

ONE GIRL'S WAY

The protracted meeting of M. had closed. The pastor said he had gathered in his lambs, so many of the girls and boys had united with the church. Jennie Evans had been brought under deep conviction, had struggled earnestly and been very clearly and brightly converted. Her pastor rejoiced over her, for he saw the work was genuine, and he fondly hoped the Lord would use her as an instrument in the salvation of her parents. Judge Evans and his wife had more influence in M. than any other people; were kind and cordial—just the sort of folks that others point out as being better than many church-members. Dr. Carey had earnestly sought an influence over them; but while they were perfectly polite to him, he knew it was only personal kindness—no interest in his Master's cause. Now, while he carried their names to the throne of grace, he often repeated, "And a little child shall lead them."

Now the meeting was ended, and Jennie could calmly think over the great love in her heart, she became earnestly anxious to do something for him who had done so much for her. But she was very timid—never said much at any time. She had looked at Fannie Clark as she moved about urging her classmates to the altar. "Oh, if she only could do that way!" But no! she must look for some little corner where shy girls could work. Then she resolved to do homely work first—to begin to lead a Christian life at home, here where they best knew her every fault. So she knelt down and with all her soul asked God's blessing on her efforts.

A cheerful, happy girl moved about the house, always finding something she could do for mother, some little attention for papa, some little play for the younger ones some kindness for a school-mate, but all so quietly that Fannie Clark whispered to the girls that she did hope Jennie would hold out. "But she is just as quiet as ever—never says a word about belonging to the church. Now I feel like calling out to everyone I meet on the street that I am a member."

Wednesday night came, and the clear-toned bell sounded the weekly prayer hour. Jennie quietly asked permission to go with some friends who came by their house.

"No, Jennie," said her mother, very firmly; "I do not approve of children's running around at night. You go to Sunday-school and to church, Sunday morning—that is often enough, oftener than your father and I go."

Jennie quietly choked back a tear and sigh, and turned to her usual evening duties. Her father noted her quiet submission—for Jennie had not always obeyed so gently—thought of it a moment, and then became absorbed in his paper.

Alone in her room, Jennie read her Bible and prayed God to show her how to get along without her prayer-meeting until she could go. "And, O Lord," she added, "please make mamma and papa want to go too."

On the morrow, at school, the girls pressed about her to know why she was not out. Poor Jennie would not put the blame on her dear mamma, so she only answered that she could not go. The girls looked knowingly at each other—they were afraid of her.

Dr. Carey, who saw deeper than they, met Jennie on her way from school, and with a tender pressure of her hand said, "I missed you last night, my child;" then, seeing a troubled look, added quickly "Keep on praying and trying, Jennie and all will be right. Remember, I am praying for you too."

The next Wednesday night Fannie and several others called for Jennie, to be met with a decided refusal from her mother. Her father noted again her pleading, disappointed look, but said nothing.

"I declare," said Mrs. Evans, as she closed the door, "I don't believe in children joining the church. Lessons, everything must be neglected for the meetings."

Wednesday nights went by, one by one. Jennie asked no more permission from her earthly parents to attend the beloved meetings, but did not cease to ask her Heavenly Father to open up a way for her to attend. Wednesday night always forced itself upon Judge Evans' notice; no matter where he went, he heard the

church-bell and saw the sad, silent, pleading look of his child. He knew his child's life had changed in the last few months, and as he admitted this, many old scenes and new thoughts forced themselves on his attention. One beautiful night, as the bell sounded its cordial welcome to all, the Judge looked up and said: "Run, little daughter; get your fixings on, and I'll take a walk with you to prayer-meeting. It's a pity you have to stay at home all the time, after all those big holes you darn up for me."

After one quick, grateful glance, Jennie ran to her room and knelt by her little bed: "O Father," she said, "I am so glad, I am so glad! I know you did it—no one else could. Please make him and mamma Christians. Amen."

Such a simple little prayer—yet the Lord, who hears our simple cry, knew how much of love and trust it contained, and was well pleased.

"Judge," said his wife, "I am astonished at how you spoil that child. You at prayer-meeting! I never knew you to go."

