

STUDYING THE STARS.

THERE lay in the Scottish meadows,
A wondrous clear-eyed lad,
Wrapped in midnight shadows,
And the folds of a shepherd's plaid;
Lay long, and eagerly gazing
With wonder-straining eyes
At God's own jewellery, blazing
Upon the stately skies;
He looked in the stars' sweet faces,
They fed his nature's needs—
He marked their glowing places
With strings of glistening beads
To the fame his soul ne'er doubted
His quick brain drove him on,
Till the world with honour shouted
The name of Ferguson.

But now when youth's mind-vision
Would range the mystery-sky,
Pale Science's strange precision
Has mapped it for his eye;
And captured the stars in cages,
And mocked their flickering flame;
Subdued these kings of the ages,
And made them come by name;
On earth the stars are brightening,
Brought down from clouds of space,
As Franklin drew the lightning,
And gave it useful place;
And the Scotch boy's spirit, turning
From new-found stars above,
Looks down on this glow of learning,
With smiles of pride and love

—N. E. Journal of Ed

THE TALISMAN.

EDGAR is a very little boy to have united with the Church, and I fear he may dishonour Christ in some way; a schoolboy has so many temptations." The mother said this to Aunt Judith.

"You needn't fear at present," she replied, "I often see Edgar when he comes out of his little room, and I notice he has a talisman to keep him from evil."

"A talisman!"

"Yes, the Lord's seal in his forehead. He won't fall while that is there."

"Aunt Judith, what can you mean? Edgar's forehead has no mark, and nobody knows just what that passage in Revelation means which speaks of God's servants being sealed in their foreheads."

"It means the Lord will take care of his own. Nobody'll deny that. Don't fret about your boy, but pray for him. If he loses his talisman I mean to know the reason why."

"Edgar does give good evidence that he loves Christ and means to serve him," admitted the anxious mother.

"Yes, and while he's young is just the right time for him to love Christ; and to confess him before men is just as much his duty as it is his father's or yours or mine."

The mother was cheered by these words, but she still wondered what Aunt Judith meant about the talisman. At noon she gave her boy's forehead a critical look, but only saw that it was frank, open and happy.

"That wasn't all Aunt Judith meant, I'm quite sure," thought the mother.

A few days after this Edgar asked leave to go skating, and his mother refused his request, because she knew there were holes cut in the ice for fishing, and feared he might get into them.

"It's too bad, mother!" cried Edgar, "all the boys are going. I know all the holes, and shouldn't go near them;" and he turned and left the room hastily. His mother bent sadly over her sewing, much troubled by her son's rebellious spirit.

In about fifteen minutes Edgar came back and said, "I'm sorry I spoke so, mother. I won't ask to go on that pond again;" and he held up his lips for a kiss. As his mother gave it she saw on his forehead the marks of the back of the little cane rocking chair in Edgar's room, and in an instant she knew what Aunt Judith meant about "the seal" and the "talisman."

"I'm glad you feel right about it, sonny-boy," she said. "The holes are soon to be properly guarded; then you may go skating."

"May I? I thought I must give up skating perhaps all winter. If it hadn't been for doing just one thing, mother, I don't know when I should have stopped feeling angry about it."

"What did you do?"

"I prayed."

"A wonderful talisman!" said the mother

Not knowing exactly what she meant, Edgar looked out "talisman" in the big dictionary, and found that it means "something which preserves one from evil by secret influence."

"I'll pray oftener than ever," he resolved

So the "sign in his forehead" was often seen by his mother and aunt, though Edgar did not know it was there. And he never dishonoured the name of the dear Saviour he truly loved and frankly owned.

A LOST LIFE.

A YOUNG man was converted during an illness which proved fatal, thought this was not apprehended when he seemed to give his heart to Christ. When his physician announced an unfavourable change in his condition, he expressed entire resignation, and, among other requests, asked his friends to sing a hymn expressive of that feeling. An hour or two after, in the silence of the room he was heard to say, "Lost, lost, lost!" This surprised his mother, and caused the immediate inquiry: "My son are your hopes feeble?"

"No, mother; but oh, my lost lifetime! I am twenty-four; and until a few weeks since nothing has been done for Christ, and everything for myself and my pleasure. My companions will think I've made a profession in view of death. Oh, that I could live to meet this remark, and do something to show my sincerity, and to redeem my lost, lost, lost life."

LUTHER'S CRADLE HYMN.

[Composed by Martin Luther for his children, and still sung by German mothers to their little ones.]

AWAY in a manger,
No crib for a bed,
The little Lord Jesus
Laid down his sweet head.
The stars in the sky
Looked down where he lay—
The little Lord Jesus
Asleep on the hay.

The cattle are lowing,
The poor Babe awakes,
But little Lord Jesus
No crying he makes.
I love thee, Lord Jesus,
Look down from the sky,
And stay by my cradle
To watch lullaby.

BELIEF IN GOD.

"Do you believe in God, and that he sends his angels to watch over and guard us?" said a little girl, aged eight, to her eight-year-old playmate.

"Yes; do you?"

"No," answered the girl, "I don't believe that, because I can't see them."

Drawing himself up, the little fellow faced her squarely, and blew his breath in her face. "Did you see that?" he asked, referring to the air he had exhaled from his lungs.

"No," was the answer.

"Well, it was there, wasn't it?" was the convincing and emphatic reply.—*Our Little People.*

A GENTLEMAN said that he once saw in an out-of-the-way place in China about twenty Chinese babies tied to stakes on a patch of green grass. The length of each baby's rope was about ten feet, and the stakes were far enough apart so that the babies wouldn't get all tangled up. They seemed very happy, and while he stood watching them he did not hear one of them cry. The mothers were at work in a rice-field a little way off.

SUNDAY-SCHOOL LESSONS.

JULY 8.

LESSON TOPIC.—Presentation in the Temple.—Luke 2. 25-38.

MEMORY VERSES, Luke 2. 27-32

GOLDEN TEXT.—A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.—Luke 2. 32.

JULY 15

LESSON TOPIC.—Visit of the Wise Men.—Matt 2. 1-12.

MEMORY VERSES, Matt 2. 9-11.

GOLDEN TEXT.—They saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him.—Matt 2. 11.