

GOOD AND EVIL.

Mattie stood by the brook, hardly knowing what to do; for her house was just on the other side, but the bridge was down the stream. While she was thinking about it, along came Charlie Jones, whistling happily. Only last Sunday, as they came out of the Sunday school, Mattie had spoken very unkindly to Charlie, and she thought surely he would only laugh at her trouble now; and indeed his first thought was to make fun of her, but just then a voice said to him, "Do good, hoping for nothing again, and ye shall be the children of the Highest." So Charlie said: "I'll help you Mattie," and almost before she knew what he was going to do, he had taken off his shoes and carried her across. "Thank you, Charlie," said Mattie, and in a moment added, "I'm sorry I was so hateful to you last Sunday." "All right," replied Charlie, and he said to himself: "How happy it makes a fellow feel to do right."

THE EARLIER AND EASIER.

One day I stood at a locked gate which led to a beautiful green field. Between the closed gate and the stone wall was a small opening, but I could not push through it, even if it were to save my life. A band of little children came tripping up, and one after another went up to the narrow opening, and without any difficulty slipped through, and were in the play-ground. I could not but think how easy it was for children to get in! and I remembered the text which tells of another gate, easier for children to enter than for grown-up people:

"Straight is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there is that find it."—*St. Matt. vii. 14.*

"Use great prudence and circumspection in choosing a wife," said Lord Burleigh to his son; "for from thence will spring all thy future good or evil; and it is an action of life like unto a stratagem of war, wherein a man can err but once."

A LITTLE boy who had been lost in one of the dense forests of the West, and was out all night, gave the following account of his conduct at the approach of darkness: "It grew dark, and I kneeled down and asked God to take care of little Johnny, and then went to sleep."

Sweetness in temporal is deceitful. It is labor and a perpetual fear; it is a dangerous pleasure, whose beginning is without Providence, and whose end is not without repentance.—*Rivulet.*

Happy is that house, and blessed is that congregation, where Martha still complaineth of Mary.

STORIES OF THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

THE BEAUTIFUL GARDEN.

There was a certain man who had a young son, Azfur Ali by name, whom he gratefully loved, and whom he daily loaded with favor. One day this father said unto Azfur Ali, "Come with me into the garden which I have purchased and prepared that it may be a goodly possession for you, O my son!" The father then led the way to a beautiful garden, in which were all kinds of flowers, some lovely in color, some sweet in scent. The garden was divided into seven portions; and the flowers in the seventh portion were white as snow on the tops of the mountains. "Now, my son, take your pleasure in six portions of this garden," said the father; but the seventh I have kept for myself. Let not your foot wander over the border; enjoy the scent of the

flowers from a little distance, but lay not a hand upon them. Behold! they are mine, and in abstaining from touching them your obedience to me shall be shown. It is my love for you, Azfur Ali, that makes me thus reserve the seventh portion. To the white flowers which blossom there on the plants will succeed a delicious fruit, to look up which will be pleasure, and to eat which will be health. The seventh portion is to be to you even a greater blessing than the other six; but now I call it mine, so trespass not on the ground reserved."

After a while the father departed for a time to a distant place, leaving his young son behind him.

From morning till night Azfur Ali amused himself in the garden; he gathered the flowers at his pleasure, and formed wreaths of the fairest blossoms, red, yellow, and blue; but his eyes often wondered to the forbidden ground on which his feet were never to tread.

"Why should I be tired and bow down to these six portions of the garden?" cried Azfur Ali. "I do not like the scent of those white flowers; if I pull them out I could put in their place golden flowers that I like much better. As for the fruit of which my father spoke I do not believe that it ever will come; at least, I cannot wait for it. A hard and unreasonable thing it is, to shut me out from a seventh part of my garden."

So Azfur Ali ran into the forbidden ground, trampling down the plants, and crushing the fair white blossoms, and some he tore up by the roots. Then he tried to put in their places plants that had golden flowers; but they flourished not, but withered, and the seventh portion of the garden was soon covered with weeds, and became a desolation!

When the father returned his wrath was great. "Azfur Ali!" he cried, "thou hast broken my command, thou hast trespassed on the seventh portion of the garden which I reserved for myself, and hast destroyed the flowers, which would have borne precious fruit. Thou hast forfeited all right from henceforth to possess any part of my garden."

This story is a parable. The garden is the garden of time, and the seventh portion is the Sabbath which the heavenly Father has reserved for Himself, as we read in His holy Word: "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy, Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man servant, nor thy maid servant, thy cattle, nor the stranger that is within thy gates; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the seventh day, and hallowed it."

