

FAMILY DEPARTMENT.

THE PEARL OF PRICE.

O, pearl of price, my treasured hoard!
O, riches righteously adored!
My Christ, my King, my glorious Lord!
The way to God we all must go;
The truth of God we all should know;
The only life in God below!

My faithful Friend, whate'er befall,
My hope when terrors dark appal,
My resurrection, and mine all!
Lo! all the love of God is thine,
And all the wealth of grace divine,
And all thy riches now are mine.

In thee my sins are all forgiven,
And sorrows are but shadows driven;
Across the sunshine sweet of heaven;
In thee is life, divine and pure,
And holy joy and peace secure,
And light that shall for aye endure.

Remember, Saviour, Christ divine,
Let all else perish, all is mine,
For thou art God's, and I am thine;
And all besides is empty loss,
And filthy rage, and wasteful cross,
To know thee and thy saving cross.

—Good Words.

RACHEL'S LENT.

BY KATE LARTON.

A True Story.

"Few here are too young and none too poor to deny themselves something during Lent," said Mr. Ashton, as he addressed his school the Sunday before Lent. Those were the last words one little girl heard him say that afternoon, for although he continued to speak, Rachel Kensall was too busy thinking to listen.

"None too poor!" she repeated to herself; "I wonder if he knows how little we have? I never have any money to spend, and mother can't afford to pay me for working for her as Mamie Stuart's mother does. No, he don't know, for I am too poor to deny myself anything."

She thought of it all the way home, and was so silent during the evening that her mother at last said, "Why, Rachel, child, you must be tired out. It is too long a walk to the church for you. Come, you had better go to bed early to-night."

"Let her guess what I have in my hand first," said Mr. Kensall, who entered just then. "It is something good to eat. Now, what is it?"

"Apples?"

"No: better than apples at this time of year."

"Oh, I know what it is!" shouted little Tommy, as he caught sight of a smooth white shell; it's eggs!"

"Eggs it is. The hens have commenced laying, and Rachel and Tommy shall have a fresh egg every morning until they are tired of them. Although Tommy does not deserve one for looking in my hand before the guessing was over."

Tommy's lip went up so pitifully that his father hastened to add, "but he shall have one just the same. They will bring a good price in market," he said, turning to his wife, "for our hens are as early as any around here."

Rachel's face lighted up with pleasure at the prospect of the treat; and what a treat it seemed to her only those can appreciate who have eaten nothing but bread and milk for breakfast during a whole winter; but she sobered down a little as her father went on speaking. "Will it be my very own egg?" she said at last, to do just what I want with?"

"Of course it will; but I guess you'll find eating it the best thing to do, unless you want to keep them to set a hen with."

"No, I don't want to do that, for something always happens to my chickens before they get big—and, besides, I like to eat them best,"—she added quickly, for she thought to herself, "I can't give them up anyway." But still the words, "None of you are too poor to deny yourselves something,"

kept ringing in her ears. "If I should keep them until I had a dozen I could sell them," she thought, "and Mrs. Ashton would give me twenty-five cents for them. And if I give up one every day, I would have four dozen by Easter, and that would make a whole dollar!" A large sum to a little girl who had never owned more than ten cents at a time in her life. "Yes, I will do it, and I'll go to the rectory to-morrow, and ask Mrs. Ashton if she will buy them."

The next morning, with a beating heart, Rachel went up the low steps of Mrs. Ashton's house and knocked timidly at the door. It was opened by the lady herself, who remembered seeing the little girl at church, and said kindly, "Will you come in and sit down? Your school does not commence before nine, does it?" noticing Rachel's books.

"No, ma'am," and then with a great effort, "please, ma'am, I came to see if you would like to buy some eggs."

"How many have you to sell? Did your father send you with them?"

"No, ma'am, I haven't got any; but you see it's going to be Lent, and the minister said none of us were too poor to give up something, and I'm going to give up my eggs for breakfast, because I haven't got anything else to give up, and I thought perhaps you'd buy them when I've saved up a dozen, and so—"

Rachel paused with crimson cheeks; she had spoken so fast that she was entirely out of breath, but Mrs. Ashton understood now, and said, as she stooped and kissed her, "Yes, my dear, I see, and I will be very glad indeed to buy them. Suppose you bring them whenever you have half a dozen, then they will be nice and fresh," and she added, as the little girl rose up to go, "Mr. Ashton will be very much pleased to know that one of his Sunday-school scholars has tried so hard to do what he said."

