

CHRIST TEACHETH BY PARABLES.

BY DR. FREESE.

By the sea-side Christ sat, with the multitude 'round,
All list'ning intently, to catch the least sound,
When spake He in parables truths that must live
So long as to man, God reason shall give;
The parables all were from God's open book,
Which they, and we all, may see if we look,
And now we'll repeat them, with moral as given,
With hope that they'll lead many souls up to heaven.

THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER.

Read Matt. 13 3-23.

Behold a sower went forth to sow,
And sow he did full well,
But the wind meanwhile commenced to blow,
And some by the wayside fell,
When fowls came along and devoured it all—
Not a seed was left of all that did fall.
The meaning of which is thus explained,
As ye may know who will—
The seed, thus sown, by Satan is gained,
Who watcheth all sowers still;
And no sooner doth seed by the way-side fall,
Than he is ready to gather it all.

Some fell upon stony places, where
No depth of earth was found—
It sprouted up quick to reach the air.
And almost leaped from the ground;
But when sun was up to the noon of day,
It shrunk, and shrivelled, and withered away;
This is the one who heareth the word,
And shouts anon with joy,
But hath no root in the living God—
Whom merest trifles annoy;
Who, when tribulations come on apace,
Are soon offended and leave God's grace.

Some of the seeds among thorns fell,
When thorns sprang up apace,
And choked what else would have done well,
And took of seed the place;
So he that gladly hears God's word,
But whom cares maketh deaf,
Whom wealth unfruitful makes to God,
Who loveth but little hath.

But other seed fell on good ground,
And fruit abundant brought—
Some hundred, sixty, thirty fold,
The owner found when sought;
So he that hears and understands,
Nor stops not here, but does—
All such bring fruit to Maker's hands—
Their barn so full, o'erflows

And shall not we be one of these
Whose barn of love o'erflows?
Who seek, and plan, and work to please
Him whom our heart best knows!
Or shall we sow of wayside seed,
On stony, thorny ground,
Which may our vanity here feed,
But not in heaven be found?

Oh, grand, dear Saviour, that our heart
Like best of ground may be:
Help us with every sin to part,
And cleave but unto Thee;
And when, at last, we're gathered up,
As reaper gathers grain,
May we on heavenly manna sup,
When we a heaven shall gain.

FREDDY, sitting by an open window one evening, was earnestly gazing at the stars, when he suddenly asked, pointing up at them, "What are they, mamma?" Mamma, being very busy, only answered, "They are God's lamps, darling." With another look, practical Freddy remarked, "Takes lots of matches."

CLIMBING THE HILL.

BY REV. JOHN KAY.

"I had a dream that was not all a dream."
J.



It was on a beautiful morning in the spring of the year as I lay, for a few minutes after the angel of sleep had folded her wings and was hovering around the couch of slumber before taking her flight for the day, that my thoughts, half waking and more than half dreaming, began to contemplate John Bunyan's Hill of Difficulty. In my dream I thought this hill was very high, having a broad base like a very large mountain. At the top there appeared a large level plain, crowned with golden sunlight. I noticed that, while at the foot of the hill it frequently grew dark, at the top there was perpetual day. I thought that it was generally understood that unalloyed happiness was there, and the only way to attain it was by climbing that hill.

I saw a great many people moving to and fro at the foot of the hill, and their faces were all set as if they would gladly face the difficulties, if they could but attain that happiness, for every one seemed possessed of a desire for it.

I noticed young and old engaged in climbing the hill; and if the young readers of PLEASANT HOURS will give me their attention I will tell them what I saw in my dream.

First, I saw a young man and young woman climbing this hill, and they thought they would like an easy and pleasant way up, so they went by the way which is commonly called Dancers Lane, and they soon found themselves brought to a standstill by a sudden termination of the road, and they were nearly killed running against Headache Rocks and stumbling over some loose rolling stones of remorse, and were at one time threatened with sudden death.

I looked again and saw some young men running swiftly around Gamblers' Curve, in a by-path which led partly up the hill. For a time I heard their merry laughter and could easily distinguish the rattle of the billiard balls, and the throwing of the dice, but soon this was still, and I heard they were overtaken by a shower of falling rocks and found a hapless and a hopeless end.

In going on only a short way, I saw some people young and old clambering up Guzzlers' Hill. They seemed like people intoxicated, and talked like fools. In the course of their conversation I heard the leader, who had undertaken to guide them along this way for a large sum of money, talking in a slanderous way about the Christian religion and the Bible. He read frequently from infamous infidel pamphlets, and the climbers ha, ha'd and clapped their hands and seemed in great glee. But in a short time I saw several of these go to an untimely grave, one was stabbed to the heart in a drunken quarrel, one was cut to pieces by a large saw, another slept the sleep of death from opium taken while drunk, and yet another was

found dying by the roadside after a bacchanalian row, and the leader filled the ranks from the young who were enticed to go up by the way of this hill, and he laughed and held his head high and put the money in his pocket, and reviled the God of the Bible. I thought, at first, they made some head way, but after awhile, upon looking closer, I observed that they were making no progress, but only wandering from mound to mound in a broad dangerous part of the mountain's side, and I left them to go on to ruin, and went to the bottom of the hill, toward the young at the beginning of the way.

