

THE CHILDREN'S PORTION.

PRACTICAL THOUGHTS FOR THE CHILDREN.

BY ALPHEUS.

"THE TWO WAYS."

In a former paper I spoke of the many evil influences attending the life of the young. In this one I wish to speak of a more comforting and delightful subject, namely, one or two of the good influences that are provided to keep and sustain God's children in the right way.

When the new and living way was opened up by our Lord and Master, it revealed to us something of God's marvellous love and grace. You know, children, how hard it is for any one of you to love, speak kindly to, or to do a kind action for, a bitter enemy; but our heavenly Father did all this for us. When we were enemies He loved us, and gave His Son to die for us. When we were rebellious He sought after us and brought us back, and now I want to refer to some of the things He does for us after restoring us to the right way.

He defends us in a great many ways, but one special way is by the ministry of His good angels. Some people think that an angel is sent to minister to, and defend every child born into this world. Be this as it may, this we do know, that a great many angels are specially commissioned to wait upon, direct, and defend every one brought into the new and living way.

Once a good prophet was sorely beset by his enemies, a whole army compassed him about to take him, and his servant cried out "Alas! master! what shall we do." The servant did not know how well he was protected. His master prayed: "O Lord open the young man's eyes that he may see." And, when they were opened in answer to the prophet's prayer, he saw that the whole country was full of chariots of fire and horses of fire, a wall of protection to God's servant. It is recorded of another of God's faithful servants, that once when distressed he fasted in sackcloth and ashes, and engaged in prayer. Just as he commenced, the angel Gabriel was commanded to fly swiftly to strengthen him and give him comfort regarding the thing for which he prayed.

How many of you boys and girls can possibly tell how many times you are diverted from danger, kept from evil or influenced to stay away from doubtful recreations or amusements by the same agency? Did you ever observe some strong influence drawing you in one way rather than another? It might have been to keep you from harm, just as when the angel was sent to shut the lions' mouths that they could not hurt Daniel. While some of God's good angels are sent on errands of judgment, like the one who smote a hundred and four score and five thousand men in the camp of the Assyrians, we ought to be glad "that the angel of the Lord encamps round about them that fear him, and delivers them;" "that He gives his angels charge over us, to keep us in all our ways."

Not only does he defend us, but he directs us when in the way. How does he do it? In giving his children a complete chart of the way. All