It was a hard thing for Rachel to do, and telling her father and mother was by no means the easiest part of it.

"Well," said Mr. Kensall, when she had told him of her going to Mrs. Ashton's, and the lady's consenting to buy her eggs, "you shall not lose your eggs anyway, my girl, for I guess we can afford to give you another one for your breakfast."

"But don't you see, father, that wouldn't be giving up anything," she said, timidly, "and that's what the minister said we must do."

"What will you do with the money when you get it?" asked her mother.

"I am going to send it to a poor little sick girl in a hospital; teacher read about her to us last Sunday, and ever so many people send money, so that the little girl can stay until she is well, and when she is gone then another can come. It's sort of like buying a bed, you know."

The forty days of Lent went slowly by, and although Rachel sometimes got very tired of the bread and milk she never complained, for the sight of the bright silver quarters made her think of the little girl who was sick and could not run around, and that made the sacrifice easier.

And on Easter morning, when she put the money, carefully wrapped in paper, and marked "For the little girl in St. John's Hospital," on the plate, she felt as happy and rich as any one there.

TEACHINGS OF LENT.

Christian! up and smite them,
Counting gain but loss;
Smite them by the merit
Of the holy cross.

Christian, answer boldly:—
"While I breathe I pray!"
Peace shall follow battle,
Night shall end in day.

"Well I know thy troubles,
O my servant true:
Thou art very weary—
I was weary too:

But that toil shall make thee
Some day all My own:
And the end of sorrow
Shall be near My throne."

The season of Lent teaches us specially the need of watchfulness and prayer. Of watching against the first approach of evil, and resisting it in the strength of the "It is written" of God's Holy Word, inspired by God, the Holy Spirit. And of *praying always*, for only through constant communion with God can we hope to have power to overcome temptation to sin, whether from within or from without.

But as well as these two great general principles, this season of Lent seems to impress on our minds two particular commands which we find in Holy Scripture. The first comes from the voice of Jesus, saying to each, *Whosoever will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me.* The only way, then, of being a disciple of Christ, the only way of following him, is by the path of self-denial and self-sacrifice. God sacrificed the Son, the Son sacrificed Himself for our sakes; so that sacrifice must be the best thing. And God, who will not deny us a share in the best, makes it one of the signs of a disciple, of a follower of Christ, that we should deny ourselves of all that is wrong—that we should deny ourselves for the sake of others—that we should deny ourselves for the sake of Christ.

To do this, we have not only to bear the cross which God in mercy lays on each who would be a disciple, but we must *take it up* cheerfully, that so we may follow Christ till it becomes to us what the cross was to Him, a foretaste of the joy which is before us.

The second lesson we would try to learn is, *bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.* These words seem so entirely to express their own meaning, seem so entirely to embrace the whole of what a disciple of Christ can try to attain to here, that we can only come to Him who, *though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered*, and, kneeling at his cross, pray Him to give to us, in some measure, this spirit of perfect obedience. And feeling our own frailty, we may well take up the beautiful words of Bishop Heber—

Oh help us, Lord; each hour of need
Thy heavenly succour give;
Help us in thought, and word, and deed,
Each hour on earth we live.

Oh, help us, Jesu, from on high:
We have no help but thee!
Oh, help us so to live and die,
As 'Time in heaven to be'!

We see from all this, what a holy, soul-improving season this of Lent might be, if we use it aright. This season, which seems a time of praying from the depths of our hearts,—

"Mercifully forgive the sins of Thy people."

But though we know that God will forgive all sin for which there is true repentance, though we know God will save to the uttermost all who come unto Him, though we know that God's love is without limit (albeit always compatible with His title of a *just God*), still, for our part, we must try, in the Holy Spirit's strength, to resist all that would lead to sin; remembering that God never sends, or never permits Satan to send, any temptation which we, in the strength of that Holy Spirit, will not be able to resist. For *God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.* And the Son of God, as we said before, *having Himself suffered, being tempted, He is able to succour them that are tempted.* And He ever stands, a *Priest upon His throne*, to make intercession for all those who are tempted.

As Lent draws to a close, we have still before us its holiest weeks—even that which tells of the Cross and Passion of the Son of God—that which tells us, on one hand, of intense darkness, and pain, and agony; but, on the other, of the greatest victory this world has ever known. Realising this, we can walk beneath its shadow patiently, knowing that Christ is ever

"Fronting our darkness with His cross."