

## THE OLD STONE-BREAKER.

INSTRUCTION of the most useful kind sometimes comes from sources and at seasons the most unpromising. A clergyman, in impaired health and depressed spirits, had left his home to spend a few weeks at the house of a relative who resided in a distant county. While taking a lonely walk one morning, he saw an old man kneeling on the roadside, breaking stones. He went up to the stone-breaker, and asked him his age.

"I shall be seventy-two if I live till my next birthday, which will be next Wednesday."

"I thought you must be about that age," said the clergyman; and then added, "I am sorry to see one so advanced in years obliged to work so hard, for I suppose you find it hard work."

"Indeed, sure, it is hard work, but not so hard as when I used to do it standing. I find it much easier since I took to do it on my knees."

At the same moment that he uttered these words, down fell his hammer, and a stone of considerable size divided into several pieces. The clergyman said, "Hard as your work is, mine is much harder."

"Work, hard work?" said the stone-breaker, inquiringly; "you're a gentleman; you don't know anything about work; it's we poor people that work. You know nothing about harder work than this. Though, thank God, I can work and be happy."

"Ah!" said the clergyman, "my good man, you little know to whom you are speaking;

you are speaking to one who is a workman oppressed with the greatness of his work. I have to work for the salvation of souls. It is a hard work. I should be as happy as you are, if I could break the stony hearts of my hearers as easily as you break these stones."

"Perhaps you try to do your work standing, sir; try to do it on your knees: I think you'll find you can do it then."

"Thank you, my good man. your advice is at least worth consideration."

"Why, don't you see!" said the stone-breaker, "if you try on your knees to do your work, you get Almighty God to help you, and the work will be well done, and easily done too."

The clergyman had made an appointment which he was anxious to keep, and he therefore hastily bid "Good morning" to the stone-breaker.

As he went on his way, "Try to do it on your knees" was repeated again and again to his inmost soul. He had not gone far before he began to pray

most earnestly for some of the most depraved and hardened of his flock. He continued to pray for them in private; and on his return to his parish his prayers increased in fervour and frequency. God heard his prayers, and soon after he resumed his public services he had the high satisfaction of seeing a decided change in the character and conduct of several of his hearers.

The hint may be profitable to parents, teachers, ministers, and others who labour for the salvation of souls—"Try to do it on your knees."

## THE POOR MAN'S INVENTORY.

"Be content with such things as ye have."—*Heb. xiii. 5.*

THE believer is to be content with such things as he has. Behold Lazarus at the gate of the rich man, his body full of sores, without shelter, food, or friends. Is he to be content with such things as he has? He has nothing. Yes, he has something. Let us try to take an inventory of it.

He has a Father in heaven, upon the throne of thrones, possessing all wealth, and exercising all power, forgetting him never, and making all vicissitudes and severities of life conduce to his ultimate unspeakable good.

He has a Saviour in heaven, one that died for him, and washed him from his sins in His own blood; his righteous Advocate ever interceding for him.

He has a Holy Spirit, who has taken up His

abode in that polluted heart, to make it new, spotless, and perfect.

The angels of heaven are his friends: they celebrated the day of his conversion with songs of transport; they hold his crippled limbs so that he does not fall, and they are waiting to convey him to Paradise. All the saints in the light of heaven wait for him, that they may know him and love him.

He has promises more in number than it is possible to count, and each so precious that all the money in the world could not buy it. He has an inheritance ten thousand times more magnificent than the boasted patrimonies of earth.

Everlasting life is his. His diseased body shall be fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body. To all his other treasures he may well add this treasure, *contentment.*

Oh! to grace how great a debtor  
Daily I'm constrained to be!  
Let that grace, Lord, like a fetter,  
Bind my wandering heart to Thee.

*Isaiah.*



*The Old Stone-breaker.*