

OUR MOTHER'S SAMPLER.

It was wrought in aliken letters,
As was the fashion then,
Stitched into our mother's sampler—
"Ere, aged ten I
'Twas long ago—passed sixty years'
Below the name the date appears.

In "eighteen hundred twenty-three!"
We often heard her tell—
She walked two miles to school that year,
And we remember well,
How underneath the elm tree's shade
She rested when a little maid.

Above her name the alphabet,
In letters large and small,
Was wrought in red, and "true love blue,"
And cross-stitched, one and all.
The rows divided off by lines,
Made from some old and quaint designs.

And through the summer sunshine,
And through the winter's snow,
With the sampler in her pocket,
Our mother used to go.
And afternoons, the lessons done,
She worked the letters, one by one

The stitches evenly were set,
With only here and there
A misplaced one, perhaps the count
Was lost mid-t childish care;
Distracting things in school, perchance,
Stole from the work a thought, a glance.

They tell me it was beautiful,
Our mother's "brotherhood" was,
And speak of all her kindly words,
Her ways of simple grace.
Could we have only seen her then,
That child, "Ere, aged ten!"

We knew her not at morning,
But when her noon-time came,
With childish love and prattle,
We gave her the new name,
Repeated with all that's pure and good—
The sacred name of motherhood.

And now the afternoon has passed;
It is the evening tide,
Our mother has just entered in
Among the glorified
We look her finished life-work through—
The misplaced stitches, O how few!

Susan T. Perry.

THE SAILOR'S FRIEND.

The following sketch is a chapter taken from a very interesting story, "The Old Lieutenant and his Son," which is offered as a premium with the *Methodist Magazine* for 1886. This story is a volume of over 400 pages, by the famous Dr. Norman MacLeod. It is beautifully bound and illustrated, and will be given to all subscribers, old or new, for the small sum of 35 cents:—

While the good ship *John* was lying in the harbour at Kingston, Jamaica, a boat pulled alongside, with a little, round faced man in the stern, who quickly ascended the ship's side, and, touching his straw hat, asked in a frank, off-hand manner for the captain.

"At your service," replied Salmond, who met him at the gangway.

"Bag pardon, sir; Captain Salmond, I presume?" said the little man.

"The same," said Salmond.

"My name is Walters," exclaimed the little man, "and though I have not the pleasure of your acquaintance, Captain, yet I have ventured on board, as I have been to sea myself in my day, though I am now a parson—a Methodist parson, I must tell you," he added, with a smile, as he perceived the gloom gathering in Salmond's face, "and though but lately come to Jamaica, I am anxious to be of service to the seamen in the port."

"And what do you want?" inquired Salmond.

"Oh, merely that, if you have no objection, I should like to have an

opportunity of saying a good word or two to your crew before they leave for home."

"The crew!" exclaimed Salmond. "A greater set of scoundrels are not on sea or land. The crew!"

"The worse they are, the more they need good counsel, and that is all I mean to give them."

"And that's just what they won't take," replied Salmond; "but you are welcome to heckle them as much as you like. It's what they deserve; for they care neither for God nor man."

After some further preliminaries and explanations, managed with great tact by Walters, liberty was at last obtained to collect the crew for half an hour in the fore-castle. Salmond, however, protested that the only discourse they would attend to would be a rope's-end or a cat-o'-nine-tails, and vowed that when he got them into deep water he would "give them a round of texts of his own making, which they would understand better than any Methodist discourse."

When Walters descended into the steaming den of the fore-castle, he said, "Good evening, my lads!" taking off his straw hat. His presence created no little stir, and more than one head looked over the hammocks, to know what all this was about. Was it a policeman? or magistrate? or some other official?

Walters seated himself on one of the bunks, and said, "I am an old sailor, and have sailed over every sea, and this fore-castle puts me in mind of old times; bad times they were for me, as I fear they are for you, my lads."

A general movement took the place of asking "What next?"

"Now, boys," Walters continued, "I like to be above-board like a sailor, and to show my papers at once. I do not like luffing or yawing, but to go straight on to port when possible; so I tell you I have come here to see you before you sail for the dear old country, which I don't expect to visit again. I wish to speak to you as I would to old comrades, and for no reason what over but for your good. I want no money, no honour of any kind, but the satisfaction of your listening to me for a few minutes until I tell you a bit of my story. Will you hear, then, an old sailor spin his yarn?"

"By all means," said the carpenter.

"Fire away, old boy," repeated a voice from a dark corner.

"Take out your reefs and scud," said another, while the greater part were silent and gave no sign.

