

In Confirmation He gave thee more strength.

In Holy Communion He feeds thee with the Bread of life, by which is kept up an abiding union with Christ.

He warns thee and reproves thee by thy conscience. He teaches thee, and makes thee love God's Will, and helps thee to do it. He convinces thee of sin. He comforts thee. He absolves thee. He bears witness with thy spirit that thou art the child of God.

Oh! wonderful Gift! And yet more. He is given to thee to dwell in thee, that thy heart may be a Temple of God. It is an awful thought. God, the Holy Ghost, dwells within the Christian's heart.

His presence is gain indeed. What then must the loss be if we lose Him? For we may resist Him, and grieve Him, and quench His Light. We may bring sin into the soul and body which He has made His own dwelling place. And then? Then all His love will but increase our condemnation. And if He should leave us we are lost, for without Him we can do nothing.

O Almighty God, for Thy Son Jesus Christ's sake, take not Thy Holy Spirit from me.

O Holy Spirit, make me to know, to desire, and to do faithfully, the perfect Will of God. Sanctify me always, and dwell within my heart for ever. Amen.

"RESPONSIBLE FOR HIS IRRESPONSIBILITY."

BY UNCLE WILLIAM.

The family were seated around the centre table, one evening in March. Mrs. Eccles and her two daughters were busy with their fingers, in one form of needlework or another, and Willie was busy mending some defects in his skate straps. Dr. Eccles had been reading *The Church Journal* aloud. After finishing that portion of Bishop Doane's address contained in the issue of March 26th, laying down the paper, he said:

"Yes, how true, and how much there is in those few words, 'responsible for his irresponsibility.'"

In a short time evening prayers were said, and the family circle broke up for the night. But Willie's ears had caught the words, and in spite of himself, they would repeat themselves over and over again, "responsible for his irresponsibility." He did not know exactly what they meant, but they sounded so peculiar to him. His sleep was not sound that night. He dreamed that he was running down a hill which grew steeper and steeper until finally he found himself at the very brink of a precipice. His speed was too great to be stopped, and over he went, headlong, and just as he was making the final plunge he heard a troop of boys clapping their hands and shouting at the top of their voices, "responsible for his irresponsibility."

He was glad enough to wake up and find that it was only a dream. But he had been skating that day, and was quite weary, and so he soon fell asleep again. But it was only to have another troubled dream. This time he thought he was rowing in a skiff on a smooth and beautiful river. Soon he found that the current was carrying him down. He did not mind this, for he was near shore, and he rather liked the sport of seeing how swiftly he could glide past the banks. Soon, however, the current drew him out into the middle of the stream. Then he found that the water was rough; and he made for the shore. But he did not succeed in reaching it. Then he heard a roaring which he had not noticed before. The noise increased, and at length it flashed upon him that he was in the rapids above Niagara Falls. Nearer and nearer he approached the abyss, louder and louder the roaring grew, until at last over went his skiff, and the same troop of boys clapped their hands and shouted "responsible for his irresponsibility." Willie awoke this time with a scream, which so frightened his father that he came to the bedroom to inquire what was the matter.

In due time, however, the morning came, and at breakfast, Willie told his dreams, and begged his father to tell him what those words meant, "responsible for his irresponsibility."

"I have to cross the city to-day," said Dr. Eccles, "and go to Brooklyn. And if you think that the

walk would not be too much for you, you may go with me. And perhaps we can find out what the words mean."

Willie gladly accepted the offer, and soon he and his father were on their way.

While on the ferryboat, Willie noticed a rather rough-looking man who was eyeing him and his father very closely. Whenever Willie turned his eyes in that direction, the strange man was looking at him. At length, as they were about to leave the boat, this person approached Dr. Eccles and said:

"I see you don't know me, Doctor."

The Doctor, after looking very closely was obliged to confess that he did not.

"Well, I s'pose so," said the stranger. "It's a great many years, Bill, since you and I met. And seeing the difference there is between us, I don't wonder that you have forgotten your old school-mate, Charley Stramp."

"Is it you, Charley?" said the Doctor with surprise, and holding out his hand.

"Yes, it's myself," replied the other. "We used to be about the same size, we looked and dressed alike, and played together. You wouldn't think it, would you, boy?" continued he, patting Willie on the head. "But that's your father's good luck. He's got along. He's rich. He's among the big folks, and I'm nothing but Charley Stramp. I can just make a living as porter in a store. And that's my bad luck. Well, Doctor, there's no knowing what's before us. Perhaps my boy will grow up to be a doctor, and your boy may be nothing but a porter in a store."

They soon parted company, and Willie and his father were again walking by themselves.

"I'm sorry for that poor man," said Willie. "I wish you would tell me something about him."

"I shall be glad to do so," said Dr. Eccles. "And I will begin by saying that luck has nothing to do with his condition. He and I were school-mates, as you heard him say. His parents were in as good circumstances as mine. He had every advantage that I had. But I studied, and he did not. I made use of my advantages, and he neglected his. He could have succeeded as well in life as I have done, but he lost his opportunity, and now he can't."

