

No! for as on the trackless deep
The seaman writes while journeying on,
The Master gives to every one
A book to write, a log to keep—
There is excuse for none.

But stay—who gave this work to me?
Is He a taskmaster severe,
Whose dark unbending brows I fear,
Like one whom truant children flee,
When they perceive him near?

Remembrances in rushing tide,
Resistlessly my fears o'erflow;
The echoes of a voice I know,
That bade me in his love confide,
Sound back to answer, 'No.'

Yes, He will teach me how to write
This mystic book with letters fair;
And may His name illumined there,
On every page in golden light
As wisdom's crown appear.

—Sunday at Home.

2. LITTLE THINGS IN LIFE.

Little words, not eloquent speeches nor sermons; little deeds, not miracles nor battles, nor one great act, nor mighty martyrdoms make up the Christian life. The little constant sunbeam, not the lightning, the waters of Siloam, "that go softly," on the meek mission of refreshment, not "the waters of rivers, great and mighty, rushing down in torrent noise," are true symbols of a holy life. And then, attention to the little duties of the day and hour, in public transactions, or private dealings, or family arrangements; to the little words and tones; little benevolence, forbearance, or tenderness, little plans of quiet kindness and thoughtful consideration for others; punctuality, and method, and true aim in the ordering of each day—these are the active developments of holy life, the rich and divine mosaics of which it is composed.

3. THE LITTLE GIRL AND HER COPY.

A little girl went to a writing school. When she saw her copy, with every line so perfect, "I can never write like that," she said.

She looked steadfastly at the straight and round lines, so slim and graceful. Then she took up her pen and timidly put it on the paper. Her hand trembled; she drew it back; she stopped, studied the copy, and began again. "I can but try," said the little girl; "I will do as well as I can."

She wrote half a page. The letters were crooked. What more could we expect from a first effort? The next scholar stretched across her desk, "What scraggy things you make!" Tears filled the little girl's eyes. She dreaded to have the teacher see her book. "He will be angry with me and scold," she said to herself.

But when the teacher came and looked, he smiled. "I see you are trying, my little girl," he said, kindly, "and that is enough for me."

She took courage. Again and again she studied the beautiful copy. She wanted to know how every line went, how every letter was rounded and made. Then she took up her pen and began to write. She wrote carefully, with the copy always before her. But O! what slow work it was! Her letters straggled here, they crowded there, and some of them looked every way.

The little girl trembled at the step of the teacher. "I am afraid you will find fault with me," she said; "my letters are not fit to be on the same page with the copy."

"I do not find fault with you," said the teacher, "because I do not look so much at what you do, as at what you aim and have the heart to do. By really trying you make a little improvement every day; and a little improvement every day will enable you to reach excellence by and by."

"Thank you, sir," said the little girl; and thus encouraged, she took up her pen with a greater spirit of application than before.

And so it is with the dear children who are trying to become like Jesus. God has given us a heavenly copy. He has given us his dear Son "for an example, that we should follow his steps." "He did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth." "He is altogether lovely," and "full of grace and truth." And when you study his character, "I can never, never, reach that," you say; "I can never be like Jesus."

God does not expect you to become like his dear Son in a minute, or a day, or a year; but what pleases him is that you should love him and try to follow his example. It is that temper which helps you to grow, day by day, little by little, unto his likeness, which God desires to see. God sees you try. God loves you for trying, and he will give his Holy Spirit to help you.—*Sunday School Paper.*

4. THE DUTIFUL SON.

A class of six boys were called to recite. Five were handsomely dressed and carried gold watches; the sixth wore patched clothes, and when he wanted to know the time, had to glance at Mr. Graham's clock in the corner.

"Who is he?" asked a visitor of Mr. Graham, when the class had passed from the room.

"Which one?"

"The one who will make his mark; the poor one, to be sure."

"Ah! Why, Judge, he is Jones Brown, the son of a labouring man. He is as honest and persevering a boy as ever the sun shone on."

"I thought so. His address, if you please."

Mr. Graham gave it without question, though he wondered what the odd judge was about to do. Mr. and Mrs. Brown and six children were surprised at tea table that evening by a call from the stranger. Jones remembered him as the visitor to the school room. In five minutes he had told his errand. He was Judge Rood, of Acton, he had taken a fancy to Jones; would Mr. and Mrs. Brown give the boy to him to be educated as a lawyer in his office?

Mr. and Mrs. Brown were speechless with delight. Jones clasped his hands gratefully. Arrangements were speedily made. Jones had but a month longer to stay at Mr. Graham's school. Then! ah, the glorious then!

Jones was a Christian, anxious every day to serve Christ with his whole mind, soul and body. Just now his heart was fairly dancing with joy that God had seemed to open before him such a bright future. Already his little trunk stood packed in the loft chamber. Brothers and sisters gathered about him daily, with little scraps of talk about what they should do without him. The five handsomely dressed boys at Mr. Graham's no longer sneered at his patched clothes or hard hands; it was possible that he might be a judge himself some day. In view of this they could condescend to treat him civilly. Jones cared little for all this.

Just a week before he was to go to Judge Rood a fire happened in the neighbourhood. Mr. Brown, while helping some one to escape was himself killed. Mrs. Brown, broken-hearted, died, and Jones, on the day he was to have gone to Judge Rood, stood in the midst of his family the only protector of brothers and sisters. What was his duty? He looked into the eyes of each of the helpless ones, and, with a trembling step, went up to his little loft chamber. The children could hear him walk to and fro; then came a silence. Jimmy peeped through a crack in the door; Jones was on his knees. Presently he came down, wrote a letter, and took it to the office; then he walked down the street straight to Mr. Jordan's machine shop.

"Will you hire me, Mr. Jordan?"

"Why, I thought you were to be the young judge."

"That is past; my family need me."

"Why, bless you, brave boy, I'd make work if I hadn't it; but here it lies plenty, and I'll give you royal wages."

"Thank you, sir. Can I come to-day?"

"To-day! was there ever such a boy? Yes, in two hours."

"In two hours then; good bye till that time," said Jones, not a muscle of his face showing the sad heart within.

"God will bless that boy," thought Mr. Jordan, wiping his eyes.

God did bless him even in this life. For years, without a murmur, he worked in that machine shop, till the youngest child in his father's family was able to care for himself. Then, every difficulty pushed out of the way, Jones went back to study. Helping hands were held out all round, and to-day Jones Brown stands a monument to the blessedness of obedience to that command. "Honour thy father and thy mother."—*Sunday School Visitor.*

5. NECESSITY OF LABOR.

Yes! we should all have our work to do—work of some kind. I do not look upon him as an object of compassion who finds it in hard manual labor, so long as the frame is not overtaken, and springs, after rest, with renewed vigor to its toil. Hard labor is a source of more pleasure in a great city in a single day, than all which goes by the special name of pleasure throughout the year. We must all have our task. We are wretched without it. Him we call "man of pleasure" makes a sort of business of his pleasure; has a routine and method in his dissipation, dines out, and visits with the same unwillingness. Even the poet, the most luxurious of mortals, who feeds on thought deliciously, must make of his murmuring honey-work a task and occupation. He runs out into some charming solitude to gaze about him, and utter melodious verse; but if he cannot convert those loose papers in his desk into something he can call work, his beautiful solitude will soon lose its charms. Mountain, or lake, or valley, it will be all flat and arid as the desert.