Walters took out a small Bible, and amidst respectful silence and evident curiosity, not unmingled with some suppressed tendency to laughter at the oddness of the interruption, said, "As I told you, I was a sailor before the mast, and served my time. I have tasted salt-water like the best of you, and drank, and swore, like the most of you. I became mate of a fine ship, *The Lord Melville*, you may have heard of her, sailing out of Liverpool. We were wrecked on a coral reef, near the Bahamas. Most of the crew were washed overboard; the rest took to the masts, and I reached the mizen-top, along with the second mate, who, to speak the truth, was the only man on board who had any fear of God in him, and many a time I laughed at him, for I was then an ignorant heathen. Well, as the sun was setting on that awful day, with the waves

breaking over the ship, and little hope of her keeping together long, Wilkins, that was his name, says to me, pointing to the sun, "Me-mate," says he, "where will you and I be when that sun rises to-morrow morning?" "The devil knows!" says I. Yes, that was what I said; for I'd no care for anything. On that, Wilkins as brave a fellow as ever stood on deck, says to me, "Tom," says he, "if the devil knows you are to be with him, it is poor comfort. But I know that when I die I shall be with my Father and my Saviour, and all the good who have ever gone before me. Oh, I am sorry, sorry for you! I would let go my hold and drown if I thought that would save you!" "Would you, indeed?" says I. "I would, indeed," says he, "as sure as God sees my heart." And then he began to preach to me on that mizen-top;—ay, on that queer pulpit, such a sermon as I never heard before. Would you like to hear it, my lads?"

"Ay, ay, sir," said more than one voice.

"If it is no offence, speak a little louder, sir," said Cox.

"Well, then," Wilkins said, "Tom, God made you and me, and all men, to be good and happy. He has loved us ever since we were born, although we have not loved him. And if we do the devil's work, depend upon it we shall get his wages, and that is misery, and nothing but misery. But," said Wilkins,—for to tell the truth I began to tremble, and for the first time in my life felt afraid to die—"but," said Wilkins, "God in his love sent his own Son Jesus Christ into the world to seek and to save the chief of sinners; the chief of sinners, mind you," said he, "and to bring back his poor prodigals to himself, their Father. And Christ died for sinners on the Cross, and suffered, the just for the unjust, to bring us to God; and rose from the dead, and lives, to forgive every man, and to give him his good Spirit to make every man who will trust him, and try and do his will, and be a good son, as he himself was to his Father and our Father. Oh, Tom," he said, "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved. Yes, Tom, even you, before the sun sets, he will receive as a poor prodigal, and save you on this mas-head, without church or Bible or parson, but by his own love. Accept the forgiveness of sin, His own free gift, for if you don't you will never love your God and be at peace, but be frightened for him and hate him. Don't," says he, holding on for his life, and talking as peaceful as a child, "don't go up to judgment with all your sins written in God's book, and not one of them forgiven? Don't damn yourself, meesmate, when God wishes to save you! Don't ruin the soul that does not belong to you, but to him that made it, and who loves it, and died for it! Don't put off turning to God until it is too late; for if you die without a Saviour, without repenting and being at peace with your Maker, and a stranger to your God; if you say to him, 'Depart from me,' then he may take you at your word at last, and say to you, 'Depart;' and where will you go then?"

"With that the sun set, and Wilkins, holding on by one hand, lifted up the other and prayed,—*God our Father, give this prodigal son of thine true repentance, and save his poor soul*

through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and grant that if both die this night, we may both wake in heaven and not in hell.' That was Wilkins's sermon, and that was Wilkins's prayer," said Walters.

"What became of Wilkins?" asked a gruff voice from one of the hammocks.

"We were both picked off the wreck next morning," said Walters; "but before morning I had given my heart to Christ, and I have never taken it from him, nor don't intend to do so for ever and ever; and I find him one of the best and kindest of masters, while I found myself and the devil the worst."

After a pause, during which no remark was made, Walters rose and said with affectionate and earnest voice:—"My men, I am neither hypocrite nor humbug! I appeal to Him that made me, that I believe what I say—that I speak the truth, and risk my soul on it. As God showed mercy to me nine years ago come tenth of next May, I desire to make my fellow-men share the same mercy, and to enjoy the same peace and liberty; to deliver them from the foul slavery of sin, and to set them free in the liberty of Christ's service. I solemnly testify to you, that as sure as there is a God we must live as long as he lives—forever, that we must be saints or devils; good and happy, or wicked and miserable. I testify to you, that as God liveth, he has no pleasure in the death of a sinner, but rather that the sinner would turn from his wickedness and live; that he who knows all your sins, says, 'Though thy sins be as scarlet, I will make them white as snow.' Oh, my lads, my comrades of the sea! don't shipwreck your poor souls forever when there is a life-boat at hand, and when you have your Lord and brother ready and able to save. There's but one plank to reach the shore. It's our only hope. Refuse it, and we die. But no one who ever trusted to it perished. What say you? Come, my lads, what say you? What has the devil done for you? What sort of a master have you found him? What sort of wages has he given you? Are you happy? Are you ready to die? Are you fit to meet your God?"

Walters paused as if for a reply. "It is God's truth you are saying," said Neil Lamont, looking at the palm of his huge hand, "and there is no contradicting you. It is Scripture, I believe, every word."

Walters, as if anxious to get the men to think, and if possible to "bring them to the point," as he said, tried another tack, and remarked, "Say your ship is drifting with the hurricane on a lee-shore; last anchor out; masts cut away; black rocks and wild breakers under astern, and the last cable is just snapping.—Where next, my lads?"

"The long-boat!" cried a sailor. "So be it," said Walters, "unless she is stove in, or cannot be launched, or won't live a minute in the breakers. But suppose she is able to take you all off in safety, then I say the ship is your soul, and the life-boat is your Saviour!"

But there was no response. After the pause, he asked, with an energetic voice—

"Who cares for you, my men? Who cares whether you are dead or alive, sober or drunk, going to heaven or hell? Fifty fathoms deep, lying