

that when the right time came you would explain everything, but that now it must trust you to know best?

"And, Mrs. Fawcett, are not we children in understanding, compared with God's infinite wisdom and knowledge? Surely He who made and knows all things knows how much it is good for us to know, and how much we are best capable of understanding.

"Believe me, He has told us all that is necessary, bidding us trust Him a little while; for the rest, He tells us that when it is good for us to know more, He will tell us more. That one day all things shall be proclaimed upon the house-top, all doubts dispersed, all dark enigmas solved, and all His dealings with us justified. We shall know why everything was right then."

She paused awhile, then continued gently.

"I am not going to reason with you, dear, for I can see it is overmuch reasoning that has already engulfed you.

"I want you to come away, for a time, from all questionings whatever, and try to stand alone with God. Just you and your Maker uninfluenced by anything else whatever. Try to believe that He made you and therefore loves you—that He is perfect and would have you perfect—that He, Himself, planted that yearning in your heart that you might not be so satisfied here as to have no desire beyond—that He too caused you to doubt and question that you might give Him a reasonable thoughtful ser-

vice, instead of a blind, indifferent one. Lastly, that He taught you to love, and that that same love is the most God-like attribute you possess; the very best part of you; and yet but a shadow of His Infinite Love.

"The Bible itself says, 'Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the whole duty of man,' and again that the chief of these commandments, is to love God, and the next which is like unto it is to love your neighbour as yourself. Try to grasp this absolutely before you venture any further, it will teach you the greatest lesson of all—annihilation of self. When you have learnt that you will easily find room for your Heavenly Father in your heart, and all the rest will follow in the most natural way."

"How shall I begin?" she asked, in low tones.

"Give up reasoning and thinking so much, relying on the Godhead, believing by the grace of the Holy Spirit that Christ our Saviour made you the Father's own well-beloved child; and then you will love others more and live more in their life. You will look about for someone to make happy and weary yourself in their service; believe me your work will be its own reward."

"But what of the next life?" she urged. "I can't forget it, for it touches me so nearly because of Jack, and mother. Tell me, is it well with them?"

"It is well," was the firm, quiet answer. "You need have no misgivings whatever, and when you have learnt to

call God, Father, you will never have, for you will trust Him all in all."

"Thou wast the source of all that love, Which makes me glad no more; And Thou hast taken to Thyself, What was Thine own before; Thine, and mine too, O Good to give, O Faithful to restore!"

Just then the clock struck six and Elsie started.

"I have been here three hours," she said; "I had quite forgotten the time. Mother will be wanting me, I must go at once."

"I am afraid I have detained you," said Madge anxiously.

"Indeed no, I have greatly enjoyed our long talk. I hope your husband will be in soon; you will be dull alone. Will you come down with me until he returns?"

At the mention of her husband a strange expression flitted across Madge's face, but she only said, "Thank you, I don't think he will be late, and I don't mind being alone."

"Shall I see you to-morrow?" asked Elsie.

"I am afraid you will get tired of me if you see me too often," replied Madge, with a soft little smile, that made her face strangely beautiful.

"Indeed I shall not," was the warm reply. "I shall come at ten o'clock to take you for a walk; mind you are ready," and with a bright smile she hurried away.

(To be continued.)

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

STUDY AND STUDIO.

APPLE BLOSSOM.—The sentiment of your verses is good, but they are not worthy of publication. Occasionally the metre halts; for instance:—

"Turn my steps from the path so wide."

We do not quite understand the expression, "I was far off but thou wert near." Of course your meaning is plain, but you will see that the metaphor is an impossible one. You may certainly send us your short story for criticism. We should prefer it written on one side of the paper, but whether in an exercise book or on foolscap matters little. Always write your name at the foot of each production. We suppose "Our Teacher" is yours, but cannot be sure among our multitude of MSS. Many thanks for your pleasant letter.

MARGARET.—1. We must not criticise your story too severely as you are only twelve years old, and it is your first attempt. Such wonderful prophetic dreams as you describe, with their fulfilment, do not occur in ordinary life. Genius, dear child, is very rare, and you need not be disappointed to hear that you do not possess it.—2. We think your abilities must be good enough to repay a sound education, and we advise you to give your time to study, as far as you can, only writing stories for amusement. You need, as yet, to learn to write and to spell correctly, but you will quickly improve if you persevere.