"Ah, well, wife, it won't hurt us. Perhaps she inherited it from her grandmother—she could never be persuaded to miss one. Ready, little girl?"

The two walked quietly on. Jennie was too happy to say anything—she could only press her papa's hand. The Judge was in a mood for silence; a voice that he alone could hear was speaking to his heart in tones loud enough to drown all other sounds. As he entered the church the congregation began to sing, "How firm a foundation."

How familiar the tune and words! He seemed to hear his mother's trembling notes amidst the trained voices around him. Memory carried the dignified, wealthy judge back, till he was only a barefoot boy on the old farm. He saw his mother in her plain home-made garments—the village saint.

Many souls had been led to Christ by her, yet here was her boy honored by men, almost an avowed disbeliever in God. Then his rough, honest father, his face beaming good-will to men. The preacher talked on of God's love for man, but somehow the Judge had gone back to his father and mother; the deathbed of his father was before him. How it rung of victory and glory, transforming the humble cottage into a Heaven below! How he had longed to die such a death then! With a long sigh he turned from the scene and gave his attention to the services of the hour.

Mrs. Evans had not been undisturbed by conscience during the hour. In early girlhood she united with the Methodist Church and had felt some measure of the love of God, but the tender plant was in barren soil. There was no one at home to lend a helping hand, no one to bid her Godspeed. She married, moved away; her name was taken from the church-roll, and she had long ceased to remember her vows. But Jennie, in her efforts to lead a Christian life, recalled and strangely stirred the past. Did she wish her daughter to be a prim Methodist, shut out from the fashionable life she so enjoyed? Well, no—not exactly. Still, she would not dare to tell her religion was not true. Yes, it was true. There was a time when she leaned over a baby coffin, and knew and felt the need of God. She became impatient at her thoughts, and walked to the door to await her husband and child.

After that night, Judge Evans and his wife began to attend church rather regularly. Before many weeks passed, Mrs. Evans again united with the church, and in time, with careful nursing, became a consistent member, and renewed her first love. Not so the Judge: conviction had seized him with a very heavy hand; he could not shake it off, and he would not yield. At times a deep despair would settle over him, and he would give himself up for lost; then,

"His soul would light on some sweet promise there. Some sure support against despair."

Again he would drown his hope in the social glass, and plunge into excesses unknown before. Everyone in M. knew that something was the matter with the Judge, but very few knew the truth. At last he knew he must yield. But what would his companions say—they who had heard him so carefully reason away the Saviour's divinity, they who had heard his

bitter sarcasms on other men's professions. Then, from his early training he had conceived the idea that to be converted he must go to the "mourner's bench." Now, the Judge would willingly have given thousands to avoid this. What! he go there, as he had seen the commonest workmen of his estate! No! Yes, it must be done.

The Sabbath was bright and beautiful; the church was crowded; Dr. Carey seemed clothed upon with his Master's spirit as he pleaded the Saviour's dying love, and with the tears streaming down his aged cheeks besought the congregation to yield, by dying love constrained. With one mighty effort of self-surrender, Judge Evans arose to go to the altar to confess Christ before men. Dr. Carey saw him coming and went to meet him; their hands clasped upon the altar, and from each broke joyous words, "Glory! glory! glory!" Jennie, scarcely conscious of her act—so surcharged was her heart with joy—crept up to the altar, too, and slipped her hand into her father's. From the rear of the church came an old man in home-spun and home-made clothes, halting, with rough stick. He had stood by and caught the dying glory as the Judge's father had entered Heaven; he had closed his dying eyes, and breathed many a prayer for "Jeems"—for such only was the Judge to him. He laid his toil-hardened hand on those on the altar, and shouted aloud, "Glory!"

It was a weird scene; the holy man of God; the humbled, bowed Judge; the little child; the rough man, with his hand and stick upraised in adoration; the sunlight flooding them with glory. The congregation arose, as by one accord and began to sing, "Glory to God in the highest?" The minister softly pronounced a blessing, and reverently the rough man added; "Now, Lord, lovest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation."

What wonder that from that day there grew the largest revival ever known in M? What wonder that God honored the work of a little girl so timid she could only daily live love for Christ?—*Student-school Visitor.*

SCHOLARS' NOTES.

(From International Question Book.)

