

Youth's Corner.

THE MISSIONARY BOX, OR AN ORANGE.

At a Missionary Meeting, held several years ago in a certain town in this country, the attention of a Clergyman, who was engaged in addressing it, was drawn to a poor man standing against the wall, holding in his arms a little girl of about five years old. It was not the man, so much as the child, which caught the speaker's notice. The little thing kept her eyes steadily fixed on him; and while he was relating facts which showed the sad state of the heathen, she seemed to listen with wonder.

This gentleman, whom I shall call Mr. B., was surprised to see that this little face showed deeper interest in what he was saying, than any face in the room. And it is not strange that he should be surprised at this; for we often see little children so careless and giddy, or giving so much trouble, that we are sorry they are brought to such places. But though Mr. B. often looked across the room at this little face, he always saw it the same: the child was always listening with deep attention to every word he spoke.

Well, some time had passed after this Meeting, when one day a message came to this Clergyman, who lived in the town where it was held, to ask him to visit a sick child. He went as he was told, to a poor cottage, and was taken into a small room; where lying on a bed, he saw the same face which he had beheld at the Missionary Meeting. He knew the child instantly; and she smiled. He immediately took a seat beside her bed; but he did not begin to ask if she loved to hear of Missionaries, and had ever tried if she could do anything for them. No; he saw the child was ill; and he knew that if she were to die, there were things that concerned her more than these. His first wish was to find out whether she knew that God loved her, and had given His own dear Son to die for her; that she, believing His love to her, might love Him in return, and be saved from sin and Satan, and be made His dear child for ever. Mr. B. talked with her about this; and he was much pleased to find that, young and simple, and in other things ignorant, as she was, she had gained this most precious knowledge—a knowledge which cannot be gotten for gold; which maketh wise the simple; and which many learned, and many great, and many noble men have not gained, and for want of it, have been unhappy both in life and in death.

God is true, and God is love. He has said, *I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me;* and so He had put it into this infant heart to desire to seek Him early, and to know Him, and to love and serve Him; and then He was found by her, and led her little sinful heart to love Him, as it never would have done, if He had not first loved her. This little girl had been taught by His good Spirit; and she knew that she had a sinful nature, that often tempted her to think and do what was wrong. She felt that she did not love the Lord Jesus as she ought. She knew too that she had often done the things which she ought not to have done; and therefore she daily prayed that her sins might be forgiven, and washed away in the blood of Jesus, the *Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.*

Mr. B. soon discovered all this, and was glad for the sweet child. Then he thought he might ask about the Missionary meeting, in order to know whether she had thought of it since; and he found that she loved to hear of Missionaries, because she loved God; and because she wished that every human being, every man, woman, and child, all over the world, should know His love and be as happy as she was.

"Happy!" you will say; "why, the child was poor and sick! how could she be happy?" Yes, she was happy; happier than many rich and gay, and proud and haughty children are; for the *peace of God* was in her heart, and heaven was before her. And if any want to know how she could be happy, let them go to Jesus Christ and learn of Him, and they shall find rest unto their souls.

This dear child, before she was ill, was happy. She was happy when she was ill. Religion did not prevent her from feeling pain; but it made her quiet and patient. She trusted in God, and He did deliver her; she prayed to Him, and He comforted her.

Mr. B. often visited her, and loved to visit her. At last the blessed Saviour, who had made her one of His lambs, took her to His heavenly fold. When she was dead and buried, her father came to the Clergyman; and, with tears rolling down his cheeks, drew out of his pocket a little box, and gave it to him. When Mr. B. took it, he said, "What is this?" And the father said, "Sir, in this box you will find some pence; and I will tell you how they came there." So he gave this history of them. He said, that, as he was going home with his little girl from the Missionary Meeting, she was talking to him all the way about what she had heard, and wondering very much at many things. She reminded him that the gentleman had said, every one might do something, if it was ever so little, to help the Missionaries; and that they all ought to have Missionary boxes in their houses; and get

as much as they could put into them; and then she begged her father to get her a box. He told her he did not know how to get one; but she was not contented with that answer, and pressed him so much, that as they were passing a toy-shop, he went in and bought a little common box, and gave it to her, so that she was delighted. But her father had more than this to do; for the next day she wanted something to put into her box. He told her he was too poor; but she thought he might give her something, and begged so hard, that he promised, if she was good, every Saturday night to give her a half-penny.

