

looked sad, and seemed not to participate in the general gaiety around him. He was followed by about twenty girls and young women veiled and dressed in red Cashmere shawls; thrown over their heads and drawn about their bodies. These shawls are sometimes hired for the occasion.

Next came the intended bride, under a canopy of crimson silk, which was borne by four Arab boys and poles. She was supported on either side by two young women, and a girl marched backward before her fanning her continually. The bride was completely covered by a red Cashmere shawl laid over head, and coming down to her feet. She was blindfolded, and knew not where she stepped, as was evident from her gait. Peeping behind the canopy, I perceived that she had yellow morocco boots, over which she wore yellow slippers. I also observed face and silks, but how they were arranged I could not perceive. The other females in the procession wore yellow boots and slippers, as do all the well-dressed ladies of Cairo, or red. Two musicians, one with a drum, the other with a flute, followed the procession. Girls were gazing from the walls of the houses and roofs; a rabble of boys, girls, men, women, and children, much like a common train band gathered in the United States, followed in the wake of the bridal and circumcisonal party, as they moved slowly along.

Yours, &c.

J. W.

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#### A LITTLE WATER A GREAT BLESSING.

The following interesting little narrative is told by the Rev. Horatio Southgate, our missionary to Asia, in a letter written by him to the Sunday School Missionary Society of Georgetown, D. C. He supposes that the children composing that society may sometimes feel discouraged, in giving the little they have, on account of the very many millions in the heathen world that are still to be converted. The following incident shows how much good a very little may do:—

"Last summer I was in Mesopotamia; the land in which Abraham lived, and was crossing a desert in the midst of summer where every thing was burnt up by the sun. Every little shrub was yellow as if it had been before a scorching fire. There were no houses. Several days we travelled and did not meet a single person. We rode on horseback, and our horses became very faint as well as we, and as we rode along we held down our heads like withered leaves, the sun was so hot upon us. One day we travelled many hours and found no water. We could not stop until we reached water, for we were parched with thirst, and our horses could not travel unless we gave them water. It is very dangerous to ride over such a desert in the day time in summer. Men are often killed by it, the sun is so hot. Those who are obliged to go over the desert in summer travel in the night, and stop by day under a tent. But we could not do so, because in the morning we did not come to any water—not a drop. We sent our men down into every hollow and up every little hill, to see if they could find any water. But they found none. What was still worse, we lost our way, for there are no roads in the desert, and our guide, though an Arab, who had always been accustomed to the deserts, did not know where he was. I told him the night before that we were going wrong, because I knew by the stars. But he would not listen to me, and hardly spoke a word all the journey, but rode on before us, and we were obliged to follow. When noon came we began to be afraid that we should find no water that day. Some wanted to stop and lie down on the ground, they were so weary and faint. But I was as weary and faint as any of them, because I was afraid that if our horses stopped they would not be able to go on again, and we should be left to perish in the desert. When I saw they wished to stop I would not, but ordered the guide to ride on, and when I followed, all the rest were obliged to come too. I asked the guide which way we should go to find our course again, and he pointed to a high mountain a great many miles off on the border of the desert. Then I rode on with one or two others towards that mountain, and the rest of the party came on more slowly. We thought we saw a little green down in a low place, and we went down to it, hoping to find some water, but there

was none; it seemed as if it were just dried up. I then rode up on a mound, and looked about, but there was nothing all around me but a great plain as far as I could see, and covered with dry, yellow, prickly herbs, such as the camels love to live upon. That same day we saw a young camel and caught him, and we caught a young gazelle, too young to run away from us.

About two o'clock in the afternoon I heard one of the men call out in a very joyful voice, and on going to him I saw that he had found some water in a little ditch. The ditch was full of rushes and reeds, so that the sun could not get at the water and reeds, so quick as in other places. There was but a very little of it left. In a day or two it would have been all gone, and if we had not come as we did, I know not what we should have done. It was only rain water, and was very warm and muddy, and full of insects. But we were very glad to get it, and when the rest of the party came and saw that we had found water, they cried out with great joy, and ran to it all in a crowd, and the poor horses were so thirsty that they got down upon their knees to drink of it.

We stopped there all that day, and when night came we mounted our horses and rode away over the desert. Now if we had not found that water, we should have been in a miserable condition, and perhaps some of our horses would have died, and how difficult it would have been to get out of the desert without horses. But God provided for the children of Israel in the wilderness.

The water did not come there by a miracle as it came to them when it poured out of the rock, but it was very remarkable that we should find it in such a great desert, and I have always thought that God guided us to it as much as he guided them, although we had no pillar and cloud to lead us as they had. Now what I wish say is this—that this little water was a very great blessing, and God made it so by guiding us to it. It was as great a blessing, as if it were a mighty river, for it was enough for us all, and it was no worse than the rivers in that country, which are always muddy and warm in the summer. So it may be with the money that you gave for Missions, and with the prayers that you offer. God can make them as great a blessing to thousands that are perishing for want of the gospel, as he made that little water in the desert to us. No, it will be a much greater blessing, for how much more precious is the soul than the body, and the Gospel than water! The Gospel, you know, is good news.

