

WHO FOLLOWS IN HIS TRAIN?

"The Son of God goes forth to war
A kingly crown to gain;
His blood-red banner streams afar;
Who follows in His train?
Who best can drink his cup of woe,
Triumphant over pain,
Who patient bears his cross below—
He follows in His train."

THE crude young voices of the Sunday-School pupils rang forth, their whole hearts being put apparently into the singing of the hymn, but Mary Dorsett, as she looked at the bright, mischievous faces of her class, knew that but little of the meaning of the impressive words was felt by her boys at least. She was an earnest, painstaking teacher, but did not seem to gain the affection of her pupils or engage their wandering attention. She felt these defects deeply and struggled to overcome what she felt to be her faults. On this particular Sunday she was more than usually discouraged. The lesson was one over which she had spent much time and study, but the day was warm, and the children restless. They were active boys, ranging from ten to fourteen, who were much more interested in the account of a game of baseball which one of them was relating than in the history of the giving of the Ten Commandments which Miss Dorsett was endeavoring to tell them. In vain did she try to interest them. They simply would not listen, and she was almost reduced to tears, when Charlie Farmer, one of the oldest and most mischievous of them all, said suddenly, looking up from a pin he was endeavoring to fasten in the seat occupied by a brother of his:

"I say, teacher, when did God write that song we sang?"

"What?" said Miss Dorsett, wonderingly.

"When did God write 'The Son of God goes forth to war?' and what does it mean anyway?"

An inspiration dawned upon her. Might it not be possible for her to impress these boys with the teachings contained in this song, although they seemed to take so little interest in the lesson?

"That hymn, Charlie, was written by a good man, who put into it the teachings of the Church."

"What does it mean? Who goes forth to war? There's no fighting now, is there?"

"Who can tell me," said the teacher gently, "who the Son of God is?"

"Our Lord," answered several voices.

"Yes, our Blessed Lord. Now, my dears, the war on which he goes forth daily, hourly, is the war against sin. His banners are blood-red because it is through His blood that we are saved. Now, did any of you ever hear of a commander going forth to fight all alone?"

"No, ma'am; no, ma'am."

"Of course not. He leads his soldiers. And

who are His soldiers but you and me? Well now, if we want to be something more than mere common soldiers, we must fight against sin and our own wicked feelings, and bear patiently whatever cross is sent us. Can you tell me, Charlie, what our crosses are?" turning to Charlie, who was looking up at her with great wondering eyes.

"I guess they are things we don't like."

"Yes, my dear, troubles, and sickness, and pain. All of these will come to us, but if we bear them patiently we will be true soldiers and followers of our Commander."

The bell rang for the closing exercises, and Miss Dorsett was forced to content herself with saying gently:

"I want you all to try to live this week just as our Commander would have you live, and to bear patiently any cross which is sent."

The following Sunday a seat was vacant in her class; Charlie Farmer's roguish little face was gone, and upon inquiry as to the cause of his absence she gained the answer:

"Yes'm, Charlie was run over by a grip car on Friday. Guess he'll lose both legs."

Horried beyond measure, Miss Dorsett, as soon as her duties at Sunday-school released her, hurried to the address given her by one of the boys, without waiting to go home.

The door was opened by Charlie's mother, who immediately ushered Miss Dorsett into the room where he lay motionless on his narrow bed.

"Charlie, dear," said Mrs. Farmer, "here's your Sunday school teacher you wanted to see so much."

The great blue eyes opened, and a wan smile flickered on the pale face.

"I'm doing it, teacher, I am. When Mike Donahue pushed me off'en the grip, and I felt them wheels going over me, first I wanted to swear, but then I remembered:

'In midst of mortal pain
He prayed for them that did the wrong,'

and when they picked me up, I said, 'I forgive you, Mike,' and then I fainted. I'm trying to 'follow in His train,' ain't I, mother?"

"Yes, my darling," sobbed the poor mother.

"Yes, and, teacher, the doctor says that perhaps I won't have to have my legs cut off, if I'm good and patient. You know how it goes:

'Who best can drink his cup of woe,
Triumphant over pain,
Who patient bears his cross below—
He follows in His train.'

"Oh, that's a bully song. It's helped me lots."

"He's singing that to himself all the time," whispered the mother softly, as Miss Dorsett buried her face in Charlie's pillow.

As she left the little cottage an hour later, Miss Dorsett murmured to herself:

"They climbed the steep ascent of heaven
Through peril, toil, and pain;
O God! to us may grace be given
To follow in His train."

—Selected.