

passionate Father enough to say "Lord, not as I will, but as Thou wilt; I open not my mouth because *Thou didst it.*"

If we could push ajar the gates of life And stand within, and all God's workings see,

We could interpret all this doubt and strife, And for each mystery could find a key.

But not to-day. Then be content, poor heart! God's plans, like lilies pure and white, unfold.

We must not tear the close-shut leaves apart; Time will reveal the calyxes of gold.

And if through patient toil we reach the land Where tired feet, with sandals loose, may rest,

When we shall clearly see and understand, I think that we will say, "God knew the best."

### TAKING CHANCES.

He was a man about twenty-five years old, and reputed to be a little irregular in his habits. I heard him say to the neighbor with whom he was talking, "I propose to have a good time and take my chances." Not many are bold enough, or reckless enough to make such an avowal openly; perhaps most men would shrink from whispering such words even to themselves. Yet it is the feeling, the shadowy thought, which they are working out in their lives.

"Have a good time." Well, that may be well enough if the words are taken in the best sense. But what, my friend, is a "good time" in your estimation? Is it to give large indulgence to the lower propensities of our nature; to get as much fun and laughter out of the world as possible; to enter into amusements of all sorts, even those of doubtful moral tendency; to indulge in little vices, and in big ones, too, sometimes, when occasion offers? How much real good do you find in such a mode of life? I venture to say you are often uneasy and restless—dissatisfied with yourself and all things around you; and sometimes you feel such a sense of guilt, such pangs of remorse, that you would gladly run away from yourself.

"Have a good time and take the chances." Why, friend, there are some who are having a better time than you do, getting some solid enjoyment out of every day as it passes along; and they do not feel that they are running any chances either in their course of life. The great affairs of their souls are all arranged and settled, and they count their blessedness as sure as the promises of God.

"Taking chances"—chances for eternity! Is there not something awful in the suggestion? Staking the everlasting destiny of our soul on chances! Is it a matter then of little concern to you whether you go to heaven or to hell? Chances for eternity! Do not deceive yourself, I pray you. There can be no chances in the case, "for whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap" (Gal. vi. 7). This is a universal law, and must remain forever in force. The farmer reaps what he sows, and so must the sinner. If you sow to the flesh, live for the gratification of your depraved nature, the result is inevitable—misery, death eternal. Moreover, the way of salvation is settled and unalterable: Without faith in Jesus Christ there can be no hope of escape from the penalty of sin. "He that believeth shall be saved, he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark xvi. 16). This announcement is clear, positive, startling. Yet do you think of running chances for eternity? that you can somehow slip into a happy condition hereafter! What folly, what madness! "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" (Heb. ii. 3). You see you *cannot* escape the awful doom of the wicked if you merely neglect the salvation which is provided in Jesus Christ.—J. P. M.

### GOD'S PROMISE.

There is something about the story of a man's conversion to Christ that is interesting at any time. One friend, telling us how graciously God had saved him, said he was specially touched at heart by the consciousness of God's mercy in forgiving wilful sin. He said, "I did not need any one to teach me that I was a sinner. I knew that, and I was fully aware that God knew still better what a great sinner I was. I had sinned against light and knowledge. When I heard God's promise to forgive even such sin and blot it out of the book of his remembrance I could not reject such mercy. I just knelt down and cried out, "God be merciful to me a sinner." I put faith in God's promise and I have had ever since the sense of his pardoning grace and the consciousness of his helping power."

GEORGE MULLER'S ORPHANAGE IN BRISTOL:—Last year, without applying to a single person, his receipts amounted to \$200,000. He has received in all from the beginning more than five millions of dollars.