"Well, then, if he can't," said Willie thoughtfully, "I suppose he is not to blame."

"But," said his father, "don't you think that he is to blame for not being able to do any better than he does? If he had studied when he was a boy, he would have been able to-day to provide well for his children, and be a useful man. He is to blame for not having studied, is he not?"

"Certainly," said Willie.

"Then he is 'responsible for his irresponsibility,'" said Dr. Eccles.

"And is that what it means," asked Willie.

"Exactly," said Dr. Eccles. "If Mr. Stramp were asked now to cure a sick person, or to transact some law business, or to buy or sell goods, he could not do it. He is not to blame for not doing it. He is irresponsible. But as he is to blame, in other words, as he is responsible for not being able to do any of these things, so he is 'responsible for his irresponsibility.'"

Willie had plenty to think of during the rest of the walk to the place where they were going. It was a handsome house in a block on one of the well-built streets of Brooklyn. As they entered the door they met a clergyman in the hall. Dr. Eccles shook hands with him and expressed his surprise as well as pleasure at meeting him there.

"I have not seen him," said the clergyman. "I have only seen his poor heart-broken wife. But as for him, he will not see a clergyman at all. He says he does not believe in a Bible, does not believe in a heaven or a hell, and does not want anybody to talk to him about religion. And he so near death, too!"

The doctor passed in, leaving Willie in the parlor alone. In the course of about half an hour he returned, and he and Willie resumed their walk homeward.

"The case of this man," said the doctor, "is just this: Many years ago I knew him as a gay, jolly, careless young man, who seldom went to

church, and cared very little about religion. He fell into the company of some thoughtless young men, who thought it very smart to laugh about religion and the Bible. They used to read the work of infidels, and repeat what the infidels said. But they did not read the works of christian men, nor try to find what answers there were for the infidel reasons. And so they became infidels; and now my patient is going to die—having lost his salvation because he cannot believe in Christ. He is to blame because he cannot. Do you understand it, Willie?"

"Yes, I understand," said the boy. "He was to blame for not going to church. He was to blame for keeping the company of wild and infidel young men. He was to blame for reading bad books, and not reading good ones. And now, just because he did so, he can't believe. And so he is to blame for that."

"That is to say," said the father, "he is responsible for his irresponsibility!"

"That is just what I was going to say," said Willie.

They had not time to continue the conversation; for they found themselves on turning a corner in the presence of a large crowd, in the centre of which they saw three or four policemen. Amidst the noise and tumult they heard a policeman's voice asking some one to run for a doctor. Doctor Eccles made himself known, and dragging Willie with him, worked his way into the middle of the crowd. There lay, covered with blood, a young man about thirty. A deep cut was on one side of his head, which a woman was holding in her lap. Dr. Eccles felt of the pulse, tried to start blood with a lance, and at length turned to a policeman and informed him that the young man was dead. Two other policemen had in charge, and were bearing away, another young man, about the same age as the murdered one.

Amongst other cries and shouts, might be heard distinctly "They've got him;" "They'll hang him;" "No, he isn't to blame;" "He didn't know what he was about;" "He was drunk, and they would have no right to hang a man for what he did when he was drunk."

But Willie had seen and heard enough. He was shocked and disgusted at what had passed, and was only too glad to hurry home with his father. After they had walked some distance, Willie asked his father if it was true that a person did not know what he was about when he was intoxicated.

"Not quite," replied the doctor. "He does not quite lose control of himself. Still some persons under the influence of liquor do seem to be perfectly insane, and act more like wild beasts than men. But suppose it was always so, that would not make true what some of those persons in the crowd said, 'that it would not be right to hang a man for what he did when he was drunk.' For, if liquor makes him crazy, then he has no right to touch liquor."

"Yes," said Willie. "But then, father, some persons get in the habit of drinking, and they say they can't help themselves, they must drink; and they can't help it, why then?"

"But how do they get the habit," interrupted the doctor. "The habit comes on by degrees. They knew it was growing upon them. They could stop very easily, but they would not. They let it grow until by and by it got so strong that it mastered them, and they could not help themselves, and now they must suffer the consequences. They are 'responsible for their irresponsibility.'"

"Well, it is very strange," said Willie, "but I never heard those words before last night, and yet they seem to fit everywhere. They certainly do apply to everything I've seen to-day."

"And to everything you dreamed last night," said his father, smiling.

"That's so," said Willie, "for when I began to run down hill I could have stopped just as well as not, but I didn't, and so I fell over the bank. And when I was rowing in Niagara river, I could have gone up stream, or kept out of the current. But I didn't try to stop myself, and before I knew it, couldn't; it was too late; and I found myself going over the Falls. And that is just what those boys meant, when they shouted out 'responsible for his irresponsibility,' but they shall not do it again."

