

City of the Jasper Wall.

O CITY of the jasper wall,
And of the pearly gate!
For thee, amid the storms of life,
Our weary spirits wait.
We long to walk the streets of gold
No mortal feet have trod—
We long to worship at the shrine
The temple of our God.

O city where they need no light
Of sun, or moon, or stars;
Could we with eye of faith but see
How bright thy mansions are—
How soon our doubts would fly away,
How strong our trust would grow,
Until our hearts should lean no more
On trifles here below.

O city where the shining gates
Shut out all grief and sin;
Well may we yearn amid earth's strife,
The holy peace to win!
Yet must we meekly bear the cross,
Nor seek to lay it down,
Until our Father takes us home,
And gives the golden crown!

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Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

Rev. W. H. WITHROW, D.D., Editor.

TORONTO, JANUARY 19, 1889.

JESUS ON THE CROSS.

THE heart-broken words, "My God, my God! why hast thou forsaken me?" adopted by Jesus from the twenty-second Psalm, I have often thought especially reveals to us something of the penalty of sin, which he bore for us—in our stead. Most Scotch boys learn from the Shorter Catechism this: "All men, by their fall, lost communion with God." By sin we have "lost communion with God." We are now, in our fallen and natural state, like the branches of the apple-trees I see cast over the road-fence by a farmer out of his orchard, when he pruned it in the spring. I have seen them with buds and small leaves, sometimes with opening blossoms; but they are cut off from the tree and must die.

Now was not this exactly the penalty pronounced upon Adam? He did not die in the literal sense on the day he ate the fruit; he lived for nine hundred years. Nor are we to think he died the eternal death; for we believe he died in faith. But the penalty came on the day he sinned, for God would keep his word. Then how? Why, in this cutting off from God. And he could only live again by being newly grafted in. Our Lord's par-

able about the vine and the branches, or Paul's about the olive-tree, will explain it.

It was this very penalty—this cutting-off from God, as a branch from a tree—that was pronounced in Ezekiel: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die!" For the penalty of sin, the wages of sin, is in all ages the same. And I apprehend that it was this very penalty that our Lord bore upon the tree. He, in taking our place, paid our penalty, whatever that might be. And here we find him, in this horror of darkness, cut off from God.

Yea, once Immanuel's orphaned cry
The universe hath shaken;
It went up single, echoless;
"My God! I am forsaken!"

And the following circumstance brought very vividly to my mind the peculiar form and language of our Lord's cry on the cross. A ministerial brother once told me of his eldest son, who had died somewhere in the United States. His employer had written the father a letter, detailing the circumstances of his son's sickness and death, and among other things said: "During the last twenty-four hours of his life he wandered much in his mind, and spoke to himself all the time in some language we could not understand." "Oh," I said to my old friend, knowing he was from the Highlands, "that would be Gaelic." "Yes, I suppose so," replied he, "but he never heard Gaelic in his father's house. My wife and I when we were married—we could speak both languages—agreed that we would keep house in English and use that language in our home; and our children never heard us speak anything but English. No doubt he heard the Gaelic on the school play-ground and among his little playmates from his earlier infancy; but it could hardly be called his native language." Yet here it was; the poor fellow, dying among strangers, wandered back in the mists of death to the heather and the Highland hills; and he was once more in imagination a little barefooted Highland boy, with tartan trews, and the honest Gaelic tongue. And is it too far-fetched to believe the same of Christ? that he too wandered back to the vernacular he had learned and lisped in his highland home—for Nazareth was up among the hills, twelve hundred feet high—and now the language of his childhood was the language of his dying thoughts. No doubt he had taught much in Greek,—for Greek was the language of public life, just as the English is now among the Gaelic Highlands,—but the sanctities of life and death, and mother and infancy and home, all expressed themselves to his mind in the home-like Aramaic.

Let us comfort ourselves with the thought that whatever our penalty for sin was, Jesus bore it for us; and with the further thought that his enemies can no more reach him now. For he, "after he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God."

THE LITTLE WAIF.

A POOR, little shivering girl crept into a church and warmed her hands, one Sunday, by the stove. Nobody turned her out, for those who love God love his poor likewise, and want to comfort and help them. The preacher was telling of the prodigal son, and how he came home to his father, and his father forgave him and kissed him; and the little lassie began to sob aloud, and the people heard her cry, "I wish my father would kiss me!" What a tale the child's words told! A cold, neglectful father was hers: perhaps some poor drunkard, who cared nothing about her. I hope she heard of her Father in heaven, and of his great love and pity for her; but, oh, dear children, you who have good fathers and mothers, thank God for them every day, and be loving and obedient to them while they are spared to you.



A Loving Friend.

BY MRS. BROWNING.

LOVING friend, the gift of one
Who, her own true faith hath run
Through thy lower nature;
Be my benedictions said,
With my hand upon thy head,
Gentle fellow-creature!
Underneath my stroking hand,
Startled eyes of hazel bland,
Kindling, growing larger,
Up thou leapest with a spring
Full of prank and curvetting,
Leaping like a charger.

But of thee it shall be said,
This dog watched beside a bed
Day and night unwearied—
Watched within a curtained room
Where no sunbeam broke the gloom
Round the sick and weary.

This dog, if a friendly voice
Called him now to blither choice
Than such a chamber keeping,
"Come out," prying from the door,
Presseth backward as before,
Up against me leaping.

Therefore to this dog will I
Tenderly, not scornfully,
Render praise and favour:
With my hand upon his head,
Is my benediction said,
Therefore, and forever!

Australia and Homeward. By the REV. D. VAN-NORMAN LUCAS, M.A. Toronto: William Briggs. Pp. 336. Price \$1.00.

Mr. Lucas has given us here a very interesting and instructive volume on the Greater Britain of the Southern Seas. He had unusually good opportunities for travel and observation while in Australia, and he gives evidence of having acute powers of observation and a well-trained faculty of description. He gives a graphic account of the fauna, silva, and flora of the country, many of whose animals and products are of a very extraordinary character. He records the marvellous progress that has conjured great cities out of the wilderness within the memory of living men. He gives a thrilling account of the pioneer explorers, Burke and Wills, and other path-finders of empire in the vast Southern continent. The latter part of the book is a series of racy letters of travel in the Southern Seas, in Ceylon, and homeward through the Red Sea, Egypt, Palestine, Italy, France, and Great Britain. The book is well printed and has a number of illustrative engravings. It deserves, and we hope will have, a large sale.