

exercising his birds in the water half a mile away, and old Margery bringing water from the Lady well. No one could come upon us here without being seen."

"Sit down here by me, then, and I will tell you the tale. I cannot think it will harm you. I had thought to carry the secret to my grave, since I have no son to whom I may leave it. But I have learned to love you as my own son, and all I have will be yours when I am gone. It will not be much—only the old cottage and croft, and what little gold I have saved; but if you have the cottage, you must have the secret of the cottage as well. So sit you down, as you will, and hear the old man's tale."

Jack obeyed, and prepared to listen with breathless attention. The old man once more glanced warily round him, and thus began his tale: "You asked me, dear boy, if I had ever seen a Bible! Yes, I have both seen and handled the Word of God in the vulgar tongue. It was not a printed book, such as we see now. It was written by hand on parchment, and bound in leather, with heavy iron clasps; like the enchanted book in your legend of Merlin. But it was no enchanted book. It was the real, true, living Word of God, done into English by good Master Wickliffe of Sutterworth."

"My knowledge of the book happened first on this wise: I was a young boy of nine or ten years old, and sharp for my years, as any lad in all these parts. I had learned to read from my father, who was a substantial yeoman, and could both read and write himself. But there was little to read in those days—only a ballad now and then, or some such nonsense, which my father did not greatly favour. About this time I began to notice that though I was always sent to bed with the chickens, yet my father and mother, and my elder brother, a lad of sixteen or thereabout, sat up much later. I used to lie awake and listen, after a while, and I could hear a low murmur of voices in the room below, as though some one was reading aloud. I dared not ask any questions, for I stood much in awe of my father and mother—more than is the fashion in these days"—added the old man with a sigh.

"Well!" said Jack, fearful lest the shepherd should fall to moralizing on the degeneracy of the times—an exercise, mind, as common three hundred years ago as now, and quite as profitable.

"Well!" said the shepherd! "As I told you, I listened thus for several nights, now and then catching a word, which roused my curiosity still more, till at last I could bear it no longer. One night—it was Easter Even, of all the nights in the year—I rose softly from my bed, and putting on my clothes I slipped carefully down the stair till I could peep through the door at the bottom, which did not shut very closely. There sat my father and mother, surrounded by three or four neighbours. You have noticed the little footstool which always stands by my great chair in the chimney corner!"

"Yes!" replied Jack, wondering what the stool could have to do with the matter.

"My father had this stool turned upside down upon his lap, and upon it lay a great book, from which he was reading in low, reverent tones, the story of the raising of Lazarus from the dead. I learned afterward that the stool had a false bottom, into which the book could be fitted, and thus hidden in a moment at any sudden alarm. I noticed in one gleam, as children do notice everything, that the door was barred, and the window carefully darkened, so that no gleam of light should appear without, and also that my brother appeared to be on the watch. I stood still as a mouse in my hiding-place, and listened to that wonderful tale, not losing one word, till my father came to that place where he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with grave clothes. Then I could no longer bear the excitement, and I screamed out aloud. In another moment my mother had drawn me out of my hiding-place, and I stood in the midst of the company."

"I was terribly frightened. I thought, when I saw my father's grave face, that I had done something dreadful; and I fell down on my knees at his feet and prayed him to pardon me. I shall never forget his look and tone, as he raised me and placed me between his knees. It was seventy years ago, and

more, yet I seem to see and hear him now, as he kissed me—a rare thing for him to do—and said to me—

"My dear son, I am not angry with you. You have unwittingly intruded into a great and dangerous secret—a secret which concerns men's lives—and you must now show that you are able to keep it."

"I was none the less frightened by this address. My head was as full of tales of enchantments as yours, and I could think of nothing but that my father and his friends were engaged in some unlawful act; and I gazed fearfully around, expecting to see I know not what frightful appearance. My father seemed to understand my thoughts, for he passed his arm round me and bade me not be afraid."

"This book," said he, laying his hand on the volume—"This book, my dear son, is none other than the Word of God, done into English by that good priest, John Wickliffe, of Sutterworth, in the days of thy grandfather, for whom thou art named. My father held this book as his most precious treasure, albeit he suffered both persecution and loss of goods for its sake: and when he died, he bequeathed it to me. If I were known to possess it, the book would be taken and destroyed, and not only thy father, but thy mother and brother, and these neighbours, would perhaps be burned at the stake. So you see, my child, into what a perilous secret you have intruded yourself."

(To be continued.)

Loving All.

Lord, make us all love all; that when we meet
Even myriads of earth's myriads at Thy bar,
We may be glad, as all true lovers are,
Who, having parted, count reunion sweet,
Safe gathered home around Thy blessed feet,
Come home by different roads from near or far,
Whether by whirlwind or by flaming car,
From pangs or sleep, safe, folded round Thy seat.

