

...came to his grave in peace...  
 ...of corn fully ripe...  
 ...of immortality...  
 ...record this story as a...  
 ...grace of God, and the...  
 ...ministrations of the late...  
 ...of Brooklyn, New York.—  
 ...Common People.

THE SIGNED AGREEMENT.

I was driving over our rugged hills in a desponding state of mind some time ago, when a man aroused me from my gloomy thoughts by calling out, "Will yer honor give me a lift? I've walked nigh on to twenty miles, and have got eight more afore I get home."

Looking him squarely in the face, and finding him of an open and ingenious countenance, I said, "By all means, my good man, come up into the trap," at the same time inwardly praying I might be able to drop a word by the wayside that should result in his blessing."

"You are a stranger in these parts?" said I. "What brings you over the hills in this weather?" for the wind was bitterly cold. "I'm going to change houses, or I want to, and as the landlord of the house I want to take lives at H—, I and my missus thought I had better see to it at once, and get the 'greement paper signed, as there's only a fortnight to Christmas."

"So you believe in making things as sure as you can?" said I.

"Well, yes; you see, sir, we had agreed by word o' mouth, but I thought he might run word afore Lady Day, but 'tis all right now 'tis signed to," said he with evident satisfaction.

"What about that other house you have had notice to quit?" I asked.

"Other house?" said the man, with great astonishment. "I don't rent more than one; leastways, I don't live in more than one."

"Oh yes you do," I said. "You live in two houses. One made of bricks and mortar, the other of flesh and blood—your body. Where are you going when you leave that? Have you a building of God, eternal in the heavens?"

"I'm afraid I have not," said he, "that's just what I want, but I'm afraid 'tis too late."

"No," said I, "it is not, I can assure you it is just the right time, for now is the accepted time, the day of salvation. But why do you think it is too late?" I asked.

"Why, sir," he replied, "it was nigh on to eighteen years ago any one spoke to me as you have on the subject, and then my mother lay dying, and she made me promise I would turn to God and meet her in heaven. I promised her but I've never kept it, and I'm afraid 'tis too late," and he seemed deeply moved.

"No," said I, "it's not too late, for 'to-day if ye will hear his voice,' is God's word, and God desires your salvation, and has made every preparation for it, and nothing remains but for you to accept it."

"I wish I could be sure of it," he said.

"How are you sure you are going to live in the new house?" I asked.

"Why, 'tis signed to," said the man, wondering at my apparent ignorance.

"Who signed to it?" I again asked.

"Why, the both of us; leastways I put my mark, as I can't write very well," he replied.

"The landlord agreed to let the house under certain conditions, and signed to it. Was that it?" I asked.

"Yes sir."

"Did his signing make you a tenant?"

"No. I had to sign as well," he replied.

"Just so," said I. "God has agreed to give everlasting life, to certain individuals, because of certain conditions having been fulfilled by His Son, and has signed to it, by raising Him from the dead—for He was 'delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification,' and he has further given proof of His willingness and power by sending the Holy Ghost to convince us of the truth. Now just as your agreement required your signature to put you into possession, so God's agreement requires your signature to give you the benefit, for 'he that hath received His testimony hath set to his seal that God is true;' in other words, he that believeth what God says accepts the gift of salvation, 'hath everlasting life.'

"Is it like that?" said the astonished man, "then by God's help I'll sign to it now?"

And as we drove along the country lane

he lifted his eyes to heaven, as the tears coursed down his cheeks, and said aloud, "O God, I do accept Thy blessed Son as my Saviour. I will sign the 'greement. Thou hast promised to give everlasting life to those who believe. I do believe, praise God!" and turning to me he said, "Oh, sir, I never felt so happy in my life. I shall have good news to tell my wife to-night."

I got him to repeat several texts of Scripture ere I parted from him (as he could not read), which he learnt, and on leaving he grasped my hand with both his, saying,

"God bless you, sir, I shall have to thank God to all eternity for my ride in this trap. Believe me, sir, when I put my foot on the step of your trap I felt as if I had never felt for eighteen years before. I thought to myself, 'That man's a Christian—like my mother.' My first step on your trap was my first step toward heaven, and if we never meet on earth we shall meet there, sir. And now, sir, I've no fear whenever the notice to quit comes to me"—striking his breast—"I have a better house sure and certain above, for 'tis signed to."

I have never met him since, but I believe I shall meet him in heaven. I need scarcely say I returned that day to the "plants and hedges" with a joy somewhat akin to the "joy among the angels," feeling that, though but a simple conversation, God could, and did, use it to his glory. Many such souls are to be found all round us; they are just waiting to be spoken with, and pointed to Jesus. If the "potters" but dwell "with the King," will He not give them the right thing to do at the right time? Infinitely better for us to be satisfied to do "the next thing" God gives us than to be deploring our inability to do the thing He sees fit to appoint to our neighbor.