"And so, Sir," said the poor father, "I got the box when she was gone, for it used always to be near her; and I have brought it to you to open. It is just thirty-four weeks since the Saturday after the Missionary meeting, and she had her halfpenny every Saturday night since; so I think you will find just seventeen pence in it for the Missionaries."

So the box was opened, and the money counted; but what did they think when they reckoned up eighteen pence and one halfpenny! just three halfpence more than the thirty-four, which the father expected to find in it! He was quite puzzled: he counted it over, and over; but there it was—eighteen pence and a halfpenny. He then asked Mr. B. if they could be mistaken in the number of weeks since the meeting. Mr. B. thought a little, and said, "No, it is just thirty-four weeks since the Saturday after the Missionary Meeting." The poor man seemed distressed, and went away saying, he could not think how his little girl had got the other three-halfpence.

Now we all know that many little children are sent on messages for their parents to shops; and perhaps the poor man might have thought of times when his dear child, who was now laid in the cold grave, had gone to buy a penny-worth of some little thing for him. But he could not think she was so ignorant as to suppose that she could please God by putting into the Missionary box what did not belong to her, or that she could be so deceitful as to drop the penny into it, instead of paying it at the shop. But though he could not think ill of his little girl, he was very uneasy, and wished he could find out how these three halfpence came into the box.

Well, one day he was sitting alone, when a lady, who sometimes visited the cottages around him, came in to leave a book for him to read, and to talk to him, as she knew he was in sorrow. She spoke of the beloved child he had lost; and his mind was so full of these three halfpence, that he told her all about them, and said it made him very sorry to think he could not find out how they came into the Missionary box. "I will tell you!" cried the lady, with much delight; "I will tell you." And so she told the poor father that one day she came in and found the little girl lying alone, and sat and talked to her for some time. The poor little thing was very ill: her mouth was dry, and her lips very hot; and so the lady said, "My dear, your mouth seems very dry and hot; should you not like something to cool it?" "Oh, yes! ma'am," said the dear child, "if any thing would cool it, and take away my thirst, I should indeed like it very much." She could hardly speak, her tongue was so parched. "Well," said the lady, "would you like an orange?" "Oh yes, ma'am! very much." So the kind lady took three halfpence, and laid them on the bed, and said, "There, then, is three halfpence for you to buy an orange."

Well, the little box was near to her, and the lady said, she saw her look at the box, and then at the three halfpence, and then at the box again. Surely at the time she felt her dry and parched mouth, and thought of the cool juicy orange; but she thought also of the sad state of the poor perishing heathen, and that she could do better without the orange than they could do without the Gospel; and so she put the three halfpence into the box, and this made up the sum—the eighteen pence and the halfpenny, which Mr. B. found in it when it was opened.

Here was self-denial indeed! It was little that she could do; but she did what she could!

INTERESTING CONTRIBUTION.

The Secretaries have lately received from the Rev. G. F. W. Mortimer, D. D., Head Master of the City-of-London School, the sum of 18s. 4d. in the name of his eldest son, who was drowned in the river Teign, Devonshire, in an unsuccessful effort to save his brother, having plunged into the water as soon as he heard his cry for help addressed to him. He was a youth of hopeful piety, and had intended to become a Missionary. Dr. Mortimer's Letter enclosing the contribution is so interesting, that we make the following Extracts:—

"My eldest boy, who was drowned in August last, had belonged to him, at his death, 18s. 4d., money given him by his friends and relatives. It was his purpose, had his life been spared, to become a Missionary—a purpose which I always encouraged, and which I had hoped to see carried out, as I felt sure that his strong and vigorous intellect could not be employed in a more useful field of labour. It has pleased God to will otherwise. He was taken from us in a moment, at the

early age of twelve years and five months. I believe that his wish would have been, had not the manner of his death prevented the expression of a wish, that his money should be given to the Church Missionary Society, a collecting-box for which he had procured at the Church Missionary House in the preceding May. I therefore enclose 18s. 4d., in the name of "George Gordon Mortimer, drowned Aug. 16, 1843."

In a subsequent letter, Dr. Mortimer gives the following further information respecting his late son's desire to become a Missionary:—

"To be a Missionary was his settled purpose, held in much weakness and much ignorance of what would be required of him, but still firmly and steadily. The month before he lost his life, a friend set fully before him all the hardships of a Missionary's life; but without making him at all waver from his purpose."—*C. M. Juv. Instructor.*

EDUCATION.

INDUSTRY.—As it was at first declared to Adam, "In the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat bread," so we still find it the appointment of Providence, that in every station of life, comfort and success should depend upon diligence and activity.

"An idle soul shall suffer hunger." (Proverbs xix. 15.)

"He that is slothful in his work, is brother to him that is a great waster." (Prov. xviii. 9.)

"The soul of the sluggard desireth and hath nothing; but the soul of the diligent shall be made fat." (Prov. xiii. 1.)

Mark the characters and histories of those who have sunk into the most abject and deplorable circumstances, and you will generally find that they have failed, not from the want of opportunity to improve their condition in life, but from the absence of industry and care. Nor is idleness at any time more to be dreaded, than during the season of youth, when the habits are to be fixed for life, and when the mind, unless engaged in useful occupations, will certainly employ itself in those which are injurious or sinful. It is, for example, owing to idleness, that so many boys begin gaming in the streets, and are led on from pitch-farthing, &c. to betting, swearing, and other pernicious habits. It is, in most cases, owing to idleness, that young people of both sexes are tempted to go into bad company, and to proceed from step to step, till our penitentiaries and prisons are crowded with wretched inhabitants, who, but for the want of good training in their early years, might have lived with present comfort and a well-grounded hope of future happiness.

Endeavour, therefore, as far as possible, to introduce into your families a just sense of the value of time, as a talent which must be solemnly accounted for hereafter; and teach them, that as by squandering pence they are soon deprived of shillings and pounds, so by wasting minutes they will lose not only hours, but days and months. The great thing, however, will be to train up your children at home, to habits of industry and activity, and to provide them with proper employments during their leisure hours, that they may be kept from sauntering about the streets in idleness and mischief. "It is lamentable to observe, how fine, robust, active children will stand idling, quarrelling, and playing tricks, merely for the want of something to do; while the poor mother, toiling over her wash-tub, complains that her children are fit to craze her!"

That you may avoid these evils, be strict in sending your children regularly to school, and never keep them away on slight excuses. When at home, let them lose no opportunity of earning a little for themselves, and feeling the pleasure of gaining something by their own labour. Do your utmost to give them a taste for useful occupation, and as far as possible employ them, during their leisure hours, in spinning, knitting, making and mending their clothes, or reading and writing; and as they grow older, in housework and washing. It is true, that at first it is much less trouble to a mother to get through her business alone, than to teach a child to help her; but consider the incalculable benefit you are rendering your families, if you can bring them to habits of industry and neatness. The trouble may be great, but the reward will be greater; for you will be not only laying the foundation of one of the most necessary virtues, habitual industry, but you will be building around your children a wall of defence against the inroads of evil and corruption.—*Friendly Advice to Parents.*

KING EDWARD VI. AND ST. GEORGE.

King Edward the Sixth, the fourth year of his reign (1550,) being then but thirteen years old and upward; at Greenwich, on St. George's day, when he was come from the Sermon into the presence-chamber, there being his uncle, the Duke of Somerset, the Duke of Northumberland, with other Lords, and Knights of that order, called the Order of the Garter, he said to them, "My Lords, I pray you, what saint is St. George, to whom here so honour him?" At which question, the other Lords being all astonished, the Lord Treasurer, that then was perceiving this, gave answer and said, "If it please your Majesty, I never did read in any history of St. George, but only in the *Legenda Aurea*, where it was there set down that St. George out with his sword, and ran the dragon through with his spear." The King, when he could not a great while speak for laughing, at length said, "I pray you, my lord, and what did he with his sword the while?" "That I cannot tell, your Majesty," said he. And so an end of that question of good St. George.—*Dublin's Life of Edward VI.*

I would not give a straw for that assurance which sin will not damp. If David had come from his adultery, talking his assurance at that time, I should have despised his speech. For an old Christian to say to a young one, "Stand in my evidence," is like a man who has with difficulty climbed by a ladder to the top of the house, crying to one at the bottom, "This is the place for a prospect—come up at a step!" (Rev. John Newton.)

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Pz. cxix. 57.—"Thou art my portion, O Lord! I have said that I would keep thy word. 1st Samuel, iii. 10.—"Speak, Lord! for thy servant heareth."

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