O, if our brother's blood cry out at us,
How shall we meet Thee who hast loved us all,
Thee whom we never loved, not loving him?
The unloving cannot chant with seraphim,
Bear harp of gold or palm victorious,
Or face the Vision Beatifical.

—Christina G. Rossetti.

Epiphany.

The Feast of Epiphany, or twelfth day, as it is often called from being the twelfth day after Christmas, closes the season of Christmas-tide. On that day the Church celebrates the manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles.

"When Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, there came wise men from the East to Jerusalem." In this short verse is told all that we know of these strangers. The tradition that they were three in number, that they were kings, that one of them was a black man, rests on no trustworthy authority. They were guided by the Spirit of God upon their way, and having fulfilled their mission, they disappear from history altogether. That they were Gentiles there can be no reasonable doubt. Probably they were Chaldean astronomers, whose nightly study of the heavens had revealed to their gaze

"The guiding star which led
With mild benignant ray,
The Gentiles to the lowly bed
Where the Redeemer lay."

In this way did God make manifest the truth that His Son was sent to be the Saviour, not of the Jew only, but of all who should believe on Him, whether Jew or Gentile.

A Cheerful Spirit.

How the business and work of the world are brightened by a cheerful spirit, that has a pleasant word for all! And not only so, but there is a cheerfulness which, even when things go seriously wrong, can keep from sinking into mere fret and worry and bitterness. Some people talk of this as if it were all a matter of temperament. Of course there are some to whom it comes easier than to others—so it is with every quality. But apart from that, cheerfulness is a duty, and a duty which no one can weave into a settled part of his life, without something of a cross. It can only be attained by

daily watchfulness, and schooling the spirit, and constantly reminding one's self how hard life, after all, is to almost every one; and by schooling one's self not to expect too much—to feel that it is not our world, and that we must not fret over what is beyond our power. These are all matters in which it is possible, greatly possible, to school one's self—to cultivate cheerfulness. And if one does, there is nothing that, however it begins by being a cross, changes more surely into a blessing and a crown—not indifference, not stoical disdain, not a bit like slothful inaction, but a large, gracious acceptance of the world and life—doing one's best and there leaving it, making no weak moan or fret, but brave and cheerful to the end.

Actions.

We can know but little of the motives which impel the actions of another; but we ought to know something of those which control our own. Mingled and entangled as they may be, we can at least endeavour to distinguish them, and to dwell upon the most worthy and yield to their influence, thus discouraging and weakening those which are inferior and selfish. Such restraints are even themselves transitory, for, when cherished perseveringly, they lead from obligation to desire, from duty to preference. The "ought," constantly obeyed, merges into the wish, and what was once a self-restraint becomes a delight.

The Will and the Way.

We wish to help the poor, to raise the down-trodden, to adjust difficulties, to promote healthful habits, intelligent minds, and virtuous characters. But we suppose most erroneously that what is chiefly needed to accomplish this is to work upon the will. We think that, if people would only determine to be thrifty, prudent, temperate, sanitary, honest, and industrious, they might speedily become so; so we talk, advise, exhort, urge, and try to convince and persuade, and, when we fail, we blame them for the issue. We forget that long habit has rendered these qualities unfamiliar to them, and that, however willing they may be to practise them, the way to do so is unknown to them—the various steps are yet to be disclosed to their view.

—Two gentlemen, a Mr. Bath and a Mr. Wells, journeying in a train together, found themselves in the same compartment with an affable ecclesiastic with whom they had much pleasant converse. They were charmed with their new acquaintance, whom they discovered after awhile to be Dr. Kennion, Bishop of Adelaide. Upon his leaving them on reaching his destination, they agreed with each other that though his title might be Bishop of Adelaide, to them he should ever be the Bishop of Bath and Wells. Not many days later they read the announcement that the Bishop of Adelaide had in fact become the Bishop of Bath and Wells.

—"Divine Service!" what a misnomer. We do not serve God by prayer, by praise, by participation in the Blessed Sacrament, by reading His word or hearing sermons, any more than a servant serves his employer by asking a favour of him, by complimenting him, by eating at his table, or receiving his commands. We eat that we may be able to work, we receive commands to execute them; so in the Church, we go there to be fed that we may be able to work for God, and to receive His commands that we may know what work He has for us to do. It is in the workshop of the world, not in the home of God's House, that we may render service, or do work for God. When words are wrongly used, wrong ideas result, and wrong actions proceed, the springs of active life are poisoned at their source. This misnomer has done vast harm.

Rev. George J. Lowe,

The Rectory, Almonte, Ont., writes: I must ask you to send me another bottle of your invaluable medicine, K.D.C. I think your last bottle has cured me entirely, but some members of my family, whose cases are worse than mine, insist on my getting some more. Indeed we all think it an indispensable article in the household.