

"HOW FAR IS IT CALLED TO THE GRAVE?"

"How far is it called to the grave?"

The boy looked up from his play—

"The grave? I have not heard of the grave;
It must be far away.

Often the sailors have told me
Of lands where the palm-trees wave,
Of lands of beauty and wonder,
But they never spoke of the grave."

Nought he knew of the silent grave,
Nought knew but his play and prayer;
Yet his life's travel was nearly o'er
His little feet just there.

"How far is it called to the grave?"
The lover looked up with a smile—
"Ah! from the golden land of love,
It must be many a mile!

Our road lies yet in the sunshine,
Through song, and through scented May;
Far, far off is the silent grave,
And its shadows cold and gray!"

He could not see that his darling,
With the bride-flowers in her hair,
And the wedding token on her hand,
Was almost, almost there!

"How far is it called to the grave?"
The mother turned with a tear;
White grew the roses in her cheek,
Her heart stood still with fear.

"How far? 'Tis close to the hearth-stone;
Alas! for the baby feet—
The little bare feet that all unled
Haste there with steps so fleet!

"And alas for the aged footsteps,
And those that have gone astray!
And alas for the broken-hearted
They find it far away.

"Yet longest journeys have their end,
And the darkest shadows flee,
And even the dreariest rivers
Find their way into the sea."

"How far is it called to the grave?"
It is only a life, dear friend;
And the longest life is short at last
When heaven is at the end!

Lillie E. Barr, Herald of Mercy.

LIFE A FAILURE.

How many persons there are who must
count their lives as failures, reckoning
from the standpoint of their purposes and

their intentions! A man enters into business, he aims at wealth and influence, he toils for years, but has losses and misfortunes, until at the end he finds money is gone, time is gone, toil is expended, life is well-nigh wasted, and nothing which he undertook to do is accomplished. The great object which men have in view is frequently too far off, it is beyond their reach, they never will attain to it. The man who does his present work for God, in obedience and fidelity, will never need to count his life a failure. He may see little fruit, but knows full well that the seed, though deeply buried in the soil, does not die. He knows also that the day of ingathering has not yet come, but it will come, and when it comes "the joy of the harvest" shall more than compensate the sower's bitter toil.

If you would have your life a success, let it be devoted to God; let some portion of each day be spent in His service; let some victory be achieved, some trophy won, some sinners saved; and then, though poverty, misfortune and affliction may come upon you, you will have this consolation, that something is forever safe. Blessed are they who find in Christ and His salvation their highest treasure, their purest and most enduring joy. Disappointments may come to them, riches may take wings, earthly friends and friendships may vanish, but the man who, standing on the hill of God, beholds one sinner saved as the result of a lifetime of toil, can say with truth that he has not labored in vain, nor spent his strength for naught.
—*Sel.*

SWEETER THAN HONEY.

At the National Council of the Congregationalists, held in Chicago Dr. Meredith said: I have read of a little colored boy down in Mississippi who was converted to God, and he was so happy he didn't know what to do with himself. He laughed, and he danced, and he sang, and he shouted, and finally he cried out, "Oh, it is sweet—it is sweet—it is sweet—as molasses!" [Laughter.] Yes, you laugh at that; but 2,800 years before that, Israel's royal singer said, "It is sweeter than honey and the honey-comb." One of them lived in a honey country, and the other lived in a molasses country, but the sentiment is exactly the same.