

DOES HE HEAR ?

BY HOPE LEDYARD.

(Continued.)

"So! so! That's too bad! I guess it's slipped out under the curtains. Terrible muddy, too!" and the good man looked back along the road they had come. "I'll tell you what, Johnny," he said, "don't fret; I can't give you such a fine Bible as the one you've lost, but if you don't find that I'll give you a good plain one."

Johnny couldn't say "Thank you"; he didn't want another Bible. He ran in to tell his mother what had happened, and explain that he was going to walk over the road to try and find his treasure, and then started, with his head bent down, determined not to come home till he found it.

How fast thoughts came as he walked! "I meant to be different; I was going to read a chapter every day! And then there were those texts Miss Duncan marked—I was going to learn every one of them."

His teacher's name recalled the afternoon's lesson. Johnny stood still in the muddy road, dimly remembering the verse he had read.

"She said we could ask God for anything; and Jesus said if we'd ask for anything, He'd hear us! I'll ask Him."

The boy had never prayed before, except at "proper times." Every night and morning he had knelt, and—sometimes slowly, sometimes quickly and thoughtlessly—he had said the Lord's Prayer, and "Now I lay me," etc. Now that he wished to pray he felt he ought to kneel; but one glance around showed him how impossible that was. He had walked some distance, but without a moment's hesitation he returned homewards, and never stopped till he reached his own little room, where he fell on his knees.

"Our Father," he said, with a new strange thankfulness to be able to call the great God by that name. But there he stopped—what words should he use? He could think of none that were fit to use to God: But as he knelt and the thought of his loss came over him, boy as he was, he fairly burst into tears, and he cried aloud "Our Father—my Bible, my Bible! Amen."

Knelling in the Sunday stillness, it seemed to the boy that he could feel God near him; and though he said no more and made no resolutions, John Day long after dated his new life in Christ from that hour when he first prayed to his heavenly Father. A little later he slipped down stairs and started once more on his quest: but it was beginning to rain and the night was coming on. Still the boy, buoyed up by his faith, pressed on and retraced all the way to the very place he had stood when getting into the waggon. But the Bible was not to be found. Johnny walked back

sadly, with a faint doubt in his heart. Had God heard?

Yet that prayer to God had made life seem so new to him—God, as a loving Father, was such a wonderful revelation, that Johnny, when he went to bed, again prayed with all his heart. This time he knew his Father better—he ventured to speak to Him and tell Him, in his boyish way, how very much he loved Him, and how, if he could but have his Bible again, he would study it.

The week passed; no one had seen the Bible; but on the next Saturday evening Mr. Barr himself called at the cottage, with a plainly bound copy of the Scriptures for Johnny. The boy took the book gratefully, and sitting down, determined to find the verses where Jesus promised to do what we asked for. He remembered the name of the Gospel,

willing to take boys, for Miss Duncan told me so." Then, suddenly, he caught sight of the promise he had been looking for: "If ye shall ask anything in My name, I will do it."

"That's it! he exclaimed; "I didn't ask in His name, so I didn't find it!" Strange to say, he did not ask again.

The boy grew on to manhood, known in all the neighborhood as an earnest Christian, as one who was following Christ very closely. For years he never had another Bible but the plain one that Mr. Barr had given him; for his mother needed his earnings, and any little sums he could save were soon spent on the poor and sick whom he visited.

One night he took his well-worn Bible and went to a weekly meeting which he and some of his classmates had started. It was held for the study of the

