

The Best For Christ.

Give Christ the best! O young men,
Strong and eager,
And conscious of your own abounding
life,
Ready to throw your soul's fresh grow-
ing powers
Into some noble cause, or lower strife,
Christ Jesus was a young man, strong
and brave,
Give him your heart's allegiance, give
to him
The best you have.

And you in whom the same young life
Is throbbing,
But with a steadier pulse and gentler
flow;
Whose hearts were made for sacrifice
and loving,
When souls' ideals grow with you as
you grow,
O give to Christ your first, most sacred
love,
And of your hearts' devotion give to
him
The best you have.

And is our best too much? O friends,
let us remember
How once our Lord poured out his
soul for us,
And in the prime of his mysterious man-
hood
Gave up his precious life upon the
cross.
The Lord of lords, by whom the worlds
were made,
Through bitter grief and tears gave us
The best he had.

NEMO

OR

The Wonderful Door.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "CHRISTIES OLD ORGAN."

CHAPTER VIII.

ONLY A TRAMP.

"Well, I call that a reglar bit of
manana," said Crumpets, when the old
man had finished his story.

"Ay, it would make a book," said the
man who was sitting next Nemo; "why
don't you write one, Tom?"

"Nay, Dick, book-writing isn't in my
line," said the old man; "but I'll tell
you what I must be doing, and that's go-
ing home. Why, my daughter and her
husband will be abed and asleep if I
don't look sharp. So, good-night, gen-
tlemen all," he said, rising with a sigh,
as he thought of leaving Jemmy's blaz-
ing fire and of turning out into the
darkness and storm.

"Wait a minute," said Jemmy; "I'll
give you a light and a hand down, Tom;
the steps are slippery with the wet and
I'm going down with a basin of soup for
your poor tramp. There's a drop left in
the pan, and it'll warm him and make
him sleep, poor chap."

"You haven't such a thing as a bone
or two you could spare for my dog,
master?" said Abel. "I left him in the
cart, for he's lame, and I thought he
would be best there; but he's done noth-
ing but bark and howl the last hour. I
think maybe he's hungry."

"Yes, poor beast, I'll take him a plate-
ful," said kind-hearted Jemmy. "He
started barking when I took you tramp
through the stable on the way up to the
loft; he tried hard to get out of the cart
to him, but he couldn't manage it. I
s'pose he took him for a queer customer,
just as I did."

Jemmy and the old man left the room
together, and turned out into the dark
night. When the landlord returned, he
had left the dog's bones behind, but he
brought back the basin of soup.

"What, wouldn't he eat it?" said one
of the men.

"He's gone," said Jemmy; "there
isn't a sign of him; and how he's gone,
that's the mystery. I saw him in the
loft myself, and I bolted the door after
him, for I didn't much care for the looks
of him, and I thought maybe he will be
walking off with some of them baskets."

"Was the door bolted when you went
just now, Jemmy?"

"Yes, it was bolted all right, but no
man was there; he's clean gone alto-
gether."

"It's a ghost, depend upon it, said one
of the men. "My grandmother's aunt
saw a ghost one night, and he came in
and went out just like that."

"Nay, it's no ghost," said Crumpets,
with his hearty laugh; "I don't believe
there is such things. He's under the
hay, Jemmy, depend upon it; he's cov-
ered himself up to keep himself warm,
and you haven't seen him."

"Just you go and look," said Jemmy
in a solemn voice; "here's the candle."

"Give me his supper, then," said
Crumpets.

"Not till you've found him," said the
landlord, laughing.

Crumpets was away for some time, and
when he returned, all that he said was,
"It's vory strange—vory strange indeed."

"Well, he isn't under the hay?" said
Jemmy.

"No, nor nowhere else, neither. He
must have gone out of that shutter-
window, Jemmy; I see it's only fastened
by a hook; and he's let himself down
the spout outside. That's the only
thing I can think of."

"He's a reglar cat, if he's climbed
down there," said Jemmy. "He might
do it, that's true enough, but whatever
made him do it is what puzzles me; it
beats me out and out, that does."

Abel Gray had started from his seat
as this conversation went on, and now,
white and trembling, he laid his hand on
Jemmy's arm, and asked what the man
was like and how he was dressed.

"Oh, he was a queer-looking fellow,
tall and thin, and he had a long tattered
coat and a soft felt hat, and his hair
hanging all down his back."

"It's him! It's our man," cried little
Nemo. "Oh, are you sure he's gone?"

"He's gone, sure enough," said the
landlord. "I went all round the house,
but I could see nothing of him."

Abel then gave the little company an
account of the encounter with that
strange man on the moor, and told them
how positive the child had been that he
had seen the same man looking out from
amongst the trees of the park as they
drove by.

"Seems just as if he was some kind of
a ghost," said the man who had related
the story of his grandmother's aunt.