LESSON III.—OCTOBER 20.

DAVID'S THANKSGIVING PRAYER.—2 Sam. 7:18-20.

COMMIT VERSES 23, 25.

GOLDEN TEXT.

In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.—1 Thes. 5:18.

CENTRAL TRUTH.

God's wonderful goodness calls for thankfulness and praise.

DAILY READINGS

M. 2 Sam. 7:1-17.
T. 2 Sam. 7:18-20.
W. 1 Chron. 17:1-15.
Th. 1 Chron. 17:16-27.
F. Ps. 2:1-12.
Sa. Ps. 72:1-20.
Su. Luke 1:32, 33, 68-79.

PARALLEL ACCOUNT.—1 Chron. 17:16-27.

DAVID'S DESIRE.—David, when settled in his kingdom in peace, desired to build a temple for God's worship (7:1-2). But God knew it was not best for David to do this. Other work must be done first. Besides, David was a man of war, but God's house must be a temple of peace (1 Chron. 22:8; 28:3). Hence God promised him that his son should build the temple, and that the kingdom should remain in his family forever. David was also permitted to make great preparations for the temple (1 Chron. 28 and 29:1-9). This promise was fulfilled in the kingdom of Christ, "David's greater son" (Luke 1:32, 33; Acts 2:28-31).

HELPS OVER HARD PLACES.

18. Then went king David in: to the tabernacle. And sat: probably upon his heels, in the oriental method of reverence before superiors. 22. Wherefore thou art great: goodness and love are the highest greatness. 23. Great things and terrible: such as the plagues upon Egypt, the crossing of the Red Sea, the giving of the Law, the conquest of Canaan. 25. Concerning his house: his descendants, as the English say, "the house of Tudor."

SUBJECT: THANKSGIVING FOR GOD'S MERCIES.

1. THE DESIRE OF THE HEART.—Where did David live? In what kind of a palace? v. 2; 5:11. In what kind of a place was the ark? (v. 2; 1 Chron. 15:1, 2.) What did David desire to do? Ought our churches to be better than our private houses? Why? Was this desire of David's right? Should we have like earnest desires for the kingdom of God?

II. THE PROMISE OF GOD.—Who revealed God's Word to David? (v. 4.) Was David's desire granted? (vs. 12, 13.) Why not? (1 Chron. 28:3.) What three things did God promise him instead? (1) v. 11; (2) vs. 12, 13; (3) vs. 16, 24. Were these things better than what David had asked for? Does God often answer our prayers thus, when we sincerely ask for what is not best for us? (Eph. 3:20.) Who built the temple? What preparations did David make for it? (1 Chron. 29:1-9.) Was the temple thus much more magnificent than it would have been had David built it when he proposed to?

III. THANKSGIVING AND PRAYER (vs. 18-20).—How did God's goodness make David feel? How many things do you find in those verses for which David gave thanks? Is what we thank God most for a test of our character? Why did God do these things for David? (v. 21.) Does God love to give us good things? What had God done for David's people in the past? (v. 23.) Name some of them. What are some of the great things God has done for us? For what did David pray?

IV. NEW TESTAMENT LIGHT.—How was this promise fulfilled in reference to the house and kingdom of David? (Luke 1:32, 33; Acts 2:29-30.) Is David's kingdom in Christ much more glorious than any temporal kingdom? Was this answer to David's prayer a great deal better than any temple or prosperity David could have had in his lifetime? What texts speak of Christ as a great king? (Eph. 1:20-22; Phil. 2:9-11; Rev. 19:16.) Where is his kingdom? Repeat some exhortations to thanksgiving. (Eph. 5:20; Phil. 4:6; Col. 3:15-17; 1 Thes. 5:18; Heb. 13:15; James 1:3.) Why should we give thanks? Will a thankful spirit make us happy?

LESSON IV.—OCTOBER 27.

SIN, FORGIVENESS, AND PEACE.—Psalms 32:1-11.

COMMIT VERSES 1, 2.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.—Rom. 5:1.

CENTRAL TRUTH.

God loves to forgive those who truly repent of their sins and forsake them.

DAILY READINGS.