The white blossoms that grow in this garden are the blossoms of prayer and praise, and perusal of the holy Scriptures. The fragrance of them is the fragrance of the garden of Eden. But the full sweetness of the fruit which follows will be enjoyed in heaven, where the hymn of praise on earth will be changed for the song of the Lord's redeemed: "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of the Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!"—*A. L.*

WHAT A SMILE DID.

In a little red-brick house in our village lived Gertrude White, a sweet little girl about nine years old. She was a general favorite in Cherryville. But she had one trouble: Will Evans would tease her because she was slightly lame, calling her "Tow-head" whenever they met. Then she would pout and go home quite out of temper. One day she ran up to her mother in a state of great excitement, "Mother, I can't bear this any longer," she said; "Will Evans has called me 'Old Tow-head' before all the girls."

Will you please bring me the bible from the table?" said the good mother. Gertrude, silently obeyed. "Now will

my little daughter read me the seventh verse of the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah?" Slowly and softly the child read how the blessed Saviour was afflicted and oppressed, yet "opened not his mouth."

"Mother," she asked, "do you think they called Him names?" and her eyes filled with tears as the sorrow of the Son of God were brought before her mind.

When Gertrude went to bed that night, she asked God to help her to bear with meekness all her injuries and trials. He delights to have such petitions.

Not many days passed before Gertrude met Will Evans going to school, and remembering her prayer and the resolution she had formed, she actually smiled at him.

This was such a mystery to Will that he was too much surprised to call after her, if, indeed, he felt any inclination; but he watched her till she had turned the corner, and then went to school in a very thoughtful mood.

Before another week passed they met again, and Will at once asked Gertrude's forgiveness for calling her names. Gertrude was very ready to forgive, and they soon became friends, Will saying: "I used to like to see you get cross, but when you smiled I couldn't stand that." Gertrude told Will of her mother's kind conversation that afternoon, and of its effect upon her; Will did not reply, but his moistened eyes showed what he felt, and he said he would never call her names again.—*From "Little and Wise," by the Rev. Dr. Newton.*

WHO WAS THE BAD BOY?

Little Annie was prettily dressed and standing in front of the house waiting for her mother to go out for a ride.

A tidy boy, dressed in coarse clothes, was passing, when the little girl said:

"Come here, boy, and shake hands with me. I dot a boy dus like you named Bobby?"

The boy laughed, shook hands with her and said: "I've got a little girl just like you, only she hasn't got any little cloak with any pussy fur on it."

Here a lady came out to the door and said: "Annie, you must not talk with bad boys on the street. I hope you haven't taken anything from her! Go away, and never stop here again, boy!"

That evening the lady was called down to speak to a boy in the hall. He was very neatly dressed, and stood with his cap in his hand. It was the enemy of the morning.

"I came to tell you that I am not a bad boy," he said, "I go to Sunday-school, and help my mother all I can. I never tell lies, nor quarrel, nor say bad words, and I don't like a lady to call me names, and ask me if I've stolen her little girl's clothes from her!"

"I am very glad you are so good," said the lady, laughing at the boy's earnestness. "Here is a quarter of a dollar for you."

"I don't want that!" said Bob, holding his hand very high. "My father works in a foundry, and has lot's of money. You've got a bigger boy than me havn't you?"

"Yes, why?"

"Does he know the Commandments?"

"I'm afraid not very well."

"Can he say the Sermon on the Mount, and the Twenty-third Psalm, and the Golden Rule?"

"I am very much afraid he cannot," said the lady, laughing at the boy's bravery.

"Does he not ride his pony on Sunday, instead of going to church?"

"I am afraid he does, but he ought not to," said the lady, blushing a little.

"Mother don't know I came here," said the bright little rogue; "but I thought I would just come round, and see what kind of folks you were, and I guess mother would rather your boy would not come round our door, because she don't want little Mamie to talk to bad boys in the street. Good evening!" and the boy was gone.

"SUFFERING AFFLICTION."

WHY is affliction allowed? What is it for? God means something by all his dealings. Nothing comes by chance. When afflictions come upon us, no matter in what form or shape, they are for a purpose, and it is for us to study that purpose. We are to improve our afflictions, as we do our blessings. When improved, they are changed into our greatest blessings.

In a journal of a tour through Scotland by the famous Charles Simeon, of Cambridge, England, we have the following account: "Went to see Lady Rosse's grounds. Here I saw blind men weaving. May I never forget the following fact: One of the blind men, on being interrogated with respect to his knowledge of spiritual things, answered: 'I never saw till I was blind, nor did I ever know contentment when I had my eyesight, as I do now that I have lost it. I can truly affirm, though few know how to credit me, that I would on no account change my present situation and circumstances with any that I ever had before I was blind.' He had enjoyed eyesight till he was twenty-five, and had been blind now about three years." "My soul," Mr. Simeon adds, "was much affected and comforted by this declaration. Surely there is a reality in our religion."

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