It was time now for Jemmy to close
his house and for the little company to
disperse, and this nervous man did not
at all like turning out into the darkness
of the night, lest he should meet the
ghost on the road; but the cheery
Crumpets offered to see him home, and
Jemmy stood at the top of the stone
steps, holding the candle and shading it
with his hand, as the four men made
the best of their way down to the road.
Then he gave the candle to Abel, and
showed him a neat little place, more like
a cupboard than a room, separated from
the large parlour by a lath-and-plaster
wall, in which were two small beds for
himself and Nemo.

The child was very tired, and the
sweet smell of the hay, with which his
pillow was filled, made him very sleepy,
but he did not go to sleep without kneel-
ing up in bed to say his prayers. First,
Abel heard him repeating the little
prayer Father Amos had taught him,
and then came the words—

"O Jesus Christ, you are the great
door; please let me come inside. Amen."

It was his last thought at night, as it
had been his first thought in the morn-
ing.

As for Abel, sleep fled far from him;
visions of the strange man in the long
cloak seemed to fill the room, and he lay
listening to the rain beating pitilessly
on the roof, and the wind shaking the
rickety windows and banging the pig-
sty door, and, oh, how he longed for
morning!

He was up as soon as Jemmy was,
and that was before five o'clock. The
maid-of-all-work, who was also Jemmy's
niece, a stout country girl, had been in
bed the night before with a headache,
but had now made her appearance on
the scene, and was busy with broom and
duster in the long parlour.

So Abel went with Jemmy to feed the
pigs and to milk the cows, and then he
brought out his basket-cart, and put all
in readiness for an early start. Nemo
did not wake until breakfast was ready,
and a grand breakfast it was—Jemmy's
good coffee, fresh eggs laid on the pre-
mises, and hot rolls which the niece had
baked that morning.

Abel felt less nervous than he had
done the night before. He was glad to
feel that their adventures were well-
nigh over, and that they would soon be
at home. He found that if he went
slowly, and let the donkey rest by the
way, it would be quite possible for
him to reach home that night, and their
store of baskets was now so small that
it was useless to think of doing more
business without having a fresh supply.

So, when breakfast was over, they
took a friendly leave of Jemmy, who ran
after them with more bones for the dog,
and then stood watching them from his
high steps till a turn in the road took
them out of sight.

"Now for home," said Abel, with a
righ of content.

"Won't we have a lot to tell Father
Amos," said Nemo, "and won't he like
my picture? Abel, are you knocking
at the door?"

"I don't know," said Abel. "Are
you?"

"Yes," said the child, "I knocked last
night, and I knocked this morning, and
I'm going on knocking till I get inside.
Do you think he'll soon open the door,
Abel?"

"I can't tell," said the little man;
"you must ask Father Amos; he'll tell
you a deal better than me."

Old Amos gave the travellers a hearty
welcome, and they sat long over his fire
the next morning, giving him a history of
their adventures in the new country.
He was much pleased with Nemo's pic-
ture, and very glad to hear that he was
knocking at the door, for he felt sure
that the Lord's words were true—"To
him that knocketh it shall be opened."

"Abel says he don't know whether he
is knocking or not, Father Amos," said
the child.

"It's a funny sort of knocking, then,"
said the old man, "if he can do it with-
out his knowing about it. He knows
well enough when he knocks at your
door of mine; doesn't thee, Abel, my
lad?"

"Yes, Amos," he said, "you're right
there, of course; if a fellow knocks, he
must know he's knocking, and I'm glad
enough that Nemo has begun to knock.
But you see I've never been brought up
to think of these things; it's different
for me."

"But, Abel, my lad, thee would like
to get safe to thy journey's end, wouldn't
thee? Thee would like to arrive at the
city of God, whether thee has been
brought up to walk on the road there or
not, wouldn't thee, Abel?"

"Yes, Amos, yes; of course I would,"
said the little man uneasily.

"Then begin knocking to-day," said
the old man. "Knock, and it shall
be opened unto thee,—unto you, Abel,
my lad—unto you."

"Yes, do, Abel," said little Nemo.

"Well, I'll see about it," Abel an-
swered. "I won't make any promises
about to-day; there's plenty of time yet,
and some day or other I'll think about
it. But there's lots to do to-day; there's
baskets to buy—we've sold out, Amos,
clean sold out; and there's the house in
a filthy mess with being shut up; and
there's Nemo hasn't a tidy pinafore nor
a clean shirt. I'll have to be busy early
and late to get all straight. So I'll be
off, Amos, and leave the lad with you
awhile."

"Do you think he will knock?" said
Nemo, when he had gone.

"Maybe he will, maybe not," said the
old man sadly.

"But you think he will, don't you,
Father Amos?" said the little fellow
earnestly.

"I hope he may," said the old man,
"but I'm afraid not. Lots of folks
think they're going to knock, and say
they will knock, and mean to knock
some day; but some day never comes,
Nemo, and then the door is shut, and it's
too late. That's just what I was read-
ing in my Testament last night; fetch it
here, and we'll read it, Nemo."

"Many, I say unto you, will seek to
enter in, and shall not be able. When
once the Master of the house is risen up,
and hath shut to the door, and ye be-
gin to stand without, and to knock at
the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto
us; and he shall answer and say unto
you, I know ye not, whence ye are."

