

the cross? Raymond's brain almost reeled under the terrible struggle which arose within his soul. The succession of thoughts which it has taken long to record, had passed through his mind with the rapidity of lightning; he well knew that not an instant must be lost if his enemy was to be saved. The decision in that swift, supreme moment was beyond him. Suddenly he turned round, grasped Estelle by the arm, and almost dragged her out from the crowd that surrounded him, while he said to her in an intense, emphatic whisper, "Estelle! servant of Christ, and yet my dearest friend, speak! How is it to be? It is for you to decide. That which you command me I will do. Shall I attempt to save that dastardly traitor—my bitterest foe—and perish most likely in the effort? Shall I give my life for his, or leave him to the just punishment of all his unrighteous deeds? Quick! lose not an instant? Speak!"

Estelle Lingard had arrived at the most terrible moment of her life. Her intense sympathy for Raymond, and perfect comprehension of his state of mind, had enabled her to follow, almost as if it had been written before her eyes, his train of thought, since the discovery that it was none other than his cruel enemy whose life, hanging in the balance, demanded another life for his succour. And now Raymond, her one and only love, had laid it upon her to make the terrible decision which might either send him straightway to an awful death, or doom him to an eternal separation from the God of mercy and justice, who exacts forgiveness of injuries on earth as the condition of pardon in heaven.

Estelle understood but too clearly that what was now required of her was the consummation of the sacrifice she had made, when she sent out Raymond to meet his Saviour in the paths of danger and self-abnegation; for she knew as well as he did that the test had been placed before them both, and that her voice was to pronounce the fiat which would fix the result to all eternity.

"Whosoever will save his life shall lose it." Emphatically true would that sentence prove for Raymond if now she bade him take his revenge, and leave his enemy to perish. Most surely, then, would his feet go backward on the way of holiness till they carried him into a wilderness of error and despair, far from his pure and just Redeemer. And yet, to bid him now, at this moment, go from her side to suffer and to die, even though he won thereby the crown of faithful service—could she do it? Would not her heart burst in the effort—the heart that beat for him, with a passionate intensity of love, which had never seemed so powerful as in this tremendous hour?

Estelle wrung her hands together, and cast her eyes up to the midnight sky with a look of agony, like that of a hunted creature driven to bay. But well was it for her that the habit of instantaneous prayer in all emergencies was so deeply engrained within her; she might hardly have found the strength in her anguish, to ask for the power to doom Raymond to his death, had not the words formed themselves naturally in her mind, almost without her own consciousness; but the prayer was made, and the strength was given. Scarce a second had elapsed from the time when he had said, "Estelle, speak!" before she turned to him, and answered "Go and save your enemy, Raymond."

"Even if to save him I must die?" he questioned, doubting if she understood the meaning of her own words.

"Even if you must die!" she repeated faintly, while all grew dark before her eyes, and soul and body seemed parting asunder in the effort.

It was done; and instantly Raymond sprang from her side, snatching out of her hand the coil of rope she carried, and sped towards the burning house.

There was one who had stood close beside those two while the momentous questions and answers passed between them, and he had heard and understood it all.

So recklessly had Hugh Carlton let his selfish affection for Estelle gain the mastery over his better nature, that he could almost have rejoiced if Raymond had disappeared for ever among the blazing ruins. Too wildly intent on the triumph of his own self-will to weigh the effect of his words, he almost pounced upon her as she stood transfixed on the spot where Raymond had left her, exclaim-

ing, "Now, Estelle—now at least it is for me to protect you. Come with me, and I will care for you as he never could!"

These words, at such a moment, were by far too much for her powers of endurance. She flung out her hands to ward him off, with a shriek which rang in his ears long after.

"Go back! Leave me! Do not touch me! Do not come near me! Go!"

Hugh fell back, almost terrified, imagining that she was nearly out of her senses, and then, attracted by the shouts of the bystanders, his attention became absorbed, like them, in watching Raymond.

Estelle, left to herself, crouched down upon the ground, unable any longer to stand upright, and with her breath coming in convulsive sobs, while her eyes were dilated in extremity of terror, she strained her gaze towards Raymond's movements, and felt as if life were leaving her for very agony.

Raymond had seen, with the first glance, that there was only one way by which it was even possible to attempt the rescue of Tracy Harcourt. The part of the house immediately below the window where he stood was in flames, so that it was not possible to place a ladder against it; but the angle of the house near it was, as yet, only swept round by the red-tongued fire at intervals, so that it was just practicable to rear one there, though at a terrible risk; and if he even climbed the ladder in safety, he saw that a worse danger awaited him.

To be Continued.

