

## Fiction Department.

## TO AN AFFLICTED CHILD

Gentlest lamb of Jesus' fold,  
Call'd to suffer from thy birth,  
Take of heaven a sinner's hold,  
Since thou art not made for earth:  
Only lie at Jesus' feet,  
Then affliction will be sweet.

Clasp thy tiny hands in prayer,  
Tell the Saviour all our heart;  
Trust him with thy every care,  
Kneer grief to him impart;  
Bow to him the suppliant knee—  
He was once a child like thee.

Take thy refuge in his arms,  
Nestle in his loving breast,  
Fly to him in all alarms,  
Fly for safety, peace, and rest.  
Weep not, darling, at his will,  
Love him, trust him, praise him still.

Meekly learn thy cross to bear,  
Never murmur or complain—  
Cheerful songs and holy prayer,  
Ease and sanctify thy pain.  
Sing of Jesus and his love,  
As the angels sing above.

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**FRIGHTS.**—Frights make up a large part of the experience of some children. They are afraid of the dark, of robbers, of bears, ghosts, and a long host of fancies which make their little lives very unhappy.

Let me tell you how bravely and sensibly a little girl once fought with her frights. She went to pay her aunt a visit, and slept in a chamber by herself, which was perhaps rather lonely at first, for she and her sister always slept together at home. One night she suddenly waked, and saw a white thing at the foot of her bed, only its head which she thought as plainly as could be, was turned a little to one side, and not looking at her. Her first thought was, "It's a ghost, surely it is!" and she drew the bed clothes over her head. In a minute she had a second thought; "If a ghost is here, God is here too, and the Bible says they that put their trust in him shall be safe;" and the child tried to put her trust in God, and this gave her courage to take another peep at the white thing. It did look very much like a living being of some kind or other. "Well, if it is, I'll speak," she thought; and she cried out, "Who's there?" The figure did not stir or answer—there it stood, as still and white as ever.

"My father says there are no ghosts, and if there are, what harm is it likely they should want to do to me? and if they do I'll put my trust in God, and he can take care of me." She was much strengthened by this reasoning; still there the figure stood.

"But I will know who or what you are," said the child; "mother says frights are more in people's fancies than anything else."

And she jumped out of the bed, and marched up to the figure. How many children would have done that? I am afraid there are many grown up people who would have failed here. She went straight toward it; and what do you think it proved to be? Why, it was the moon shining through the window on the wall. "How much it did look like a head, with eyes, nose, and mouth," she said, and then jumped into her bed again. For a long while she lay and looked at it. But it only looked like moonshine, and no ghost, and she wondered how she could have been deceived. And that I dare say, is as much as ghosts ever are, all moonshine; and she kept her eyes on the soft silver light, until she again sunk into a sweet sleep.

Is not this an excellent ghost story? and may not the example of this child teach us a most useful lesson upon the best means of overcoming our foolish frights and false alarms.

**THE EFFICIENCY OF GOD'S PATERNAL LOVE.**—A boy in the House of Industry in Toronto, was walking in the yard one day, and picked up a stray scrap of the New Testament which contained part of the story of the prodigal son (Luke xv.) He read, "I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son," &c. He said to himself, "I am that wicked son." A friend who was present, said to him that God was willing to be called

the Father of every returning prodigal. He asked, "Do you really think God is willing to be a Father to me?" "Just look and see what He says," and he read on. "But will my Heavenly Father forgive me?" "No! I am too great a sinner," and the tears streamed down his face. "O, no! I am too great a sinner, God could not surely pardon one so wicked!" With his faded handkerchief he wiped his eyes, and read again: "But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck, and kissed him." Here the Lord the Spirit appeared to have taken away the evil from his eyes, and discovered to him the mercy of God which receives to the paternal embrace the very chief of sinners, and he was subdued into filial obedience by the love of God, and experienced that joy that is unspeakable, and that peace which passeth all understanding.

Reader, you are not too great a sinner to be pardoned! If you truly understand the love of God your Father to sinners as such, you would be quite overpowered, and your doubts and questionings would all be supplanted by the faith of sonship. "Come and see!"

"HE DELIGHTETH IN MERCY."

—British Messenger.

## Selections.

## "HOW READEST THOU?"

A Tract by the Rev. J. C. Ryde.

THE BIBLE is "written by inspiration of God." In this respect, it is utterly unlike all other writings. God taught the writers of it what to say. God put into their minds thoughts and ideas. God guided their pens in setting down those thoughts and ideas. When you read it, you are not reading the self-taught compositions of poor imperfect men like yourself, but the words of the eternal God. When you hear it, you are not listening to the erring opinions of short-lived mortals, but to the unchanging mind of the King of kings. The men who were employed, to indite the Bible, spoke not of themselves. They "spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." (2 Peter i. 21.)

I shall not waste time by attempting any long and labored proof of this. I say boldly, that the book itself is the best witness of its own inspiration. It is utterly inexplicable and unaccountable in any other point of view. It is the greatest standing miracle in the world. He that dares to say that the Bible is not inspired, let him give a reasonable account of it, if he can. Let him explain the history and character of the book in a way that will satisfy any man of common sense. The burden of proof comes, to my mind, to lie on him.