"She hath done what she could" is a memorial that no language can possibly excel, and the opportunity of gaining such a reward lies within the reach of every one of the King's servants. May the Lord help us to "go and do likewise," for

In this "little while" doth it matter,  
 As we work, and we watch, and we wait,  
 If we're filling the place He assigns us,  
 Be His service small or great?  
 There's a work for me and a work for you,  
 Something for each of us now to do.

—W. J. H. Brealey, in *Word and Work*.

PATCH.

"Here comes Rags and Patch. Holloa, rag-man, here's a bargain for you," and the scholars just set free from study hours clustered around a little boy, whose coat was patch upon patch, and a girl whose thin pink calico dress did not keep out the keen March wind.

Dick and Celia Bennett were the children of a man who had set out in life with bright hopes, and for a time he bravely ran his race, but, oh, his love of drink had dimmed all those hopes, made weak the strong arm, and blurred his moral senses. Now, the sunny, cosy home was gone; the father did little but drink and doze; the mother, by washing, barely kept a shelter over their heads, while Dick and Celia often went hungry as well as ragged.

"Arn't they handsome, though? Mabel Rand, don't you want the pattern of that hood?" said Roy Gordon, a boy of twelve.

"Wouldn't they make 'illegant' scare-crows to keep the birds away from Pat Flynn's cherry trees and raspberry bushes? Let's tell the old man to engage them for the season," said another.

The group of well-dressed little girls should have been pitiful toward the shy Celia who stood shivering and cowering in their midst, but they, sad to say, helped to tease and torture the children.

"I think they are almost a disgrace to our school. Mother says we ought to be very careful about our playmates," said a haughty little miss.

"Suppose we see what this coat is, or rather was, made of at first," said Roy Gordon, and he thrust his fingers into a rent and coolly tore of one of the patches.

"Oh, please don't do that. Mother sat up late last night to wash and mend Dick's coat," sobbed little Celia.

"Hadn't you better inquire where your most honorable daddy is, and what his occupation is at the present time?" sneered Roy Gordon. At this Dick ceased his sobbing, stood up straight, and looked directly at Roy and Mabel.

"Yes, Roy, perhaps I had better go to your father and ask him where mine is. If he doesn't know I'm sure Mabel can tell me. Many nights have Celia and I gone at

midnight to bring him home, for, wretched and poor as he is, our mother loves him yet and sent us to guide him home. We usually go to Mr. Gordon's first. If not there, we always find him at Mr. Rand's. It isn't always easy for me to love my father, 'cause he drinks so hard and lets mother work so hard, but it is said, 'Woe unto him that putteth the bottle unto his neighbors' lips.' Celia and I are ragged, I know, but, thank God, our clothes are not bought with blood-money. I'd rather go hungry and shabby than dress grand with money taken from poor families. My father was a gentleman. Who made him what he is? Mabel Rand and Roy Gordon; I'd rather be Celia and me than either of you," and Master Dick led his sister toward their poor home.

"Bravo!" cried the crowd that had collected, and the well-dressed children were glad to leave the place. When Dick got home his anger was gone. He laid his head on his mother's lap and told his story. Little comfort could the poor woman give. Her poor husband was so weak, and temptations everywhere. Many homes, once happy and blest, are now as desolate as Celia's and Dick's. Shall we not all try to spare the feelings of the drunkard's poor, suffering children; make their woes lighter, if we can?—Selected.

FRUITFUL LABOR.

Not quite a year ago one of the colporteurs of the American Bible Society was selling his books in the outskirts of the city of Buenos Ayres—not in those parts where the wealthy have their villas, but where the laborer raises vegetables for the market, and where some who are unable to pay city rents find shelter in their own huts. Having sold a Bible in one of those humble homes, the colporteur asked permission to pray. While thus engaged the child of a neighbor, to whom such a scene was quite extraordinary, stood at the door, and no sooner had he concluded than she ran home and told what she had seen. Her father had formerly occupied the post of constable, but the defeat of his political party in the revolution of 1880 threw him out of employment. Three years of inactivity had reduced him to the greatest extremity. All human aid having failed him, it occurred to him on hearing the report of his little daughter, to seek help of God, and he sent the child to call the colporteur there. On entering the house, the colporteur was told that he had been sent for to pray, to see if God would not help them out of their difficulties. After prayer and some good counsel, in which he urged the man to pray himself, the colporteur withdrew. The unusual circumstance made a deep impression on his mind, and it was not long before he found his way back. The interest spread, and several of the neighbors bought books. Repeated visits fanned the flames till a prayer-meeting was established, which has resulted in the conversion of eight persons, some of whom give good evidence of the genuineness of their profession by their change of life.