Now I suppose it has been better news to many thousands, who would never have heard of it if Missionaries had not gone to them, than it was for us, when we were faint and weary in the desert, to hear that water had been found. If any of you could have come to us then and given each of us a cup of cold water, how gladly you would have done it. How glad then will you be to give, and do what you can to send the Gospel to the thousands and millions, who never received it, that they may learn the will of God, as you are learning it in the Church, and the Sunday School, that they may be taught concerning Jesus Christ as you are taught, and abandon their idols, and believe in him and be baptized, that they may be saved. I did not think, when I began, to tell you this long story, but it came into my mind while I was writing, and I told it, so that if you should ever say, How little good we can do? you might remember how much good a little water did in the desert, and never say so again."

#### RELIGIOUS LITERATURE.

##### 'TIS ALL FOR THE BEST.

A PROUD sea captain was accustomed, whatever afflictive Providence might befall him, to express himself as perfectly satisfied, it would be in one way or another to his advantage. It happened, just previous to an important voyage he was contemplating, he had his leg broken by a fall, so that he was prevented from embarking. An intimate friend—a stranger to the resources and consolations of piety—knowing the usual method by which he resolved his difficulties, asked him if he thought that was for the best? To whom the more than heroic, the Christian navigator promptly replied, he had no doubt of it. Even to the view of a worldling, whose vision is so narrow he can grasp nothing beyond the boundaries of time, the result proved

ed the position to be correct. The vessel sailed at the appointed time. The second in command took the place of the captain. Prosperous breezes sped the crew away from port: but, as in the affecting instance of the President steamer, not one ever returned to give an account of the disaster that must have occurred. In a moment they may have sunk like lead in the mighty deep, or, stranded upon some inhospitable shore, they may have lived and died the slaves of savages, or have been instantly dispatched by their barbarous hands. It was all for the best.

Such invariably we are taught is the character of Divine Providence towards the pious. It often proves so in an aspect strictly temporal. The patriarch Jacob exclaimed, as his trials thickened upon him, "All these things are against me." Yet the unseen hand of God turned them all to his profit. His darling Joseph, instead of having been devoured by some wild beast, was sold into Egypt by his envious brothers, where God, after supporting him in the dungeon, at length placed him at the right hand of Pharaoh, by which means, during a protracted famine, he not only saved Egypt, over which he was lord, but his father also and all his household. We are also referred by Scripture to the more remarkable instance of Job. At first he seemed to be a mark for all the arrows that Satan could direct. Only his life was kept out of his hands. His effects, his herds and flocks, were taken. His ten children, by a whirlwind from the wilderness, were crushed together in the house where they were feasting. The wife of his bosom bade him curse his God, and die. His health, as well as his wealth, took wings, and fled away. And his friends, that should have cheered his broken heart, upbraided him with taunting reflections, and hesitated not to prefer against him the odious charge of hypocrisy. But the thick cloud that seemed to threaten his very life, began to dissipate. The storm of adversity abated. Its lightnings ceased to scathe his soul. Health and wealth and children and friends not only returned, but returned in a measure far exceeding that of his former prosperity. Should there, however, be no relief as to this world—should death alone prove the closing scene of trial, still it is all for the best.

Affliction, by the grace of God, is the furnace of the soul, to purge away its dross, and make it as the gold which has been thoroughly refined. Irrisome as it is to flesh and blood, and for the time being exceedingly grievous, it nevertheless afterward yields the peaceable fruits of righteousness. The mortification of the carnal affections proves the renewal and invigoration of the spiritual appetites. Often the result of the process is so happy as more than to reconcile the suffering subject to the severity of its mode. He counts it all joy in being thought worthy of chastisement, and sings of the judgment that deals the blow, because of the mercy by which it is tempered. And what is death but gain? Death, besides forever terminating the sorrows of the saint, introduces him to a larger share of celestial bliss than he had otherwise received. His light afflictions, which are but for a moment, in the beautiful and consoling language of inspiration, work out for him a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. What more then can the sons and daughters of affliction ask, if they only improve the dispensations of the Lord? "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called, according to his purpose." What would they have altered in the eternal, merciful arrangement of their heavenly Father? What one of the blessings he has designed them would they be refused? What part of the celestial glory that awaits them would they be denied? Who would not suffer with Christ on earth, to reign with him in heaven? Go, then, child of sorrow, and take down thy neglected harp. Sweep its melodious strings with animated strains of thanksgiving and joyous acquiescence in the pleasure of the Lord. All losses and crosses are blessings in disguise. And in the darkness and stillness of midnight, let the hymn rise to heaven—

"No more, believers, mourn your lot,  
But, since you are the Lord's,  
Reign to them that know him not,  
Such joys as earth affords."