### Children's Department.

#### A LITANY.

Only one prayer to-day,  
One earnest tearful plea;  
A litany from out the heart,  
Have mercy, Lord on me

Although my sin is great,  
Still to my God I flee;  
Yes I can dare look up, and say,  
Have mercy, Lord, on me.

Ashes are on my head,  
And thus I turn to Thee:  
I fast and weep I mourn and pray,  
Have mercy, Lord, on me.

Because of Jesus' Cross,  
And that unfathomed sea—  
The crimson tide which laves the world,  
Have mercy, Lord on me

No other name than His,  
My hope, my help may be;  
O, by that one all-saving Name,  
Have mercy, Lord, on me

In garb of penance clad,  
I crave thy pardon free;  
In life to die, in death to live,  
Have mercy, Lord on me.

#### THE LARK AND HER YOUNG ONES.

A lark who had young ones in a field of corn, which was so ripe that she thought men would soon come to reap it, was in fear for her brood. The worst of it was, she had to leave her nest each day to seek food for her young ones. But she did the best she could; when she left the nest she told her young ones to hear all that was said in the field, and to tell her all when she came back.

When she was gone they heard a man say to his son, "I think this corn is quite ripe; I wish you would go and tell our friends to come and help us to reap it."

When the old lark came home, her young ones in great dread told her what they had heard, and said, "Pray take us from the field as soon as you can."

"Do not fret," said the old lark; "I think you will be safe here for one day more at the least."

The next day she said to her brood, "I must leave you for a short time to get food for you. Be sure to tell me all you hear said."

When she came back her young ones told her

that the man and his son came, and no one else, and that the man said, "We may wait here all day for those friends of ours for whom we sent—they are not true friends; you must ask those of our kin to come to our aid."

The old lark said, "My dears, if that be all, you are safe for a day more, at the least."

The next day when she went out she said, "Be sure you let me know what the man says to his son if they come whilst I am from home."

When she came back the young ones said "The man and his son came, but not one of their friends or kin. The man said, 'We must not wait for folks to help us; we two must reap the corn, or it will spoil.'"

"Then," said the old lark, "it is time to be off; when folks make up their mind to do their own work, it is sure to be done."

She bore her young ones off, and the next day the good man and his son set to work, and the corn was cut down ere night.

#### WHAT WAS FOUND IN A WASTE-PAPER BASKET.

Do you know what it is, my little friends, to look for a piece of paper that is worth something to you, and which has by accident been thrown into the waste-paper basket?

I have many a time had to make such a weary search; and how glad I have been to find the lost piece, or perhaps the torn bits of it, one after another, which had to be carefully pasted together again.

Now, I am going to tell you what a Mohammedan once found in his waste-paper basket.

Not far from Agra, in the North-west of India, lies a large town called Bhurtpoor, and there lived a man who belonged to the sect of the false prophet Mohammed, and in whose heart a secret longing was awakened after something he scarce knew what. What he sought was a way to free his soul from the burden of sin that oppressed him. He had no friend that could help him; certainly they often said to him, "Allah, Akbar!" "God is great;" but that did not make him any happier. One advised him, indeed, to do something very hard, which should cause him great pain; or to make a pilgrimage, by which he would be sure of salvation. But he felt sure that all his own works could not save his soul from sin.

At last he began to pray to God. Was not that the best thing that he could do? His constant prayer was, "O God, show me Thy truth!"

One day there came into his hands a heap of waste paper out of the basket; he was going to use it to wrap up drugs for a hospital in which he was employed. As he sat there using one piece of paper after another in his work, his eye fell on a sentence in a stray leaf. Here were words that seemed to promise an answer to that which had filled his mind so long. He looked for more of the leaves and read them eagerly.

"What can this be," said he to himself, "but God's answer to my prayer? Strange that I find these very words in this heap of paper!"

He searched further and further, and at length found all the scattered leaves forming a tract entitled "Din-i-happi;" that is, "What is the True Religion?"

He felt sure it was sent by God. This tract directed him to the Bible; he tried to get one, but there was not one in his language to be had in Bhurtpoor. He went to the missionary at Agra, who had just received a supply of newly-printed Bibles; one of these he bought and read carefully, and by degrees light dawned on the Mohammedan's soul, showing him that the Lord Jesus, who said, "Him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out," was also Himself the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

Now what do you think, dear children, would have been the best thing for this man to have found in the waste-paper basket—a bank-note for a thousand dollars, or a little book which pointed him the way to find the Saviour and Eternal Life?

—It is better to look round on prosperity than back on glory.—Lewis Lass.

—Hatred is keener than friendship, but less keen than love.—Mamvenaraes.