PHILLIS (sic).—Your verses on "Christmas" vary too much in metre. You begin in lines of eight and seven syllables alternately, but soon the "7s" line becomes "8s." There is no such adjective as "choicely," and miles cannot be said to "roll" unless they are measured on the ocean. Your description of Christmas, although pleasant, has nothing fresh about it. You need not feel ashamed when we say you could not hope to earn by your verses, as it is by no means an easy thing to turn poems into money.

LUX.—The thoughts of your verses are good, and you appear to understand and to obey for the most part, the rules of metre, the chief exceptions being here and there in "Beautiful Night." We do not, however, think that you could make any use of the poems, as religious compositions expressing the same familiar thoughts are very plentiful.

ALPHA BETA.—We have received your kind note and thank you for sending it. We also wish to express our sympathy with you in your suffering, and our hope that your invalid life may yet be brightened by the knowledge of good and successful literary work.

TRINIDAD HELIOTROPE.—We are glad to have your letter from a distant port, and to know that you are able at length to gratify your wish in taking our magazine. May it bring you as much help and pleasure as we should like to send you! We do not think that you were wasting time when you wrote the poems you enclose, so long, of course, as you were not neglecting any duty in doing so. We were much interested in "The Months," with the new and strange description of what characterises each in Trinidad. "Ariel's Farewell to Naxos" is the best poem of the three, but occasionally your metre halts. This verse is correct:—

"Softly the whispering wind of eve did woo
The fields of golden grain,
And gently stirred the vines that, ripening fast,
Purpled the smiling plain."

But your ear will tell you that your first line—

"Two were standing 'neath fair Syrian skies"
is not of the same cadence as the first line of the verse we quote. Dr. Angus' *Handbook of the English Tongue* will give you the rules of punctuation as well as of prosody. You can obtain it by writing to the Religious Tract Society, 56, Paternoster Row, London. Careful observation will also teach you a great deal.

ONE BY ONE.—1. Your handwriting is very good, well formed, readable, and we should think, characteristic. Your letter would look better if you kept a uniform space between the lines.—2. "A Sketch by Moonlight" is not rubbish at all. You evidently have some power of description. You should try to write with a little more self-restraint, not "letting yourself go" all the time, but only occasionally; then the effect would be enhanced.

FLOWERINE.—We are afraid you have not much ear for correct versification, as both the poems you send us are very defective in form. Every poem should have some metre in which it is written; that is to say, the lines should be of certain lengths and cadences. We refer you to our last answer.

MERMAID.—There are a great many ways of publishing, which vary according to the reputation and capacity of the author. Sometimes an author sells his work outright to a publisher, receiving a certain sum for the "copyright," as it is called. Then the publisher can issue the work as he chooses, and if he first issues it in a magazine, can republish it in book-form. Sometimes the author sells his MS. to the publisher of a magazine "for use only," retaining the right to publish on his own account in book-form later on. Sometimes again the publisher pays a sum down for a MS., and agrees to also pay a "royalty" on copies sold after a certain total has been reached. These three ways are, we must add, chiefly for the successful in literature. It is sometimes the case that an author pays all the cost of the publication of his book, hoping to be recouped by the sale; or he may divide such cost with the publisher. All depends on the (presumed) worth of the book. We cannot give you any idea of the probable cost in your case, as we do not know details, but for a work of any size, £40 or £50 would not go far. Your best plan will be to communicate with the publishers of similar works to your own, setting forth your aim, and asking whether they would be disposed to enter into negotiation with you, but if you are quite unknown, we fear you could hardly hope to make money by the venture.

INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDENCE.

Two little French boys of thirteen, André Bossy and André Pallé, pupils of the Lycée at Rochefort, Charente-Inférieure, France, would like to correspond with English boys of the same age. They would write in English, their correspondents would write in French, and they would correct each other's mistakes. Will any English brothers of "our girls" volunteer?

OUR OPEN LETTER BOX.

Miss S. Hill, Abberwick, Alnwick, Northumberland, kindly sends us the information for E. A. T., and offers to post her a copy of the words of the hymn,

"Onward through life thy children stray
Groping at noon their silent way."
on receipt of name and address.