M. 2 Sam. 11:1-27.
T. 2 Sam. 12:1-23.
W. Ps. 51:1-19.
Th. Ps. 32:1-11.
F. Luke 15:1-10.
Sa. Luke 15:11-32.
Su. John 3:1-17.

DAVID'S SIN.—David committed the double crime of adultery and murder, the latter in order to hide the former. *Sins seldom go alone.* David was very prosperous. He was perhaps growing luxurious. He stayed home from the war east of the Jordan at Rabbah, and may have been indulging in idleness. He yielded to temptation, and that led to a series of wrongs which he never dreamed of doing when he began. His sin was also against God's cause and the moral state of his kingdom.

DAVID'S CHARACTER.—He was a good man, with many noble qualities, and accomplished a vast amount of good. This double crime was a great blot on his character. But we must remember (1) that the blot seems all the blacker for being in so good a man; (2) that we must judge him in the light of his circumstances, and not by our light. Scarcely any other Oriental monarch would have looked upon the acts as crimes of any great account; (3) We must note David's deep and bitter repentance. This shows the true character of the man.

HELPS OVER HARD PLACES.

1, 2. Blessed: the original is plural, "O the blessedness of him," etc. The person described is blessed in many ways, in body and in spirit, in himself, and in his relations to others, for time and eternity. *Transgression*: going into forbidden fields. *Sin*: missing the mark, falling in duty. *Iniquity*: in-equity, what is unjust. *No guile*: the repentance is sincere and true. *3. When I kept silence*: did not confess his sin. This verse and the next describe David's feelings during the year he tried to keep his sin to himself. *Bones waxed (grew) old*: he was weak, pained, sick in body and soul. *Roaring*: crying out in his anguish. *4. Thy hand*: the emblem of power and activity, of bestowing something. *My moisture*: the figure is taken from a tree whose sap is dried up, so that all its freshness and power is gone. *Selah*: i.e. interlude. *6. Floods of great waters*: emblem of troubles and punishment. *7. Compass*: . . . with songs: he found deliverance from troubles and dangers on every side, for which he sang songs of praise. *8. I: i.e. David. Will instruct*: teach from his experience. *Guide thee with mine eye*: keep watch over thee, so as to keep thee in the right path. *9. Be not as the horse*: be guided by reason and God's Word, and not be forced to do right.

SUBJECT: SIN, FORGIVENESS, AND PEACE.

I. SIN.—What great sins did David commit? Which of the ten commandments did he break? Did he know them? What great things had God done for him? Was his sin against God as much as against man? (2 Sam. 12:9, 14; Ps. 51:4.) Did he do a great deal of good? Was David a truly good man? (1 Kings 15:5.)

How could so good a man fall into sin? Is it right to judge David by his sin alone, without considering his character and his repentance? Why does the Bible record the sins and faults of its good men? Are the sins of good men as really against God as against man?

II. REPENTANCE.—How long did David try to hide his sin? (See Time.) How is his state of mind during this time described? (vs. 3, 4.) What at last led him to repentance and confession? (2 Sam. 12:1-14.) How was David punished? (2 Sam. 12:14-23.) What Psalm expresses David's repentance? (Ps. 51.) Did all the people know of his sins? How did he make them all know about his repentance?

See title to Psalm 51, which means that it was to be sung in public worship. Did it require great courage and sincerity for a king to thus humble himself before the people? To whom should we confess our sins? Is there true repentance without confession? What are the proofs of true penitence?

III. A SONG OF FORGIVENESS AND PEACE (vs. 1-11).—Who are blessed? What three words express the nature of sin? (vs. 1, 2, 5.) The meaning of each? What three words express forgiveness? What does God's forgiveness do for us? For whose sake will God forgive us? (1 John 1:9; 2:12.) Why can we not be forgiven without Christ? Describe David's feelings while he refused to confess his sin. (vs. 3, 4.) What blessings came when he confessed his sin? (vs. 5-7; Prov. 28:13.) Why will not God forgive without repentance and confession? What is meant by "compass me about with songs of deliverance?" (v. 7.) What advice did David give from his own experience? (vs. 8, 9.) Must we all be governed by brute force, if we will not by reason? What contrast between the righteous and the wicked? (vs. 10, 11.)