

THE IRON BOOT.

Johnnie Truman had a disease in his foot. It made the bones of his foot and ankle soft, so that they were bending and growing out of proper shape as he walked upon them. His mother took him to a physician, who told her to get an iron boot made, and to have him wear it every day for a year. So the boot was made and put on. But Johnnie found it very awkward, unpleasant, and painful. Think of a stiff iron boot on the soft, tender foot of a little boy! He couldn't run; he couldn't jump; he could only drag it wearily as he walked slowly along. Poor Johnnie! it was a very hard thing for him. Sometimes the neighbours would say as he was limping along: "There goes poor Johnnie Truman with his iron boot. It's cruel of his mother to make him wear it when he hates it so much."

And sometimes he would go to his mother, and say—"Oh, mother, do take this iron boot off!—It's so hard to get along with; it almost kills me. I don't care if I am lame; I don't care if my ankle is out of joint; I don't care how I am when I grow up; all I want is to get this boot off;" and then Johnnie would worry and fret as if his mother had put the boot on on purpose to give him trouble. Yet it was not so. The iron boot was necessary to support the limb till the bones grew strong and healthy. But Johnnie had no faith in it; he did not believe it would do him any good. Instead of trusting his mother and the doctor, he was fretting and worrying about it all the time.

A lady who was staying at the house got tired of hearing his complaints, and said to his mother one day, "Mrs. Truman, why don't you take the boot off that boy, and let him take the consequences? I am sure I would."

His mother was grieved. She looked with tender love upon her little boy, and as she stroked his head she said: "I must do for my child not what is most pleasant for him now, but what will be most useful for him hereafter. Johnnie will thank me one day for what I am doing now. If he wouldn't think about it so much it wouldn't be so hard to bear. He has a great many things to make him comfortable and happy, in spite of his iron boot, and that won't last long."

Johnnie hung down his head. He felt ashamed of himself. He knew how many things his mother was doing for him all the time, and that even the iron boot was for his good. At last the year of painful trial passed away. The disease was removed. The iron boot was taken off. Johnnie grew up to be a tall, handsome young man, with straight, strong limbs, and a firm, quick tread. And what do you think he often said to his mother?—Many and many times he would throw his arms around her neck and say—"Oh, mother, I can never thank you enough for making me wear that iron boot. It was the best thing you ever did for me. If it hadn't been for that I should have been a poor cripple all my life."

Thus you see how Johnnie's trouble was made a blessing to him. Well, just in the same way every trial that we have is, as it were, an iron boot our Heavenly Father puts upon us. Don't let us fret and worry about it, but let us bear it patiently, because we may be sure that God intends to do us good in some way.

PRAY to God at the beginning of all thy works, that so thou mayest bring them all to a good ending.

THE most terrific storm of real woe in a man's heart rarely flings its froth and foam as high as his lips.

CONVENTION is no part of religion. To quarrel needs no grace. The devil can fight, and your imitation of his conduct discredits you as a member of the "household of faith."



A SLEIGH WITHOUT RUNNERS.

Such a turn-out as this would create a great sensation in Toronto or Montreal—How would you my dear children like to be its owner?

The Laplander shapes his sledge very much like a canoe, and although you or I would get it capsized before we had driven a mile, he never does, unless he happens to drive into a snow drift. Dressed in warm deer-skins, he guides his reindeer merrily and safely over the snow. He is always cheerful and contented, and would not exchange his cold, bracing climate, for a warmer one.

SKIPPING THE HARD POINTS.

Boys, I want to ask you how you think a conqueror would make out who went through a country he was trying to subdue, and whenever he found a fort hard to take, left it alone? Don't you think the enemy would buzz wild there, like bees in a hive; and when he was well into the heat of the country, don't you fancy they would swarm out and harass him terribly?

Just so, I want you to remember, will it be with you; if you skip over the hard places in your lessons, and leave them unlearned, you have left an enemy in the rear that will not fail to harass you and mortify you times without number.

"There was just a small bit of my Latin I hadn't read," said a vexed student to me, "and it was just there the professor had to call upon me at examination. There were just two or three examples I had passed over, and one of those I was asked to do on the black board."

The student who is not thorough is never well at his ease; he cannot forget the skipped problems, and the consciousness of his deficiencies makes him nervous and anxious.

Never laugh at the slow, plodding student; the time will surely come when the laugh will be turned, but it more

than pays. Resolve when you take up a new study that you will go through with it like a successful conqueror, taking every strong point.

If the inaccurate scholar's troubles closed with his school life, it might not be so great a matter for his future career. But he has chained to himself a habit that will be like an iron ball at his heel all his life. Whatever he does will be lacking somewhere. He has learned to shirk what is hard, and the habit will grow with years.

THE physically blind feel their infirmity; but what shall we say of the morally blind?

WHAT I admire in Columbus is not his having discovered a world, but his having gone to search for it on the faith of an opinion.

WE are hanging up pictures every day about the chamber walls of our hearts that we shall have to look at when we sit in the shadows.

THE mind has a certain vegetative power, which can not be wholly idle. If it is not laid out and cultivated into a beautiful garden, it will of itself shoot up weeds and flowers.

NONE are so fond of secrets as those who do not mean to keep them; such persons covet secrets as a spendthrift covets money, for the purpose of circulation.

GOD pity the man of science who believes in nothing but what he can prove by scientific methods; for if ever a human being needed divine pity he does.

BLESS me in this life with but peace of my conscience, command of my affections, the love of God and my dearest friends, and I shall be happy enough to pity Caesar.—Sir Thomas Browne.

NOTHING BUT CHRIST.

"Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever."—HEB. xiii. 8

Nothing but Christ,
As on we tread,
The Gift unpriced—
God's living Bread:
With staff in hand
And feet well shod,
Nothing but Christ—
The Christ of God.

Everything lost
For Him below,
Taking the cross
Where'er we go;
Showing to all,
Where once He trod,
Nothing but Christ—
The Christ of God.

Nothing save Him,
In all our ways,
Giving the theme
For ceaseless praise;
Our whole resource
Along the road,
Nothing but Christ—
The Christ of God.

Nothing but Christ
For darkest hours;
In Him our trust
'Mid Satan's powers:
Though tempests rage
And troubles flood,
Nothing but Christ—
The Christ of God.

Nothing but Christ
For brightest morn;
As, well sufficed
With Canaan's corn,
We then shall know,
In His abode,
Nothing but Christ—
The Christ of God.

To-day—is Christ
Unchangeable,
To-morrow—Christ
The bleaser still;
Then, lost in God,
Our journey o'er,
Only is Christ,
For evermore.