"So it will be too late to knock,
Nemo, thee sees, when the door is shut,
and who knows how soon the Master
will rise up to shut it?"

"Oh, I do hope Abel won't be too
late!" said the child.

And from that time, almost every day,
he would ask his foster-father very anx-
iously, and sometimes with tears in his
eyes, "Have you begun to knock yet,
Abel?" and when the answer came
which disappointed all his hopes, he
would say, "Oh, Abel, do be quick!
He'll be shutting and bolting the door
soon, and me and Father Amos will hear
you knocking outside, and we won't be
able to let you in."

Sometimes Abel would laugh when he
said this, and tell him old Amos had
filled his head with strange notions,
sometimes he would pat him on the
back, and tell him to cheer up, for he
would be all right some day, but most
often he simply turned the subject, or
went on with his work without speaking.

As for Nemo, he constantly repeated
his little prayer, he knocked day by day
at the door, and he looked very earnest-
ly for it to be opened to him.

"Amos," he said one day, "it's a long
time."

"What's a long time, my lad?" asked
the old man.

"That door," said Nemo, "it's a long
time coming open."

"I think it is open, Nemo," said Amos.
"Open now?" asked the child, "open
for me, Father Amos? Why do you
think it is open?"

"Because the Lord's word wouldn't be
true if the door was still shut, Nemo."

He says, 'Knock, and it shall be opened
unto you.' You have knocked, and so I
am quite sure he has opened."

"Then do you think I've got inside
the door, Amos? Ab, I do wish I
knew I was inside!"

"Yes, Nemo, I believe you are inside.
Why, the Lord longs to let you in much
more than you long to come. He died
that he might be able to open that door;
he could never have let us into the way
if he hadn't died. And now his heart
longs for everybody to come to the door.
And, Nemo, you have come to Jesus, the
only Way, the only Door, and I believe
he has set your feet in the way of peace."

"Oh, Amos, what have I got to do
now?"

"Just to keep in the way, dear child,
till you reach the city of God."

A strange new light and joy came in-
to the boy's face, a sunshine that was
of heaven and not of earth. When he
went home again, he said solemnly and
gravely, "I'm inside, Abel."

"So I see," said the little man, laugh-
ing; "you're not in the street, that's
clear enough."

"I'm inside the door," said Nemo;
"Father Amos says so."

"Oh, that's what you're after," said
Abel, "is it?"

"Yes," said the child. "I wish you
were inside, too, Abel—I do wish you
were!"

"Well, it's washing day to-day, and I
must not stop to talk," said the little
man. "Fetch me all the dirty towels,
Nemo, and we'll set to work."

The sunshine on the child's face was
not quite so bright after that. He
thought he would be so happy if only
Abel would come inside too, and would
walk along the road with him. And
he was very much afraid lest the Master
of the house should rise up and shut the
door, and Abel should be left outside.

Abel had told old Amos all about the
strange man they had met on the moor,
and Amos had said nothing whilst Nemo
was there; but as soon as he had left
the room he had shaken his head
solemnly, and had declared that he did
not like it at all, he was sure that that
man was up to no good, that was clear
enough for any one to see; and it was
the old man's opinion that he knew
something of Nemo's history, and had
taken the opportunity of finding out
what the child was like.

"I hope we shall never see him
again," said Abel.

"Was he at all like that man you saw
in the house when you took it?" asked
Amos,—"the man whom the woman
called Alexander, I mean?"

"No, not a bit like him—not the least
little bit. I think I should know that
man again anywhere."

The poor dog soon became a great
favourite, not only with Abel and the
child, but with the old man also. As
for Nemo, he was devoted to him; by
day he followed him about everywhere
he went, and by night he lay stretched
at the foot of his bed. He quite lost his
lameness, and when for some time he
had been well fed and cared for, he be-
came strong and healthy, and altogether
a different creature from what he had
been when he was brought to them on
the moor. They tried to give him the
name of Trusty, but he would not an-
swer to it; and if Abel wanted to call
him, he was compelled, though sorely
against his will, to call him Nemo, for
in spite of all his efforts he would an-
swer to nothing else.

The strange ring Abel locked up care-
fully in the box in which he kept his
money, that it might be safe until such
time as he might happen to see its
strange owner again. But he could not
be hoping, from the bottom of his
fearful little heart, that that time might
be far distant.

(To be continued.)

DYING FOR HER BROTHER.

A tender story is told of a French girl
only twelve years old, who succeeded in
saving her little brother from wolves.

It was during a severe winter, in a
remote village of France, and wolves
were constantly seen prowling about.
One day a wolf with five little ones burst
into the cottage, attracted by the smell
of the bread which the girl had been
baking.

By means of a heavy stick, the brave
girl had almost succeeded in driving the
mother wolf off, when, seeing one of the
cubs about to attack her brother, she
seized the boy, thrust him into a cup-
board, and buttoned the door. That
gave the wolf time to fly at her, and in
a moment she was the prey of the sav-
age beast. Her brother remained quite
safe, and was rescued from the cup-
board by some neighbours.

He lived to be an old man, cherishing
the memory of the sister who had died
to save him.