Here is a book, written by not less than thirty different persons. The writers were men of every rank and class in society. One was a lawgiver. One was a warlike king. One was a peaceful king. One was a herdsman. One had been brought up as a publican—another as a physician—another as a learned Pharisee—two as fishermen—several as priests. They lived at different intervals, over a space of 1500 years; and the greater part of them never saw each other face to face. And yet there is a perfect harmony among all these writers. They all write as if they were under one dictation. The handwriting may vary, but the mind that runs through their work is always one and the same. They all tell the same story. They all give one account of man—one account of God—one account of the way of salvation—one account of the heart.—You see truth unfolding under their hands, as you go through the volume of their writings—but you never detect any real contradiction, or contrariety of view. Tell us not that all this might be the result of chance. The man who can believe that, must indeed be a credulous person. There is only one satisfactory account of the book. It was written under the direct inspiration of God.

**IRRELIGION OF THE GREAT MEN OF FRANCE.**—I know not when, but certain it is that the nation has an immense progress to make in serious thought, if she wishes to remain free. If we look at the characters compared as regards religious sentiment, of the great nations of Europe and America, and even Asia, the advantage is not for us. The great men of other countries live and die on the scene of history, looking up to heaven; our great men appear to live, and die, forgetting completely the only idea for which it is worth living and dying—they live and die looking at the spectator, or at most, at posterity.

Open the history of America, the history of England, and the history of France, read the great lives, the great deaths, the great martyrdoms, the great words at the hour when the ruling thought of life re-

veals itself in the last words of the dying. But cross the Atlantic, traverse the Channel, come to our times, open our annals, and listen to the last words of 'as great political actors of the drama of our liberty. One would think that God was eclipsed from the earth, that his name was unknown in the language. History will have the air of an atheist, when it recounts to posterity these annihilations, rather than deaths, of celebrated men in the greatest year of France.

Look at Mirabeau on the bed of death. "Crown me with flowers," said he, "intoxicate me with perfumes. Let me die to the sound of delicious music."

Not a word of God or of his soul. Sensual philosopher, he desired only supreme sensualism, a last voluptuousness in his agony. Contemplate Madame Roland, the strong-hearted woman of the Revolution, on the cart that conveyed her to death. She looked contemptuously on the braggart people who killed their prophets and sibs. Not a glance towards heaven—Only one word for the earth she was quitting—"O Liberty."

Approach the dungeon door of the Girondins. Their last night is a banquet; their only hymn the Marseillaise! Follow Camille Desmoulins to his execution. A cool and indolent pleasantries at the trial, and a long imprecation on the road to the guillotine, were the two last dying thoughts of this dying man on his way to his last tribunal.

Hear Danton on the platform of the scaffold, at the distance of a line from God and eternity. "I have had a good time of it; let me go to sleep." Then to the executioner, "You will show my head to the people; it is worthy the trouble!"

His faith, annihilation; his last sign, vanity. He holds the Frenchmen of this latter age!

What must one think of the religious sentiment of a free people, whose great figures seem thus to march in procession to annihilation, and to whom that terrible minister, death itself, recalls neither the threatenings nor promises of God!

The Republic of these men without a God has quickly been stranded. The liberty, won by so much heroism, and by so much genius, has not found in France a conscience to shelter it, a God to avenge it, a people to defend it against that atheism which has been called glory. All ended in a soldier, and some apostate republicans cannot be heroic. When you terrify it, it bends; when you would buy it, it sells itself. It would be very foolish to immolate itself. Who would take any heed? the people ungrateful, and God non-existent! So finished atheist revolutions.—Lamartine.

**THANK GOD FOR WATER.**—Reader, did you ever go, on one of those hot, scorching days, when the thermometer stood about 96 in the shade, to some shady grove, through which sparkled in its pure, liquid light, a limpid stream of water, beautiful and refreshing in its own coolness, and, throwing off all hindrances, plunge beneath the pearly wave, rise to the surface, and again, porpoise-like, plunge into the cooling tide? If you have, as you left the murmuring stream, the whole body strengthened with vigor and renewed life, did you not in your hearts thank God for water, and rejoice that such a treasure was not denied your enjoyment?

Did you ever ride or walk out into the country or the fields after a refreshing shower has watered the parched earth, quenching the thirst of the parched soil, and filling with the pearly drops of the life-giving beverage, the tiny cup of each little flower, as well as of the slender blade of grass, and spangling every tree, bush, and shrub with a wreath of silvery drops, sparkling in the morning sun, like diamonds set in emeralds? If you have, did not you thank God in your heart for the water, as you felt the cool breath exhaled from its million drops, fanning your cheek, laden with the aroma of many flowers? Did not the little ground-bird sing a sweeter song, the robin warble a softer note, and the lark carol a wilder melody, as he soared towards heaven, bearing its simple praise? And did not all nature smile more joyously, in the cool, fragrant, refreshing atmosphere?

Did you ever, with parched and thirsty lips, approach the bubbling spring, welling up from forest glen, and stooping, sip from the sparkling stream the life and health-giving beverage "prepared by God himself," fresh from the fount? If you have, as you rose, refreshed in body and spirit, did you not inwardly thank God for water, cool water, to slake the burning thirst and refresh the weary? And did you not then wonder how man, created in the intelligence of the angel, a reasoning, capable, and responsible being, endowed with the wisdom of judgment, could prostrate his body, destroy his mind, and become a degraded being, by