

she said ; 'the Bible is my only comfort.' Her story was soon told. She had been a Sunday-school teacher. She married a 'steady' man. He got out of work. Idleness brought temptation. He took to drinking. What he got he spent in the public-house ; she supports him, herself and her two children. Every word I spoke to her was as balm to her wounded spirit. 'Heavy as my burden is, the Lord helps me to bear it,' she said. The Bible and the Sunday-school had borne fruit."

The next extract well illustrates that blowing of wind where it listeth, of which we hear the sound or see the signs in mysterious preparations of the heart within for the appeal which comes from without.

"I rang at a bell. The maid who answered peeped out of the half-open door, and asked what I wanted. I thrust in a Bible as my reply. She flung open the door, and started back frightened. She took the book, turned over a few leaves, and then went to fetch the money.

"'It is very strange,' she said, when she came back, 'I was at work in the kitchen, cleaning the plates, when texts of Scripture I had learned in school came up in my memory one after the other. I said to myself, You learned these texts, and now have not so much as a Bible to look them up in. At that instant the bell rang, and before saying a word, you thrust a Bible through the half-open door. That is why I was so frightened.' She promised now that she had a Bible to read it diligently."

One of the colporteurs describes a scene that may teach a useful lesson to many a parent, who looks round upon his young children and wonders what they will be when they grow up. It is called "A little child's first purchase."

"In a weaver's house I found a little girl. Her parents refused to buy. I took the child and said, 'Do you know that Jesus loves you?' 'No, I never heard that,' was her reply. 'Would you like to hear what he says?' I asked. 'Certainly.' 'Suffer little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not. Jesus wants you to come. Do you wish it too?' 'Indeed I do,' she said ; 'I should greatly like to come to heaven.' 'Look here,' I said, taking a map, and putting my finger on Jerusalem, 'here Jesus died that you might go to heaven.'

"The child had a box, in which she had put all her little savings. As yet nothing that had gone in had ever come out. 'Mother, I know what I should like to do with my money ; buy a Bible. May I?' The parents looked at each other, and were deeply moved. They said, 'We have often wondered what her first purchase would be.' They gave their consent, and the Bible came into their house. The child could read, and the peculiar circumstances of the case make me hope that the book will not only prove a gratification to the child but a blessing to the parents."

The position the Bible Society has always taken in Roman Catholic countries is distinctly non-controversial. No doubt a zealous colporteur will often be not only ready to give every man a reason of the hope that is in him, but now and then also to turn the tables and ask his Roman Catholic friends for a reason of theirs.

But there ought on no account to be permitted such an interpretation of the colporteur's duty as would tend to make the priests of the various villages look upon the colporteur as a foe. Now and then—and it was so also from the beginning—a priest proves friendly and helpful. The following is an instance :—

"A priest bought a Bible of me and then went with me towards the village. I asked him if he could tell me where I could lodge. 'Time enough to think about that,' he replied ; the people are now all in their houses ; evening is the best time for your work. When that is over, think of lodgings, not before.' I have sold more than 10,000 Scriptures among Romish populations, and come into contact with hundreds of priests, but I never met such a priest as that."