

music in the church. They sang 'Carol, brothers, carol,' a while ago, and now we think the organist is beginning to play 'My ain cuntry' for Carol."

"I hope she hears it," said Mrs. Bird; "but they are very late to-night, and I dare not speak to her lest she should be asleep. It is after ten o'clock."

The boy-soprano, clad in white surplice, stood in the organ loft. The lamps shone full upon his crown of fair hair, and his pale face, with its serious blue eyes, looked paler than usual. Perhaps it was something in the tender thrill of the voice, or in the sweet words, but there were tears in many eyes, both in the church and in the great house next door.

"I am far frae my hame,
I am weary aften whiles
For the langed-for hame-bringing'
An' my Faether's welcome smiles;
An' I'll ne'er be fu' content
Until my e'en do see
The gowden gates o' heaven
In my ain cuntrye.

The earth is decked wi' flow'rs,
Mony tinted, fresh an' gay,
An' the birdies warble blithely.
For my Faether made them sae;
But these sights an' these soun's
Will as naething be to me
When I hear the angels singin'
In my ain cuntrye.

Like a bairn to its mither,
A wee birdie to its nest,
I fain would be gangin' noo
Unto my Faether's breast;
For He gathers in His arms
Helpless, worthless lambs like me,
An' carries them Himself
To His ain cuntrye."

There were tears in many eyes, but not in Carol's. The loving heart had quietly ceased to beat, and the "wee birdie" in the great house had flown to its "home nest." Carol had fallen asleep! But as to the song, I think perhaps, I cannot say, she heard it after all!

So sad an ending to a happy day! Perhaps—to those who were left—and yet Carol's mother, even in the freshness of her grief, was glad that her darling had slipped away on the loveliest day of her life, out of its glad content, into everlasting peace.

She was glad that she had gone, as she had come, on wings of song, when all the world was brimming over with joy; glad of every grateful smile, of every joyous burst of laughter, of every loving thought and word and deed the dear, last day had brought.

Sadness reigned, it is true, in the little house behind the garden; and one day poor Sarah Maud, with a courage born of

despair, threw on her hood and shawl, walked straight to a certain house a mile away, dashed up the marble steps and into good Dr. Bartol's office, falling at his feet as she cried, "Oh, sir, it was me an' our children that went to Miss Carol's last dinner party, an' if we made her worse we can't never be happy again!" Then the kind old gentleman took her rough hand in his and told her to dry her tears, for neither she nor any of her flock had hastened Carol's flight—indeed, he said that had it not been for the strong hopes and wishes that filled her tired heart, she could not have stayed long enough to keep that last merry Christmas with her dear ones.

And so the old years, fraught with memories, die, one after another, and the new years, bright with hopes, are born to take their places; but Carol lives again in every chime of Christmas bells that peal glad tidings, and in every Christmas anthem sung by childish voices.

THE END.

HYMN.

"In thy presence is fulness of joy."

DEAR guiding Presence, lead us as we go
Trembling and fearful through life's wilderness,
Thy benediction grant, Thine aid bestow
In doubt, temptation, danger, and distress.
So shall our grief be joy, our pain be blessed,
Our night be morning, and our labor rest.

DEAR guiding Presence, oft our pilgrim way
Is strewn with trials and beset with snares;
Oh, in our need, be Thou our strength and stay.
Remove our dangers and relieve our cares.
For, leaning ever on Thy loving breast,
Our doubts and fears are gently lulled to rest.

So, 'mid the fever of the world's vain joys,
So, 'mid the turmoil of our daily life,
Be Thou our refuge from the heat and noise,
Our calm in tempest and our peace in strife.
For whether tried or wearied, or distress'd,
Thy loving Presence giveth light and rest.

DEAR guiding Presence, guard and comfort still,
When death's grim shadows close upon our eyes,
Our fears dispel, our hearts with gladness fill,
And bring us, joyful, to Thy Paradise;
There, safely sheltered on Thy loving breast,
Our souls shall bask in everlasting rest.

—H. G. B., in *The Church Eclectic*.

BEING FAITHFUL.

A FAITHFUL man is one who not only has faith himself, but one in whom others have, or may have, faith. Perhaps the first may be said to stand to the second as cause to effect. "Wouldst thou have me believe in thee, thou must thyself first believe."

The doubting man is "unstable in all his ways." Instead of being an anchor in the storm, he is, "like a wave of the sea, driven and tossed." Having no rock under

his own feet, he can give no secure standing-room to another. But a man who is faithful, that is full of faith, is able to say, "I know in whom I have believed," and becomes by that fact both a guide and a support to others to be depended upon. No man, therefore, can be trusted in a matter concerning which he himself is sceptical.

But it is important to know what, and in whom, a man believes. "He that trusteth to his own heart is a fool." It is likewise vain to put confidence in man, or trust in princes. Only he that trusts in the Lord is safe, or is a sure ground of trust to others. But his trustworthiness even then is based, not on some original quality of his own, but on the strength of his faith in another—even "the Lord who will stablish you."

But it is well, again, to note that one may be faithful without being always wise, fortunate, or successful. The thoroughly trustworthy man may fail for want of that knowledge which is beyond the scope of his powers, or is denied him by his circumstances. It does not, therefore, follow that a man is faithless because he makes mistakes, or does not succeed.

It is conceivable that the unjust steward might have wasted his Lord's goods without being blameworthy. The wheat and the oil might have been lost through the unforeseen dishonesty or incompetency of the debtors. As long as men are finite in knowledge and limited in power, so long is it liable to happen, even to the very wisest and best, that sometimes watchfulness shall be found asleep, and prudence off its guard, and failure and disappointment come in, in spite of the most conscientious stewards.

It is a consolation to know that our divine Lord does not require of us, His stewards, that we shall be successful, but only that we shall be faithful. "It is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful," I. Cor. iv. 2. This is always possible. It is a quality of the heart, an element in the character; and as every man is properly responsible for his intentions, he cannot be excused for failure if he did not do his best to succeed. He may have done his best not to fail, but he is still not faithful unless he has tried to succeed. The "wicked and slothful servant" who wrapped his talent in a napkin, and went and hid his lord's money, may have thought only of not failing. He would guard securely, and return unwasted, the trust committed to his keeping.—*Selected.*