The man who asked prayers in order that he might be relieved from temporal distress, first found spiritual comfort and afterward temporal aid. For some three months he has filled the post of sub-constable in a rising country town, where he lets his light shine on the surrounding darkness. Through him religious meetings have been commenced. On three occasions some of the Christian workers have been out from the city to assist in this work at his request. *Mich. Chris. Advocate*.

A WORD IN SEASON, HOW GOOD IT IS.

BY MRS. BELL V. CHISHOLM.

"For it is appointed unto all men once to die, but after death the judgment."

It was but a small thing, this repeating of a single verse among a score of others, but to shy Bessy Hildreth it was a real cross. She had just come out on the Lord's side, and only the fear of denying her Master could have given her courage to open her lips in the little Sunday evening prayer-meeting. Frightened at her own trembling tones, she shrank closer into the dark corner where she sat, and wished, oh, so fervently, that she had not attempted to speak at all. Had she not been trying to still the wild beating of her own heart, she would have noticed the startled look that came into a pair of dark eyes just opposite her. Ah, poor little, timid Bessy, could you have

known that it was this very tremor in your voice that fastened the attention of careless Duncan Forbes on the solemn words you uttered, you would not have longed to recall them, or to have vainly wished them unsaid.

Poor, light-hearted Duncan had been familiar with the text from childhood, and had it not been for the quivering lips that repeated the words to-night, it would have been unheeded, as were the thirty other verses that had been spoken in his hearing. Hymns were sung, and fervent prayers ascended to heaven, before the meeting closed, but Duncan heard nothing, except the terrifying words, "After death, the judgment." In the silence of his own chamber, the verse still rang in his ears, and when he courted sleep, visions of the great white throne passed vividly before him. The morning light brought no sweet peace, neither did the business of the day dispel the gloom that had settled upon his spirits. He read his Bible, and tried to pray, but twenty-one years of sin and folly passed in solemn review before him, appalling him with their magnitude, and utterly choking the petitions already formed in his heart.

Almost in despair, he slipped quietly into the prayer-meeting the next Sunday evening, and before its close he startled the little praying band by requesting them to intercede for him at the Throne of Grace. He stated what had caused his awakening, and humbly asked for aid and direction. Before the close of that memorable meeting he had found rest to his soul. With the love of Jesus fresh in his heart he persuaded others, his dear companions and friends, to seek the one thing needful. Soon souls were anxiously inquiring the way heavenward; and a precious revival, such as the village of Melville had never enjoyed, followed, and in the end, more than sixty new converts dated their new life to Bessy Hildreth's faithful performance of duty. "In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thy hand, for thou knowest not which shall prosper."—S. S. Times.

Question Corner.—No. 6.

- BIBLE QUESTIONS.
- A DISTINGUISHED COMMANDER.
- This commander was distinguished in several ways. First by his age. He was eighty years old before his chief battles began. Next, by his exploits. By a succession of these he almost destroyed one nation and organized another. Thirdly, by his weapons. His only visible instrument in achieving these victories was a piece of wood. Fourthly, by his mistakes. Before he was asked, he wanted to run; when he was asked he could scarcely be persuaded to move. Lastly, by his disinterestedness. He willingly gave place to a successor who, in one most important respect, was to do more than himself. Give the name of this commander; and justify all that is said of him here.
- SCRIPTURE ENIGMA.
1. A village near Jerusalem, often visited by our Saviour.
  2. The name of a bold and dauntless prophet.
  3. That period when Solomon admonishes all to remember their Creator.
  4. The place where a king sought the assistance of a witch.
  5. The name of a coppersmith mentioned in St. Paul's Epistle to Timothy.
  6. One of the sons of Methuselah.
  7. An exceedingly strong man mentioned in the Old Testament.
  8. The Israelitish king who besieged Tirzah.
  9. An ancient city of Italy.
  10. A young man who was restored to life by the apostle Paul.
  11. The name of a cave where David hid himself from Saul.
  12. The king who caused Daniel to be put into a den of lions.
  13. One of the numerous articles that Solomon brought from Egypt.
- The initials constitute a call to duty.
- ANSWERS TO BIBLE QUESTIONS IN No. 4.
1. Sheba. 2 Sam. 20. 21, 22.
  2. Jonathan and Ahimaaz. 2 Sam 17. 17, 21.
  3. In Troas. Acts 16. 8, 9.
  4. In Ephesus. Acts 19. 23, 27.
- SCRIPTURE ENIGMA.
- Laodicea, Achan, Korah, Eli, Olives, Folix Goshen, Abel, Lazarus, Ishmaelites, Levites, Eden, Egypt.—LAKE OF GALILEE.
- CORRECT ANSWERS RECEIVED
- Correct answers have been received from Albert Jesse French, George Garbutt and Lillie A. Greene.