In passing to another side of the hill, I noticed a place called Idlers' Green, and this was filled with people both men and women, and they were standing around doing nothing, neither trying to get up themselves nor to help any one else up. Indeed, they cried in a very mean way after those who were trying, and did all they could to discourage them. They were dressed in rags and looked as if they did not get half enough to eat. They said, "We can't try, the way is so steep." They were about as sorry a looking lot of dirty woo-begone creatures as eye could look upon. They begged for bread rather than work for it, and drank whiskey, and swore fearfully. For a time I tried to persuade them to a better way, and a few took my advice, but the most of them remained still where they were. Some of them sickened and grew weak, and the wolves of disease and passion devoured them.

Now, in my dream, I looked for some safe path up the hill, and as I came round to the western side I saw some young men drinking from a limpid stream which gurgled in melody and sparkled in beauty as it ran from under a great rock. This was the stream, of Truth and when they had partaken of this water they looked more beautiful than before. Their voices were sweet and clear, and their faces were the very picture of health. They had a good time talking and singing together, but I noticed, after a while, that some of them began to be proud of their beauty, and others were wealthy and they were proud of that, and a few others became proud of their learning, and instead of climbing they sought quiet arbors and shady glens, where they could have a good time, and business soon gave place to pleasure and they were absorbed in self-seeking and self-pleasing, and, although they made a good general appearance, they made no progress towards the top of the hill.

It was all aglow in the beautiful sunshine but they reached not after it. I saw, for my dream seemed to take in many years, that these young and beautiful men grew old and they grew hard and worldly. I counted several millionaires among them. Others became statesmen, and, for this life, had done well, but in the search for real happiness they were not much further up the hillside than when I first saw them. I noticed one or two of them die. There was no Bible in their hands, but a few works on philosophy and political economy, and some had charts and maps of new territory, and rising towns, and corner lots; and there were a few fine-looking men walking to and fro, but it was so cold and dark. Oh, how damp and chilly! It was enough to freeze the blood in

my veins, for the cold overhanging rocks shut out the sunlight and the heat, and I turned from them. I must tell the rest of my dream in the next paper.

PUZZLEDOM.

ANSWERS FOR LAST NUMBER.

- I. CHARADE.—Robin Hood.
- II. CROSS-WORD.—Usufruct.
- III. ENIGMA.—Richard the Lion hearted.

IV. SQUARE—

C O V E R
O L I V E
V I N E S
K Y E N T
R E S T S

NEW PUZZLES.

I. CHARADE.

When far away from friends and home,
'Midst scenes and scenes new;
My first to mind will often come,
Bringing the past again to view

My next, a very little word,
In meaning, not as much as little,
Of it no doubt you've often heard
Three fourths of it you'll find in spittle.

My whole we all have been
At one time or another;
And though its state embraced no sin,
It oft has caused us all much bother

II. HIDDEN FIGURES.

- 1. Get ten cheap spelling books.
- 2. Hush, a dear soul is passing away!
- 3. Tell Helen her ring has been found.
- 4. Drive a long spike through the post.

III. WORD-SQUARE.

My first, some of us have had in court,
Others find it at home:
My second often comes to nought,
And also means to aid some one;
My third is often owned
By people of high and low degree;
And if my fourth is rightly shown,
A maiden's name you'll see.

IV. CAPITATION.

- 1. Behead a trick and leave to consume.
- 2. Behead a loud noise and leave an instrument for rowing.
- 3. Behead a plant, and leave an animal.
- 4. Behead a limit, and leave a color.

WHAT A BOY DID.

NUMBER of years ago when Mr. and Mrs. S. C. Hall, two famous English writers, visited Ireland, a bright boy offered to be their guide. Returning home, Mr. Hall took a flask from his pocket and offered some whiskey to the lad. As he refused, Mr. Hall, to test him, offered him a shilling, then half a crown, and at last a pound, but the boy, though his jacket was ragged, remained firm, and, pulling a temperance medal from his pocket, said: "For all the money your honour is worth I would not break my pledge." The medal had been given him by a father on his dying bed, who used to be a drunkard, but had become a sober man through the total-abstinence movement. Mr. Hall threw the flask into the lake beside which they stood, and both were ever after devoted teetotalers, working with voice and pen. The firmness of a boy brought two noble workers into the ranks.