

God really does know what we have to eat and drink, and what clothes we have on?"

"Aye, to be sure!" said Nat, cheerily. "Don't you know that Alice has got a patch on her boot, and Polly wants a new frock, and what we're going to have for dinner to-day? I should be nothing of either if I didn't take note of such like things, and if I didn't cast about in my mind how they are all to be provided for."

"Allow the Lord must cast about to provide for the world!" He doesn't rain us down bread from the heaven, of course. We couldn't look to have anything we want in that miraculous way. But the Lord makes our wants fit in one to another. Look at the herring; I want a herring or two, maybe, and the fishwife wants to sell some herrings; so we come across one another, and both of us got our wants provided for. Then, there's a girl wants a new gown, and a shopman wants to sell her a gown. And there's a boy wanting matches, and a boy selling matches. That's how we fit in."

"Bless you, if the wisest man in the world, with the longest head, had to provide for the folks in Manchester, he'd be certain to forget lots of things. He'd forget matches, or clips, or tennypenny nails, or paste-pots, or something we could not do without."

"But the Lord has ordered it so that we all fit in together, and get along comfortably."

Nat's eyes fell upon Tom's pinched face, and he turned on still more earnestly.

"Some things don't seem plain to understand," he said. "When I was a bill-sticker, it was very hard upon me, not knowing how to read—and I never could learn. Tom. There's something wrong inside of my head, I reckon, for R and B always get wrong; and I never could remember which had the little early twist through it—O or Q. So my wife used to tear off the right-hand top corner of all my bills, for fear I should post them upside down, and lose my business. But one night, when she was trusting to the fire-light—and we hadn't much fire—she tore off the wrong corner, the one right opposite to it—in the left-hand corner, she knows. Well, the next morning out I went, and my gentry bill I posted on the walls was upside down; and somehow, I felt uneasy in my mind, and I stood and stared at each one after I'd done it, but I couldn't make it out. The reading didn't look right—but I couldn't tell, for my ignorance; only I was uneasy."

"Ever since then, when things have looked uncomfortable and awkward, I've thought they were like the bills posted upside down. We can't read them; but, maybe, if we were a little bit wiser, we could make out something of their meaning—even if they be posted upside down. But, by-and-by, they'll be turned right, and then we shall read them straight off, from end to end."

"God'll larn us to read then," said Tom, with a faint smile.

"To be sure," answered Nat. "Why, I'd give a pound down now to know how to teach Suey her letters. Our text last Sunday morning was, 'And they shall be taught of God.' Of course he has to do it himself, just as I'd be heart glad to teach Suey. Ah! I shan't be stupid and ignorant any longer, Tom; and thee'll be no more sickly and starved. We'll learn of God, lad—thee and me—the bills won't be upside down there."

"Nat," said Tom, after a pause, "I hanker so much after Phil, as never was. But father watches me, and I'm afeared to go to the school. I gave one of the boys an apple for him, with my love, yesterday; but I've not seen him for six weeks."

"Well," said Nat, sighing, "it's hard upon thee, Tom; but he's safe there. And who knows? Some of thy father may be a good man. Maybe, if we

could make out that bill of thine that's posted upside down, it says somewhere, near the beginning, or in the middle, or at the end, 'Here Tom's father turned good,' or something of that sort. I can't put it into printed words. That 'ud be rare and happy, wouldn't it, Tom?"

"Aye," said Tom, with tears in his eyes. "That 'ud pay for all."

He sat silent and motionless for some minutes, seeing nothing of the crowd passing along before him, while he fancied the happiness of having a good man for his father. He felt more comforted and strengthened by Nat's homely words than if he had been feasted at a plentiful table; and now, as the Infirmary clock struck the hour of two, he shook hands with Nat, and kissed little Suey, and hurried away to the market to fill his basket with cockles, for the tea-tables of the people living in the back streets about Ardwick.

(To be continued.)

### A FATAL DRAM.

It was a small village in Dakota where farmer Pelton went to buy what few groceries his little family required.

He was in the prime of life, and, with his young wife, had but recently sought the far west to make them a home. He was frugal, industrious and honest, a conscientious, God-fearing man.