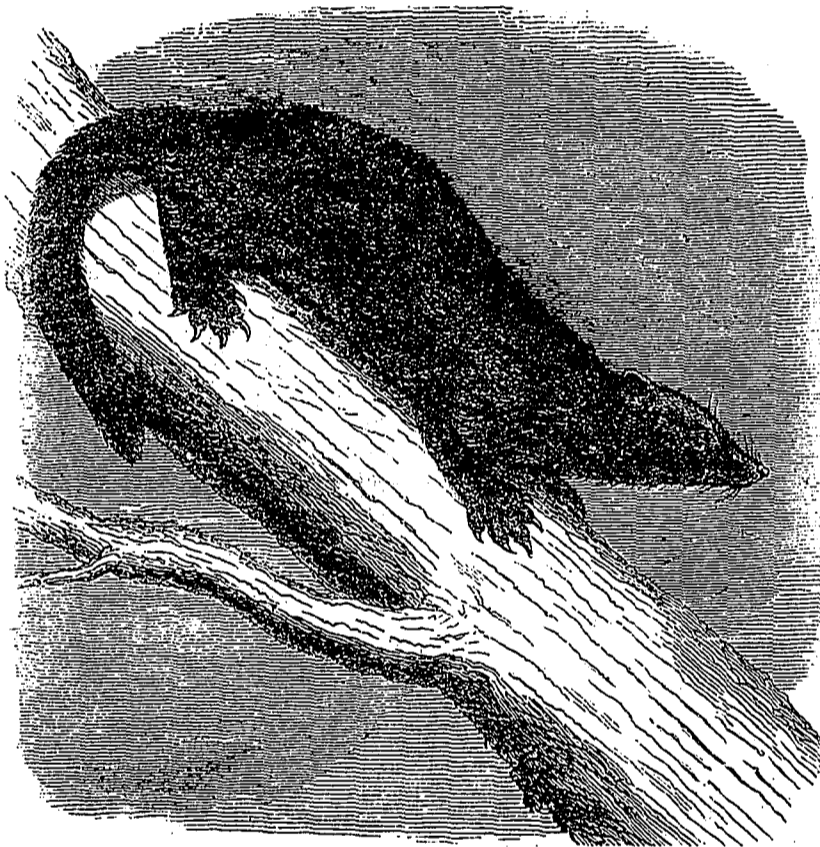
muddy, so that my walk had wearied me, and I was feeling low-spirited and dejected. Just then I saw something lying in the middle of the road. I picked it up; it was a book—a Bible.

"My friends, I tell you this because I notice that some of you have marked your Bibles, while one or two have not. Don't hesitate to mark them.

"I picked up the Bible, and might have thrown it down again, but I happened to see a text was marked. I was curious to see why that particular verse was singled out, and read it; 'Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' I told you I was weary; you can fancy how that text spoke to me. Suddenly I seemed to see myself—I could not come; I was not fit!

"I turned the leaves of the Bible and caught sight of another mark. The verse was: 'Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow.' Friends, I need not tell you much more when I show you that very Bible—my companion ever since. I don't know the man that dropped it; I've often prayed for him. But if not in this life, yet in the next, he will learn that his lost Bible has been the means of saving my soul."

So John Day's first prayer was answered. He saw his own Bible, and as he learned what a gain his loss had been, and remembered that it was through that loss he first learned to pray, he bowed his head and gave thanks.—*Churchman.*



THE BLACK MARTEN.

and beginning about the fifth chapter of St. John he went steadily on. All the way he read; and what a wonderful story it was for a boy whose heart had already been drawn toward God! He read of the blind receiving sight, of the death and burial of Lazarus; and when he came to that little verse, "Jesus wept," the boy stopped in wonder.

He could understand how the sisters felt. Only two years before his father had been brought home dead, and then his little sister had died. Did Jesus feel sorry for them, too?

Further on, with his heart all aglow with desire to be one of the Saviour's disciples, he read; "If any man serve Me, let him follow Me."

"Any man! That means folks now-a-days as well as the disciples! And I know Jesus is

Bible, but an evangelist, who had been wonderfully blessed in his labors, had promised that evening to say a few words. The stranger was there, and joined in studying the chapter they had agreed upon. He was then asked to speak, and said he was going to tell them something which he seldom told, for he did not often feel it best to talk of himself. For some reason he felt impelled to do so there.

"I was a very careless and utterly irreligious man seven years ago," he said; "and, worst of all, I drank. I had become such a slave to this habit that my wife had left me, and I was wandering from the city where we had lived. It happened that on a Sunday afternoon I passed along the high road, longing to reach some public-house where I could quench the thirst that was tormenting me. It was very

GERALDINE.

A WELL-SPENT LIFE.

One day, some thirty years ago, a merry little girl, who was out walking with her nurse in the outskirts of the city of Bath, stood still to look at some poultry through the railings of a garden. An old gentleman was feeding them, and kindly asked her to come in, which she was very glad to do. They had a pleasant talk together, and as they parted the venerable old man placed his hand on her head, and said solemnly, "The blessing of the Lord rest on thee, my child, and make thee a blessing." These words, which much impressed the little girl at the time, were long remembered by her. They were spoken by William Day, who was then about eighty years old, a minister who, even before the age of twenty-one, had preached a thousand times.

Little Geraldine was descended from the martyr Bishop Hooper, of Queen Mary's time; she was a very loving, lively, sensitive and clever child, and as she grew up her sweetness, intelligence and humor made her a great favorite in society. Fond of light reading and music, she also spent much