

MORALITY AND RELIGION.

BY REV. JOSEPH COOK.

"Willie—Scud—Jesus—Saviour—Nearer home—" her Spirit takes its flight: her favored body is at rest. Waft her, angels, through the skies, on downy pinions bear her, ye angels of light, this poor little waif on earth's highway. Ignorant! ragged! poor! Nay, wise in the highest sense; clothed in the spotless Christ-purchased robe of righteous moss; richer than the greatest monarch, child of God, joint heir with Christ. Up! through the star-lit skies: over the jasper sea; through gates of pearl and streets of gold; over plains bathed in the sunlight of the Eternal King; through the throng of prophets, martyrs, priests, and kings; bear her, ye ministers of His, until ye set her—this precious jewel—in the unfading diadem on the Saviour's head.

There is weeping on earth. Beyond the stars another voice helps to swell the anthem of the Imperial Choir; the everlasting song goes forth, and

"Heaven's eternal arches ring
With His beloved name."

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She was buried in a neighbouring churchyard. Miss Bird, Scud, Mother Brown, most of the ragged-school children, and many of the children of the streets, attended the funeral. Her death was regretted by the whole neighbourhood; her gentle spirit and kindly actions had gained for her the love of many. And Willie? Scud faithfully kept his promises and looked after him, and "stuck to him," as he phrased it, until he gradually grew stronger and better able to take care of himself. They both continued to attend the school, where the teachers took a new interest in them, and they became steady, truthful, hard-working lads. And Scud—poor, honest, true-hearted Scud, where shall we leave him? Where can we better leave him than at Mattie's grave, which he is never tired of visiting? It is a pouring wet night, and nearly dark; Scud has finished for the day, and goes to look at Mattie's grave before going home. He takes his cap off reverently, heedless of the rain (it is the cap she gave him); as he sorrowfully reads the inscription on the tombstone in the dim light of the lamp, his grief bursts out afresh, and falling down upon it, he lays his face against the cold, wet stone, and sobs as if his heart would break.

"Oh, Mattie! Mattie! I wish I was with yer, I does; if it hadn't 'a' bin for me, yer would niver 'ave died."

Patience, Scud, poor boy! Tread in her footsteps, trust in her Saviour, and thou, too, shalt in God's good time go to make up "His Jewels."

"Like stars of the morning
His bright crown adorning,
They shall shine in their beauty,
Bright gems for His crown."

YOU remember that is the old story, one ship's crew went by the Isle of the Sirens and heard the songs of the women who were fair in the upper part, and whose forms below were like the snake. Ulysses went by, and he filled his ears with wax, and bound his crew with matted thorns, and fastened himself to the mast. Thus he went by safely. But afterward a man named Orpheus came by the same island, and as he was a famous musician he set up a better music than that of the sirens. He passed them with defiance and in triumph. The ancients knew the difference between morality and religion. That man who went by with his ears filled with wax, bound to the mast, was a man of mere morality. The man who went by gladly and a little proudly was the religious man. His heart was changed by listening to a more ravishing melody than the sirens could produce. Ulysses rather wanted to land, and so the men of morality want to sin. Do you suppose mere morality will save you? If it be mere morality, you have wax in your ears and you are bound to the mast, and I will give you a certain amount of credit for good judgment and the right effort of the mind to avoid sin. Heaven forbid that I should underrate morality, but it cannot make a man at peace with himself. It is not enough to make men and the plan of men walk together in peace. Religion always can do that. Morality is going by as Ulysses did. Religion is going by as Orpheus did.

Until your similarity with God does not involve painful self-denial, you have not got it. You are living in mere morality, and in the nature of the case you cannot be safe. But suppose you have attained the love of what God loves, and the hate of what God hates, there is still that record behind you. I do not know how you are to get similarity of feeling with God, except by looking on the Cross. When I regard God as my Redeemer, I am glad to take Him as Lord. The direction, therefore, that I would give to those who are seeking God is, look upon God as Redeemer, trust Him as Saviour, and then it will be easy to take Him as King. When you have taken Him as both, then you have saving faith, and not till then. Until men do that they cannot be at peace. The central truth of the Scripture is that in the nature of things two cannot walk together except they be agreed. God is Saviour; look upon Him. Now, trust Him as Saviour, and you will gladly take Him as Lord, and thus you shall have attained the two things necessary to your peace. Fear for the penalties of past sins shall have gone away. You look to God to forget them for the sake of the chastisement His Son took upon Him when He bore our iniquities that He might lead many sinners to glory.