

"The Lord be praised!" said he, reverently, as he divested the half-dead lads of their soaked clothing, and rubbed their numbed and swollen limbs before the blazing log fire. After a meal of venison and milk, the boys were able to tell their tale of destitution, and to explain their need.

"Let us but carry some provisions back to our mother," they asked, "for she is so weak she cannot leave her prison, and we fear she will die. We will work for you all the spring to repay you, if you will spare us food."

Gladly the pastor gave them all they could carry; but as the next day was quite mild, and the snow was too soft to bear their weight, they waited until the third day, and then set out with sad hearts, thinking of their mother. All promised well; a hard crust on the snow bore their weight well, and with a pole stretched from shoulder to shoulder the boys carried their bag of provisions along in the middle.

The pastor watched them depart, from his roof, and the boys, looking back, saw him, and set up a merry, thoughtless cheer. The vibration in the air set a vast avalanche in motion; it rushed down the precipice, and they, hearing the thunder and roar of its descent, looked up, and, seeing the great white, cloud-like mass rushing upon them, knew their doom. They dropped their burden, and, clasping their arms about each other, sank under an avalanche of snow fifty feet in depth.

The pastor saw it all—saw the boys drop on their knees, entwined about by each others' arms; but he knew he could not help them.

Then he thought of the anxious mother in that lonely hut far up the desolate valley, and he felt that whatever the consequences to himself, he must go, and tell her the shocking news of her sons' death.

After much perilous walking he found the hut, and here a sad sight awaited him.

In a corner of the hut the poor widow lay, covered by a layer of moss—this was all her covering, save one thin garment. She had divested herself of all her clothing, and had piled them over little Pierre, to keep him from freezing. She herself was cold in death, and her fingers were laid upon these words in the book she loved so well: "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city."

She and her two boys had entered in—they would hunger no more, neither thirst

any more—all earthly sacrifice ended; henceforth eternal life for them.

And what of the youngest, Pierre? When the pastor awoke him he was in a stupor, but a little cordial soon revived him, and he told his sad, yet beautiful story.

"Our mother ate nothing after the boys left—she gave what was left to me, for she said she knew the boys would never return. Her words to me were: 'My son, I will gladly give my life for thee, but I long to see thee a servant of God ere I am called hence.' She prayed night and day for my soul—she read to me, and she explained the words she read so beautifully that I felt my heart breaking, as the ice breaks up before the rays of the sun. I saw her dying for me, for she would not touch our little store, lest I, too, should die—"

"Have you, then, food in the hut?" asked the pastor.

"Yes, enough for another day, for one person—but now our mother need not starve herself—you have come, and you will save us—"

"Your mother is with the Saviour she so well served," said the pastor—he felt he must tell the poor boy.

"Oh, my mother, that was why you said, 'I can now die in peace, and with joy!'" and the poor child could not speak for sorrow. But Pastor Gerson calmed and comforted him, and he was able to complete his story.

"My mother told me of the love of God in sending His Son to die for us, and she reminded me of the sad, hard life and the cruel death of our Saviour, that we who believe in His name, and seek to serve Him, might pass from death to life. And she told me of His words upon the cross, and though I had heard them before, they seemed now to fill my heart with fire. I could not help myself, I was melted, and threw myself on my knees, and prayed God to forgive me and accept me. I saw my mother weeping—'Oh, my son,' she said, 'now I can die in peace, and with joy; it is so little to give my life for thee now that thou knowest the gift of God in His Son.' Then she lay down in the corner, after covering me with her clothes, and I thought her sleeping. Oh, sir, she died for me! she suffered for me! What can I do?"

"Live for God, and prove thyself worthy the memory of such a mother, my poor Pierre."

Pierre has just been made pastor in the room of Pastor Fritz Gerson, who is now too aged, and he preaches before all things

that story of the sacrifice of Christ on the cross which all our Scripture Union members are reading to-day—"The Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me." When the snows melted, the bodies of the brothers were found in their last embrace. A white wooden cross now marks the spot, on the road to Chamouni, of a mother's sacrifice.—*M. B. Gerds.*

GOOD FOR EVIL.

WHEN Madame Sontag first began her musical career in Vienna, she was hissed off the stage by her rival, Amelia Steinenger. Years went by, and, one day, in her glory, Madame Sontag was riding through the streets of Berlin, when she noticed a little girl leading a blind woman along the walk, and she called to her and said, "Whoisthat you are leading?" "Why," said the little girl, "don't you know? That is my mother, Amelia Steinenger. She used to be the great singer once, but she lost her voice; and then she cried so much about it her eyes went blind." "Give her my love," said Madame Sontag, "and tell her that in a few days an old acquaintance will call upon her." The next week, in the city of Berlin, a vast multitude gathered at a benefit for the poor, blind woman, and it is said that Madame Sontag sang that night as she never sang before, and to the day of her death she took care of Amelia Steinenger, and then she took care of her child after her.

THE MORNING WATCH.

By the REV. WALTER SEARLE.

PART I.

A FEW years ago I had the privilege of spending a few hours with my friend, the Rev. F. B. Meyer, then of Melbourne Hall, Leicester, now of London. On leaving, I received copies of his church magazine, *Worship and Work*, in which I read, with newly-awakened interest, two articles on the "Morning Watch." The writer urged upon Christians the desirability and duty of spending the first hour of the day alone with God in prayer and devout study of His Word. Cases were cited to show that some of the holiest and busiest of God's children had made this the settled habit of their lives. Sir Henry Havelock, even if he had to march at four in the morning, would rise so as to have two hours' fellowship with the King. The late Lord Cairns made it a rule to have an hour and a half before meeting the family for prayers, and never deviated from this, even if his late duties in parliament left him no