One cold afternoon with a threatening leaden sky, (it was winter) Pelton was in the village, and having to get some articles at the little drug store, it happened that this was the last errand he had to do before starting for home. Hurrying through this, anxious to be on his way home for it was getting late, he had started for the door when the druggist called to him and said he must take extra precautions to guard against the cold on his ride home as it threatened a blizzard, and so persistently urged that he drink a good stout thimble full of old Bourbon whiskey to heat him up, that, although he was not in the habit of drinking, he took it, thinking that perhaps it might fortify him to better stand the eight miles' ride, with the thought that at all events it could do no harm.

How quickly he felt the warming effects of the liquor. He had gone out half a mile on his journey when he felt that the liquor was having a very happy effect, making him feel that he could stand a hundred blizzards.

The wind arose, and the snow began to thicken, making an impenetrable "white blackness." Onward he pressed, urging his good horse to a brisker pace. Furious the wind blew. Faster came the snow, and he more closely pulled his thick wraps around him and nestled lower in the waggon bed.

His grasp on the driving reins grew more slack, and overcome with drowsiness the reins finally dropped loosely over the dashboard; yet the good horse pressed on, knowing well the road.

At last the home was reached. The loving wife anxiously waiting and watching eagerly, came to the door. She called John but got no response. She found him cold and lifeless. There was grief, but who can describe it?

In the morning he went from her in the strength of his manhood. In the evening shorn of strength, his life, his inanimate clay returns to her; and although the neighbours believed, as the village paper stated, that he was frozen to death, yet science with unerring certainty and absolute truth points to the glass of liquor as the primary cause of the desolation of that prairie home.

How many there are who believe and teach that rum will keep a man warm when the truth is, it only benumbs the sensibilities and aids the cold in stagnating the life current.—*Royal Templar.*

### It Isn't Far to Jesus.

It isn't far to Jesus;  
If you only knew how near,  
You would reach him in a moment,  
And banish all your fear.

He is standing close beside you,  
If only you could see,  
And is saying, could you hear him,  
"Let the children come to me."

For you know he never changes,  
As your little friends do here;  
He is always kind and ready,  
Both to comfort and to cheer;

And the very best about it is,  
He's always close at hand,  
And will always listen to you,  
And always understand.

It matters not how little,  
Or how very young or weak,  
And if you have been sinful,  
It was you he came to seek.

There is nothing that need hinder  
Your coming to him now,  
So you surely will not linger  
Until you older grow.

You really must love Jesus  
When you think of all his love  
In coming down from heaven,  
That happy home above;

And lying in a manger,  
And suffering so much woe,  
That you and all dear children  
To that bright world might go.

### THE MOTHER HEN.

A MAN was telling me that he was used to riding on wagons, which are drawn up and down from a coal pit in the North of England, and that he had been much interested in the conduct of a hen and chickens, which belonged to a cottage near the waggon way.

It seems that these chickens were in danger of being run over by the waggon, and whenever the old hen heard the train coming, she would call the chicks away from the danger. But there was one of the little ones that would stop till the last minute, and one day as the man passed he could hear the mother calling, but the child would not listen, and the train caught it and killed it.

When he was walking back, he saw the hen trying to put life into the dead chicken, she was spreading her wings over it, and trying to entice it to look at her, and stand on its feet, but she was too late. It was dead.

Jesus Christ once said to a wicked city, "How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, but ye would not!"

Is that chicken slain by the waggon, a picture of what you will ever be?

### HELPING MOTHER.

"HELPING mother" is what most little girls are fond of doing, though there are some who are lazy, and don't do anything except to make work for others by their untidy habits; always leaving their hats, balls, hoops, and books everywhere but in their right places. It must be very nice indeed for mothers who have willing children to run on errands, and do whatever they are told to do, without grumbling. And mother can always find something to do for her little ones, who should ask to be set to work. Never be idle. Remember, that time once lost can never be regained. If you are sent out to play, don't forget to play, but see that you injure no one by any of your games; and when at work, do it well, so as to earn a smile and a kiss from mother.