

pierced his heart as with a knife. He could find little to say, and just then Aunt Joan came and told him that he must now leave his brother.

During the night the angel of death visited the house. Tenderly and with gentle tread he came—his errand to carry a child's poor soul back to God. Little Herbert's work was done. Unconsciously he had saved his brother from a demon who threatened to destroy him body and soul. Jack did in truth, after many a struggle, become a strong, brave noble man. His life's work was to save those who were as he had been. By brotherly help and counsel he won the love and confidence of the outcasts of society. He always believed the best of people, and showed them that he expected them to be brave and true. By these means he led many to realise their own highest ideals, and to become helps instead of hindrances to the progress of God's Kingdom upon earth.

THE HOME CIRCLE.

Anyone can carry his burden, however heavy, till nightfall. Anyone can do his work, however hard, for one day. Anyone can live sweetly, patiently, lovingly, purely, till the sun goes down. And this is all that life ever really means.

EACH MOMENT.

If we may commit the days to our Lord, why not the hours, and why not the moments? We do not realize the importance of moments. Look back through the history of the Church in all ages, and mark how often a great work grew out of a mere moment in the life of one of God's servants. The moment may have been spent in uttering five words, but they have fed five thousand, or even five hundred thousand. It is not so often a whole sermon as a single sentence in it that wings God's arrow to the heart. Again, in our own quiet waiting upon God, have we not found that He can so irradiate one passing moment with His light that its rays never die away? Are not such proved to have been kept for Him? And if some, why not all? O, how much have we missed by not placing them at His disposal! What might He not have done with the moments freighted with self, or loaded with emptiness, which we have carelessly let drift by? Oh, what might have been if they had all been kept for Jesus! How He might have filled them with His life and light, enriching our own lives that have been impoverished by the waste, and using them in far-spreading blessing and power! We see something of God's greatness and wisdom when we fix our dazzled gaze on infinite space; but when we turn to the marvels of the microscope we gain a clearer view of these attributes by gazing on the perfection of His infinitesimal handiworks. Just so, while we cannot realize the infinite love which fills eternity, we see that love magnified in the microscope of the moments, and revealing its unspeakable perfection of detail to our wondering sight.—F. R. Havergal.

"BEYOND THE REACH."

BY A. BANKER.

The mind of man is altogether limited in its powers, and there are some things which are far beyond its capacity or ability to comprehend. It can perhaps understand, in a dim and indefinite way, the immensity and infinitude of space; but intelligently to apprehend a period of time (using the word in its larger sense) which is absolutely without beginning and without ending, is utterly beyond its grasp, and it helplessly recoils from the futile attempt.

In order feebly to give some idea of a period of prolonged duration, let us think of the star Sirius. Its volume is calculated to be 175,000,000 times greater than that of the earth (which latter contains 259,800,000,000 cubic miles), and its distance is such that a ray of light travelling 192,000 miles per second would require twenty-two years to reach this earth. Imagine it to be formed of minute grains of sand, of which about 600,000 would go to the cubic inch.

Now let us, by a stretch of the imagination, suppose that to a snail, travelling day and night at the rate of a foot a minute, or a mile in three and a half days, were allotted the task of travelling to and fro between the earth and Sirius, bringing a grain of sand each journey; the first grain therefore involving a journey of about 276,000,000,000 years. Before a cubic inch has been removed, half a million of such periods must elapse, which must again be multiplied 254,358,061,056,000 times before a single cubic mile were transferred.

What an appalling period of time will have rolled on ere the very last grain of sand composing all those millions upon billions upon trillions of cubic miles had been carried away! And yet even that tremendous cycle would bear no greater comparison to never-ending Eternity than would one second of time to the whole of that awful æon!

And each and every individual upon this earth will continue to have a sentient and active existence, endued with vigorous mental powers, capable of experiencing pleasure or of suffering remorse probably far more intensely than is possible during the earth-life, for periods of infinitely longer duration than those we have been endeavoring to imagine, because they are eternal.

Perhaps in this connexion an old problem may be recalled: Supposing the earth were composed of grains of sand, and each grain were to represent a thousand years, which would be the wiser course for a man to pursue—to live in sinful pleasure and regardless of the future for that prolonged space of time, the subsequent eternity to be spent in torture; or to live in torture until the last of those millions of years had elapsed, and then, to spend eternity in joy and happiness?

Now it requires very little thought to answer this question, for the whole of those years are but a minute, inappreciable point in Eternity's tremendous range, and bear no greater comparison to it than does one drop of water to the whole world's oceans, or than one grain of cosmic dust to the entire Universe.

And yet there are innumerable people who are willing, with their eyes open, to risk their Eternity, not for the sake of millions of ages of pleasure, but for a few short years of very doubtful enjoyment. All the time it is in their power to ensure their eternal joy and happiness, not by enduring long ages of torture, but by accepting the great Atonement offered in His divinely inspired Word, and by abstaining from offending (or forgetting) Him who is from everlasting to everlasting, or from acting in any way contrary to the rules He has enjoined in that Word.

What vast changes will take place in the Universe in the course of all those never-ending ages! This earth of ours will have long passed out of existence, and with it doubtless the whole planetary system. Some of the planets will have lost all life (like the moon, which is an extinct and dead world, without water and without air, and therefore without life) sooner than others, for some (e. g., Jupiter and Saturn) are still in but the initial stage of their existence, and some, as the Earth, and Mars, and perhaps Venus, in their prime. Another great planet which doubtless once revolved between the orbits of Mars and Jupiter has long ago been broken up and destroyed, four hundred and nine fragments (known as the minor planets) having been so far discovered, some of which are perhaps not larger than the Isle of Wight, while the largest, Vesta, according to Madler, is only 300 miles in diameter.

The sun, too, cannot burn for ever, for those flames of hydrogen, six hundred thousand miles high, must require an enormous bulk of matter, constantly renewed, to produce them.

But all those gigantic cataclysms, through the long ages of Eternity, must be continually taking place throughout the Universe. The spectacle of such will perhaps form one of the innumerable sources of gratification, reserved for those who are privileged to inherit the mansions prepared for all who have elected to honour and obey the Great Creator of that magnificent Universe. These will, doubtless, receive a reward infinitely beyond the mind of man even to conceive. As Addison writes:—

'Tis Heaven itself that points out an hereafter,
And intimates Eternity to man:
Eternity, thou pleasing, dreadful thought.