

Childrens' Department.

REPORT OF THE BABIES.

BEING A RECORD OF FACTS,

Of the happy workers,
Youngest ones are we;
That we're very little
Any one can see.

P'raps you think our help, too,
Must be also small,
But we're sure it's better
Far than none at all.

Would you know the many
Things we've learned to do?
Listen, and the secret
We will tell to you.

I made lots of stitches
In a patchwork square—
Hardest work I ever
Did too, I declare.

I can't sew; but grandma
Holders made for me;
These I sold to carry
Light across the sea.

I shelled beans for heathen
(Papa said I might);
So my little fingers
Made a shining bright.

My mamma, to help me
Bottled up some ink;
I've sold seventy cents' worth;
Now, what do you think?

Out of auntie's pansies
I've picked every weed,
And she's going to give me
All I sell of seed.

I can 'muse the baby
When he wants to play;
Many a shining penny
I have made this way.

Sometimes I run errands
Over 'cross the street—
Earn my mission-money
Helping older feet.

So you see, though little,
We've found work to do;
When we said we helped some,
Don't you think 'twas true?

SCATTERED FRAGMENTS.

THE repetition of to-day's Gospel from the fourth Sunday in Lent is very remarkable, especially as the kindred history of the 4000 fed in the wilderness with the seven loaves is chosen as the Gospel for the seventh Sunday after Trinity. It has led thoughtful divines to inquire into the special adaption of the miracle to this last Sunday of the Christian year, into the reason why at the Reformation it was assigned to it; and they have found a motto for the day in the words, "Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost." The Christian year is fast passing away with all the means of grace which day by day and week by week it has offered us—and how we have slighted them! The crumbs from our table would be a feast to some starving souls, and we continue weak and languid in the midst of plenty, because we have wanted appetite to eat and be strengthened. The reflection is a painful one; still we ought neither to turn away from it, nor to brood over it in despondency, but, putting it to its proper use, at once to "gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost."

It may help us in this work to know how some have thriven on less than our fragments, and have ever been

"Ready to give thanks and live
On the least that Heaven may give."

Such a one was Vincent Blake, of whose history a short sketch shall now be given.

Vincent Blake was an orphan boy, and brought up by an uncle and aunt who made him a perfect drudge, fetching water, carrying the baby, and running errands from morning till night. He was a handy, willing boy, and never complained of hard work, scanty fare, or rough words; but he used to ask some times when he might go to school with his cousins. "I'm ashamed of you asking," said his aunt; "how do you think I could get on without you at home to help? And I'm sure 'tis the least you can do to make yourself useful after all our kindness to you." The kindness of which she boasted was not very great. Certainly she had taken her nephew into her house at five years old, and had provided him with some sort of food and clothing ever since; but she had taken good care he should work for them, and besides had appropriated to herself all his mother's store of clothes and household goods. However, the poor boy made no answer to her boast, but finding there was no choice of school for him, he asked one of his cousins just to teach him letters. The illbred boy burst out laughing. "That would be a good joke!" he said, "as if I had not enough of books at school! Catch me looking at one at home. And what in the world can you want to learn reading for, such a trouble as it is?" "Mother wanted me to be a scholar," said Vincent softly, as he went out to fetch some water.

Poor Vincent! Bad examples surrounded him, he was very ignorant, and there was little to help him in the right way, but through God's blessing that little sufficed. The remembrance of his mother's warnings kept him from using the bad words which he too often heard in the family, nor did he ever forget to repeat night and morning the prayers she had taught him to say at her knee. Sometimes, too, his aunt would allow him to go to church in the evening when she was not very busy, and oh! how attentive he was to the service! How earnestly would he join in such of the prayers as he knew, and with what eagerness did he listen in the lessons and the sermon for something he could understand!

At ten years old Vincent was put to work at a pottery in his native town in Staffordshire. He was set to help the men who packed the crockery, and an active, useful little fellow they found him. One day as he was sitting with some of them eating his dinner, by the side of the crates they had just been packing, his eye caught the large words, "Glass with care," printed on their direction-cards; and he abruptly exclaimed, "What a poor, ignorant fellow I am! I can't so much as read those big letters!" "Can't you?" said a good-natured lad by his side, "Well, then, I'll teach you. I've scholarship enough for that. Look here? there's g, l, a, double s. Now say them after me." Vincent was glad enough to do so, and thus he got his first reading-lesson in one of the sheds at the pottery. Some of the other boys collected around him, laughing and jeering at him, but he did not mind that in the least; he was too much in earnest. That evening at home he begged an old spelling book which his cousins had thrown aside, and looked out at once in it for the letters his friend had taught him. He produced it in the shed next day at dinner-time, and asked for some more teaching. Laughing at his earnestness, one of the men showed him the rest of the letters. After this he generally found one or the other of his companions willing to give him a helping hand, but in fact he taught himself far more than they taught him. He never lost an opportunity of getting on, and before six months had passed he was able to read tolerably in the Prayer Book. His first savings were spent in buying one, and from the day he got it, he never missed spelling out a Psalm every morning and evening before he said his prayers. How happy he was at church with a Prayer Book of his own! I need not say.

Vincent was also making some progress in writing during this time. At first he

brought a piece of chalk with him, and used to trace letters with it on the floor of the shed. Afterwards he found a treasure at home in an old broken slate, on which he used to beg his fellow-workmen to set him copies, and would write them with the greatest care. At the end of three years he could read and write well, and had bought himself a Bible and some other useful books. He was now so much his own master that he could attend a Sunday school and before he had reached the usual age for Confirmation he could repeat the Church Catechism perfectly, and was able to answer most of the questions put to him upon it.

Such was the early history of one who showed unusual diligence in gathering up every fragment of religious instruction and religious privilege. It is satisfactory to know that Vincent Blake's earnestness was the same when his opportunities for improvement were greater. Soon after his Confirmation his master, who had lately heard his history, and shown him some kindness, lost sight of him. Work was slack in his native town, and the boy had been obliged to go elsewhere to seek it. His master would sometimes call him to mind, and say, "I wonder what has become of that good, thriving lad Vincent Blake;" but he never heard till nearly fifteen years a letter reached him, dated from a town in Bedfordshire, and signed Vincent Blake. An excellent letter it was, well written, and showing a manly and Christian spirit. It told of past struggles and much hard work, but said that the writer was now comfortably settled as schoolmaster in the town from which he wrote. It set the reader thinking, and as he laid the letter down he felt that he had never before received such a lesson on the right use of advantages bestowed on us.

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THE MIDNIGHT CHIMES.

What are the chimes of midnight saying,
My soul to thee?
Still but the things of time obeying,
Behold how fleeting time must be!
A little toil, a little pleasure,
Small hopes and fears;
These might suffice thee couldst thou measure
The life that shall be thine by years.

What are the chimes of midnight saying?
Soul, turn to God!
Delaying still, and still delaying,
How soon thy earthly course is trod,
The darkest way if heavenward tending
Less dark appears;
Ah! there, in rapture never ending,
We'll sigh no more for bygone years

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