

put aside his spade or plough and put on his Sabbath coat, and the house-wife her Sabbath gown, and the best room looks its best and cleanest, and the children for that day are kept from school, and with carefully combed hair and sober look and anxious happiness, wait the coming of the minister. The family bible "the book" lies on the table in the centre of the room, and the shorter catechism is placed modestly by its side. All is quiet and decorous as a Sabbath morning—their best friend is coming on a solemn errand. The sagacious collie at the door feels that something unusual is going on, and puts himself on his best behavior. Oh thrice happy household! Oh favored servant of the Most High! Surely such a scene as this must be pleasing to the Author of all good, and profitable to the souls and bodies of his dying creatures. He opens the sacred page, they sing the holy hymn, he sends up the fervent prayer, he speaks words of solemn warning, of tenderest love, of earnest advice, he presses the hand of each, and praying for a blessing on this house; he leaves it with the same quiet solemnity with which he entered.

We said that such customs and such clergymen were still to be found—would that they were to be found in every hamlet in our pleasant land, then would we have fewer sects and greater piety and more happiness. But somehow we fear, this kind of thing is growing old-fashioned and out of date. We have to be sure, the annual visitation, but we find too often, that no preparation is made for it. The father cannot afford to lose half a day's work—even the children sometimes cannot be kept from school, lest something be lost for which money is to be paid, or it may be, a hurried visit is paid at night that the hours of labor may not be interfered with. Oh! cold and hollow mockery; yet it alone, and anger not God by such an offering. Give not a make-believe heart to God and your real heart to the world. He cannot be deceived.

#### A DREAM FOR SLEEPING SOULS.

One night I dreamt, and in my dream I stood on the bank of a broad river. And as I stood three men ran swiftly down from the hill behind towards the water. They seemed in great anxiety, for they were followed by a fearful enemy whom I cou'd not see, he being

still on the other side of the hill; but they feared he would speedily overtake and kill them. When they came to the water they looked about in great perplexity, for they sought to cross hastily over; but there was neither bridge nor ferry. Now there were some fishermen standing close by, whom the three flying ones entreated to help them. They pointed to a small, narrow raft that was fastened to the shore by a rope, and said: "This little boat may carry you over; but it is a perilous venture, for the boat is certain to upset if you make ever so slight a blunder in paddling it."

While the three men looked at the raft, and doubted much if they would risk it, I saw a strong man approaching, with a royal crown on his head and of a noble countenance. And when he drew near I saw that he was moved with much compassion for these people; and he said, "I will take you across if you will trust yourselves to me. Climb upon my back, clasp your arms round my neck, and I will swim you over one at a time."

"Are you so strong a swimmer that you can do that?" "Oh!" cried the fishermen with one voice, "he is the strong hero of this country; he has carried over many a one before you, and none was ever lost; you may be thankful that he offers to help you, and had better take him at his word." "No, no!" said one, "I have no courage for that, I will try the raft."

So, without more ado, he unfastened the moorings and set off. He floated away smoothly enough, and it seemed that he might make the voyage safe; but it was not a moment till, by a wrong stroke the raft upset, and he sank to the bottom, never to rise.

When the second saw the evil fate of his companion, he said, "I am a good swimmer and the water is smooth,—I am sure I can swim across."

So he jumped into the water, and swam off some yards, but then the waves rose upon him and after many struggles he too sank, never to rise.

Then the third cried to the royal prince, "Have pity upon me, and take me over; I will do whatever you tell me."

"With all my heart," said this kingly man; "but remember that when you are on my back you must not try to swim yourself. All you have to do is to keep tight hold, and not to let me go." "Of course," replied the other; "I cannot swim a stroke. I shall not let you go, you may depend upon it."

Then the royal swimmer took him upon his back, and plunged into the river.

The first hundred yards, where the water was smooth, all went on fairly. I wondered at the incredible swiftness with which the strong man cleft the current. I heard the poor fugitive sing a joyful song. But as they approached the middle of the river, where the waves ran high, I saw that the water came up to his lips, and sometime: