

of God! But down on your knees, Jack Alcott, and there beg for mercy. Listen: "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." "For a little moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee." "In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer."

Ah, you may well tremble, Satan, and slink away, for he is on his knees, and your wretched reign in that soul is over forever!

It began to be noised abroad, soon after the pitiful funeral, that Jack Alcott had thrown up his pretence of business, and was working night and day down in the slums among newsboys, bootblacks, and worse, and that a shadow called Sam was ever beside him as his right-hand man.—*Annie L. Hannah, in Watchman.*

"SEALED ORDERS."

Out she swung from her moorings,
And over the harbor bar,
As the moon was slowly rising
She faded from sight afar—
And we traced her gleaming canvas
By the twinkling evening star.

None knew the port she sailed for,
Nor whither her cruise would be;
Her future course was shrouded
In silence and mystery;
She was sailing beneath "sealed orders"—
To be opened out at sea.

Some souls, cut off from moorings,
Go drifting into the night,
Darkness before and around them,
With scarce a glimmer of light;
They are acting beneath "sealed orders"—
And sailing by faith, not sight.

Keeping the line of duty
Through evil and good report,
They shall ride the storms out safely,
Be the voyage long or short;
For the ship that carries God's orders
Shall anchor at last in port!
—*Helen Chauncey, in Sailor's Magazine.*

VERY PRESUMPTUOUS.

"Well! I never heard such a thing! How very presumptuous!" exclaimed Ida Morton, laying down the book she held in her hand, and looking up at her old friend, Mrs. Montrose, with an expression half of dismay, half of disgust. It was

a pretty picture. Ida sat on the flower-flecked grass, her lissome figure and fair, golden-framed face bent down towards the book she had been reading. White doves cooed in echo to the silvery tones of her sweet young voice; bees buzzed in and out of the rose and honeysuckle bushes round her, and in the big garden chair against which she leaned sat the dearest old lady in the world, owner of the quaint cottage in which Ida Morton was lodging while painting her last commission—a picture of glen and wood, with softly rippling, softly-shaded streamlet of silver beauty. Such a dear old-fashioned woman, in her soft, pale gray dress, lace crossover, and close fitting cap bordering the silver hair upon her brow. On the lips is a smile of sweetness, in the eyes a look of love, over the face the light of peace—oh, yes! you would have called Mrs. Montrose a beautiful woman, although she was old and wrinkled, and gray-haired—just because you could not help it—it was the truth.

"What do you call presumptuous, my dear?" said Mrs. Montrose, laying her hand gently on the girl's arm.

"Just listen." And Ida read:

"The late Joseph Mackey, of New York, printer and publisher, was a great Bible-reader and Bible-lover. He determined to have a Bible of his own, and having a large number of workmen in his employ he made them print for his private and individual use a complete copy of the Holy Scriptures, differing from the ordinary one only in this, that wherever there was a general promise or command he made it particular by inserting his own name before it. For example, he made it run thus: 'God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that Joseph Mackey believing on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.' 'This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom Joseph Mackey is chief.' 'My grace is sufficient for Joseph Mackey, for my strength is made perfect in weakness.' 'Himself bore Joseph Mackey's sins in His own body on the tree.'"

Ida stopped suddenly, and ex-

claimed, "I think it most presumptuous, don't you?"

"No, my dear lady," said the old lady, very gently, but with a joyous gleam in her still, dark eyes, "I don't think he went beyond his privileges. All that believe in and obey the good Lord are His children, and are entitled to the rich legacy He left them in His will."

"I quite understand," said Ida, "that salvation is a personal matter, but I don't quite like the idea of taking possession of the Bible promises in that way; it would make things so dreadfully real," pausing a little to select a word, and then using it with lowered breath. "And it would not always be comfortable; for example, I am not sure I should like this: 'If Ida Morton will come after Me, let her deny herself and take up her cross daily.' I do not so much mind the comforting bits of the Bible, but I do not like the commands coming so closely into my daily life."

"You speak very frankly, my child," said the old lady, gravely; "I can imagine the Scriptures became a different book to Joseph Mackey when he read it in that way. We all like to claim God's promises, even though we can't go the length of printing our names before them like this man did. But when it comes to carrying out His commands, many besides yourself object. It is not presumptuous to assure ourselves boldly of God's Word; it is but blessed faith."

"Well, dear Mrs. Montrose, it certainly would make my hope of heaven and grasp of God very real, if I read my Bible as Joseph Mackey read his, and I am afraid—don't be shocked, I only want to be quite honest—my life would be very different if I read the commands of Christ as literally," and the girl shut her book impatiently.

"Oh! don't look at me so gravely," she cried presently. "I am not good, I know; I'm only a half-hearted Christian. I'd like to be safe and happy, but I'd like to have my own way a bit, too; I don't like giving up my will. It is hard, you know, Mrs. Montrose, when one is young, and the world before one."

"Not hard to a true heart, my child. Our way, our will, can become the Lord's way and will. Be-