utterly dejected frame

of mind he went out to the evening service.

Ditchly never heard that second sermon. Years after, the Rev. Peter came across it, all dusky and crumpled in an unused drawer; he straightened it out tenderly, as he remembered the high hopes that had gone to the writing thereof, but he did not preach it. "There are no birds in last year's nests," and he had learned many things since the days he builded that one.

By the end of the first week the curate began to understand something of the state of affairs in his parish. Mr. Barry was to be disturbed about nothing of an unpleasant or troublesome character; his nerves were to be considered; that was the law. Miss Barry was sensible and energetic, but she believed in her brother most thoroughly as the incarnation of wisdom and learning; most of the practical suggestions were hers, but by a sophistry that was nature now, it had been practised so long, he was invariably referred to as the author, nay, had come himself to regard them as original. Naturally, his views were bounded to a certain extent by ill-health; his sister's mission in life was to consider him, he believed; she did consider him most faithfully, but it limited her horizon also, down to nearly the same level as his own.

During that same week Mr. Goss made his first essay at parish visiting. That either could hardly be considered a success. His sole experience hitherto had been amongst the London poor, who are by no means backward at taking their full share in conversation with any stranger. He could not understand these rustic souls, who stood in blank silence when he addressed them in the orthodox manner; that stolid respectful stare checked his own flow of language most effectually, and it was hard to say whether he or his hosts were most relieved when the door closed between them.

Coming back in the evening from this first visitation, he passed a little smithy, with "Dale, Blacksmith," over the door; he hesitated, remembering the landlady's description.

"But at last he will be able to do something more than stare at me," he said to himself, and he pushed back the half-door and stepped in.

The blacksmith was busy straightening an immens nail. Mr. Goss waited till it was restored to a satisfactory condition, and then proceeded to explain his reason for looking in. The blacksmith responded that he was glad to see him, and then the usual blank ensued, and the curate, racking his brains for some congenial topic, unfortunately stumbled upon his own sermon. The blacksmith listened with the same patronising air that had distinguished him during its delivery; and when Mr. Goss wound up his remarks with a fear that it was a little unsuitable to the congregation, Dale calmly expressed his opinion of the matter—

"It don't make much difference. You're but a lad yet, and people don't expect old heads on young shoulders."

For a full minute Mr. Goss stood in petrified amazement.

"Upon my word, I think you are forgetting my position and yours."

The blacksmith shrugged his shoulders. "I'm not forgetting that you are in the twenties, and I in the fifties; and it's likely I'll know more about some matters than you."

Mr. Goss turned to the door. "Then, under these circumstances, I had better say good evening at once."

"Good evening," returned the blacksmith equably, taking up his nail again.

Mr. Goss walked home in no placid of mind; truly, if this were parish visiting, his attempts at it should be few and far between. At his own door he encountered Miss Barry, and told her something of his annoyance.

(continued)

WAKEFUL HOURS.

If we could always say, night after night, "I will both lay me down in peace

and sleep," receiving in full measure the Lord's quiet gift to his beloved, we should not learn the disguised sweetness of another special word for the wakeful ones. When the wearisome night, come, it is hushing to know that they are appointed. But this is something nearer and closer-bringing, something individual and personal; not only an appointment, but an act of our Father: "Thou holdest mine eyes waking." It is not that he is merely not giving us sleep, it is not a denial, but a different dealing. Every moment that the tired eyes are sleepless, it is because our Father is holding them waking. It seems so natural to say, "How I wish I could go to sleep!" Yet even that restless wish may be soothed by the happy confidence in our Father's hand, which will not relax its "hold" upon the weary eyelids until the right moment has come to let them fall in slumber.

Ah! but we say, "It is not only wish, I really want sleep." Well; wanting it is one thing and needing it another. For he is pledged to supply "all our need, not all our notions." And if He holds our eyes waking, we must rest assured that, so long as He does so, it is not sleep but wakefulness that is our true need.

Now, if we simply submit ourselves to the appointed wakefulness, instead of getting fidgeted because we can not go to sleep, the resting in His will, even in this little thing, will bring a certain blessing. And the perfect learning of this little page in the great lesson book of our Father's will, will make others easier and clearer.

Then, let us remember that he does nothing without a purpose, and that no dealing is meant to be resultless. So it is well to pray that we may make the most of the wakeful hours, that they may be no more wasted ones than if we were up and dressed. They are His hours, for "the night also is thine." It will cost no more mental effort (not so much) to ask Him to let them be holy hours, filled with His calming presence, than to let the mind run upon the thousand "other things" which seem to find even busier entrance during the night.

"With thoughts of Christ and things divine  
Fill up this sinful heart of mine."

It is an opportunity for proving the real power of the Holy Spirit to be greater than that of the Tempter. And He will without fail, exert it, when sought for Christ's sake. He will teach us to commune with our own heart upon our bed, or perhaps simply to "be still," which is, after all, the hardest and yet the sweetest lesson. He will bring to our remembrance many a word that Jesus has said, and even "the night shall be light about" us in the serene radiance of such rememberings. He will so apply the Word of God that the promise shall be fulfilled: "When thou awakest, it shall talk with thee." He will turn the silent hours, and give songs in the night, which shall blend in the Father's ear with the unheard melodies of angels.

Can we say, "With my soul have I desired thee in the night?" and "By my bed I sought Him whom my soul loveth"? Then He will fulfil that desire; the very wakefulness should be recognized as His direct dealing, and we may say, "Thou hast visited me in the night." It is not an angel that comes to you as to Elijah, and arouses you from slumber, but the Lord of angels. He watches while you sleep, and when you are awake you are still with Him who died for you, that whether you wake or sleep, both literally and figuratively, you should live together with Him.

ENGLISH PLUM PUDDING.—One pound of flour, one pound of finely chopped suet, mix with milk to a thick batter, then add three eggs, one pound of rasins, one pound currants, one pound of sugar, a quarter pound of candied peel, rind of lemon grated, flavor with spice and mix well together. Then pour into a well buttered basin, tie a floured cloth securely over the top and boil five hours.