

ROSE LOVELL'S MISSION.

"HOW I wish," said Rose Lovell one morning, "that I could be a missionary." At that moment she was hemming a kitchen towel. Her mother, sitting opposite her, was basting work for the machine, and her cousin Lu was copying music for her teacher. The evening before they had all attended a farewell meeting in their church. It was given to two ladies, who were going far away to India, to tell the story of the cross. Rose was full of admiration for these good women, and longed to do as they did.

"You can be a missionary right here, in this house, if you like, Rose," said her mother.

"I don't see how," answered Rose.

"A missionary is a person sent on errands of good. You can do Christ's errands here, if you want to, as really as you could do them by crossing the sea. I was thinking a while ago that somebody ought to find a mission in Aunt Margaret's room."

"How is she to-day?" asked Cousin Lu.

"She is just as usual, sweet and patient, but she has many weary hours. Her eyes are of very little use. They look bright, but their sight is very dim. She can neither sew nor read, and she used to be so fond of reading. I try to entertain her, but I have very little leisure."

Rose finished her towel. Then she went up-stairs and tapped at Mrs. Graham's door.

"Come in," said a pleasant voice.

"Would you like me to read to you a while?" asked Rose. The inquiry was answered by a bright smile, and the face of Aunt Margaret fairly beamed with gratitude. First, of course, she asked Rose to choose one of the "sweet old chapters" from that dear Book, which is always a lamp to the feet, and a light to the path, even though the bodily feet and the bodily eyes have grown insufficient for their work. Then she took from her table-drawer a little volume of poetry, which a friend had sent her, and while Rose in reading paused now and then to rest, she listened and criticised in a way which was quite a help to Rose, who received some new ideas for her composition. Composition day was the hardest one in the week, but talking over the subject with Aunt Margaret greatly lessened its terrors.

By degrees Rose found out that her mission was to take up the nearest duty, and perform it faithfully. Many an evening hour she spent with her aunt, the latter perhaps knitting while the reading went on. A deep, tranquil happiness pervaded the heart of the unselfish girl, while she thus gave a helping hand to one who needed it. It is always much more blessed to give than to receive, and though it is only love and kindness we can give, if it be for Christ's sake, we are sure to feel that He is pleased.—M. E. S.

SONG AND SILENCE.

"When the song's gone out of your life, you can't start another while it's ringing in your ears, but it's best to have a bit of silence, and out of that may be a psalm 'I come by and by.'"

When the song's gone out of your life,
That you thought would last to the end—
That first sweet song of the heart
That no after days can lend—
The song of the birds to the trees,
The song of the wind to the flowers,
The song that the heart sings low to itself
When it wakes in life's morning hours?

"You can start no other song,"

Not even a tremulous note
Will falter forth on the empty air;
It dies in your aching throat,
It is all in vain that you try;
For the spirit of song has fled—
The nightingale sings no more to the rose
When the beautiful flower is dead.

So let the silence softly fall
On the bruised heart's quivering strings;
Perhaps from loss of all you may learn
The song that the seraph sings;
A grand and glorious psalm
That will tremble, and rise, and thrill,
And fill your breast with its grate-ful rest,
And its lonely yearnings still.

NEGLECTED WARNINGS.

BY THE LATE DR. GUTHRIE.

"Gray hairs are here and there upon him, yet he knoweth not."
—Hosea vii. 9.

IT is one of the most beautiful and beneficent arrangements of Providence, that children, if sensible of their helplessness, are not ashamed of that which awakens our love and sympathy; it gives them no pain. Nor less kind on God's part is it that our minds are formed to adapt themselves to the circumstances of advancing years. Indeed we often glide so gently, so gradually down the decline of life, as to be little disturbed with the premonitions of its close. I remember the saying of a venerable lady, who had seen the changes of four-score summers: "Let no one trust to this, that they will turn to God, and seek a Saviour when they feel old; I don't feel old." And though the young perhaps will hardly credit it, men with furrows in their brow, and gray hairs on their head, often find it difficult to remember that they are old; to believe it; to realise the approach of their end; how near they are to the grave. Death seems to flee before us, like the horizon which we ever see, and never reach. The river that springs like an arrow from its rocky cradle, to bound from crag to crag, to rush brawling through the glen, and, like thoughtless youth, to waste its strength in mere noise, and froth, and foam, flows on smoothly, slowly, almost imperceptibly, as it approaches its grave in the bosom of the sea. And so is it often with man. The nearer we draw to our end, through a natural callousness or otherwise, the less sensible we grow to the evils and approach of age. And when a man has not left his peace with God to seek in old age, his greatest work to a time when he is least fit to do it; when a man, having made his calling and election sure, has left nothing for a dying hour but to enjoy the comforts and peace of piety; in such a case it is a most blessed thing that old age does not make our hearts old, or numb our feelings—that gray hairs are on us, and yet we know not.

But where, in such a case, is the hope of those who have trusted to turning religious when they turn old, and attending to the concerns of a better world when they have ceased to feel any interest in this? Death and a man, so runs the story, once made a bargain—the man stipulating, lest he might be taken unawares, that Death should send him so many warnings before he came. Well, one day, years thereafter, to his great amazement, the King of Terrors stood before him. He had broken the bargain, so said the other, who clung to life. Death, he alleged, had sent him no warnings. No warnings? His eyes were dim; his ears were dull; his gums were toothless; and spare and thin were the hair locks on his bent and palied head; these, Death's heralds, had come, not too late, yet all in vain. Amid warnings, but unnoticed or despised, his salvation was neglected; his soul lost; gray hairs were on him; and, so far as any practical effect was concerned, he knew not. Literally, or not, they are on us. Every setting sun, and every nodding hearse, and every passing Sabbath, warn us that days of darkness come, and opportunities of salvation go. Be up, therefore, and doing—asking yourselves such questions as these: Am I saved? Have I been born again? Have I embraced the Saviour? If not, Oh, seize this flying hour!

He taught a solemn truth who painted Time as an old man, with wings on his shoulders, scythe and hour-glass in his hands, and on his wrinkled forehead one lock of hair. All bald behind, and offering us no hold when it is past, let us seize Time by the forelock. Be saved this hour! That hoary preacher addresses you, as he shakes a glass where the sands of some of us are well-nigh run, and points his finger to the grave which, a few years hence, shall have closed over all this living assembly. Like other preachers, he shall die. Death himself shall die; but we never. Blessed or cursed with immortality, we shall live to wish we had never lived, or to rejoice that we shall live for ever. And, whether they fall late or early, happy then and happy now, such as, not ignorant that there were gray hairs on them, guilt in their lives, and sins on their consciences, sought salvation in Jesus Christ—washing their stains away in that atoning blood which both cleanseth from the vilest sins, and is free to the worst of sinners!—From "Speaking to the Heart."

None but Christians understand the divine philosophy of trying dispensations.—Cecil.