

ner of her heart felt sore and empty. At last, all were gathered in the upper hall, and arranged before the two doors of the nursery so that, when they were flung open, all should "see first."

"Oh, how beautiful! How beautiful!" Then in they rushed, and for at least five minutes the children danced and capered about the dazzling tree. Mrs. Reade saw George fasten something on, but thinking it was a present for his father or herself, said nothing.

Then came the stripping of the tree. What shouts of delight, as the little ones received just what they had asked of Santa Claus! But Nell, though delighted with her muff, and the new outfit which Kate had made for her doll, kept looking among the branches for some particular thing. At last, George managed to bring her around to where his parcel hung, and something in its shape made her say: "Oh, Katy! Here it is!"

Father and mother drew near as Kate opened the parcel bearing her name.

"A good joke!" laughed Papa. "Her own beloved skates re-presented!"

The look on Kate's face George never forgot, nor the hearty thanks when they had a quiet minute together.

"They're yours and mine, now, George," she said; and so they proved, the two skating in turns all winter, and loving each other more than ever from having seen a better side of each other's character. They each had learned a life-long lesson from that wrong promise.—*St. Nicholas.*

THE CRIPPLE GIRL.

BY IDA GLENWOOD, IN "ADVOCATE AND GUARDIAN."

"Meta," cried Minnie Clifford, "I wish you could come out and have a frolic with Beppo and me; it's perfectly lovely!" And away she scampered, little thinking of the sore wounds her merry words had penetrated. Meta did not speak, but the head dropped wearily on the pillow, and big tears shut out the dying glories of that lovely spring day.

"What I do ye know not now, but ye shall know hereafter," repeated the mother softly.

"Don't, mother! that can't mean me, for He didn't do it! it was myself! it was she! if—"

"Not a sparrow falls to the ground, my darling, unnoticed, or uncared for, and did He not notice, my child? The Father knows where we can serve Him best; can you not believe this, my child?"

The tender, sympathizing mother rolled the bed back into the corner, as she said, "I will get a light now, and my daughter will see how the gloom of despondency will flee before it."

"No, no, mother, not yet, come and sit down beside me, just as you are; I don't want you to see my face, while I tell you how wicked I am. Everything is wrong to-day! I have been thinking of one year ago, when Minnie Clifford and myself ran about the fields after arbutus blossoms to carry to our teacher, and how happy we were as we talked of what we were going to do when we became women; and then that terrible day, when the sun shone so bright, and the new grass and the fresh green leaves were so beautiful, that put an end to all my joy and made me what I am. If I had not disobeyed you, mother, and persisted in mounting Minnie's frolicsome pony, I should not be here. I did not obey you, as I knew I ought, and this is my punishment. How can I feel that He did it, and that it's all right?" And sob after sob fell on the ear of the stricken mother.

"My poor little lamb," she said at last, "the rod has fallen heavily; but 'whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth.' There is a 'needs be' for all these things. You are assured by this affliction that He loves you; and 'as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him.' If you knew, to-night how gladly your only parent would take upon herself this great chastisement you could not but feel that Jesus, who died for you, must also pity you. If this be so will He not help you bear it? 'Cast thy burden on the Lord, and He will sustain thee.'"

"But, mother, who will sustain you? I was going to take care of you, and be good—I did mean to be good, mother; as father said, be a Christian, and meet him in heaven. You wouldn't have punished me so hard,

mother, for disobeying you? O, how dreadful my thoughts are!"

"They are human, my child, and Christ, who was once human, can understand them. True, I would not have punished you so sorely, but remember I could look no farther into the future than that one transgression; while the Lord sees the whole life, and uses no more severity than is needed to bring His beloved home. Oh, believe that all is for the best, and you will see clearly that it is love that wounded my pet lamb. We will get a light now, my darling, and read; I think He has something for us in His Word, for He never leaves His little ones 'comfortless.'"

The fifteenth chapter of St. John was opened to "Blessed words," said the mother, when it was finished. "How can we doubt the Lord's tender love?"

And from that humble home, the voice of supplication was wafted heavenward, and the Father listened and answered.

Ten years passed away, and again the spring days had come, and the golden sunshine lay in shimmering patches on the fresh green grass outside the humble cottage where Mrs. Gray and her daughter were still living. The large house on the hill, now, as ten years ago, caught the last rays of the setting sun, but it was lonely and desolate.

The petted child had many months before fled from her home with one whom her parents disapproved, and was now living a frivolous life in a distant city. No more could her ringing laugh come to the poor cripple, from the garden walks, where Beppo still wandered, old and neglected. Meta had wheeled her chair close to the window, where the light might fall upon her, for she held in her hand an open letter, which she was anxious to finish reading. She folded it at last, as she said, "How richly that pays for all the labor we have performed! A whole family made comfortable the entire winter and with such small cost!"

"Meta, my darling, one evening just ten years ago to-night, in the same room, you murmured at your chastenings, and thought it so hard that before twelve years old the happiness should all be taken out of your life!"

"Now, mother, like Paul, I can thank God for tribulation. Minnie Clifford was my envy on that sad night, and I believe I would have been willing at that time to have given up my hope of heaven, to have been able to run down the garden walk as she did. I thought it was cruel that I should be crippled and she allowed to go free. But now my heart knows no murmuring. I am glad to have been afflicted, for before I was chastened I went astray. I see it all now. Nothing less than what I have received would have answered the purpose. And, mother, the burden is not so very heavy now to carry, it has become so fitted to me that it seems a part of myself."

"It is the Father who has fitted it, my child, and has given you strength sufficient to bear it. And if in this life He scatters so many blessings among the thorns, what will He not give us in that which is to come?"

SUE'S NEW MOTIVE.

BY KATE SUMNER.

Sue Graham stood in the south kitchen door, pinning on her great calico apron, with a very disconsolate look on her usually sunny face. Grace Dennis, so pretty and dainty in her fresh cambric, drove by in her basket phaeton, with little crippled Bessie McAllister. The frown deepened on Sue's face, and she gave her apron-strings an impatient twitch. Then she turned hastily from the doorway to the hot kitchen. It seemed hotter than ever, as she remembered how cool and fresh it looked out of doors. And there were the breakfast dishes to be washed, rooms to be swept and put to rights, cake and pudding to be made, and dinner to be prepared. Sue turned back to the door again, her brown eyes overflowing.

"What is it, Susie dear?" asked her mother, stopping on her way to the pantry at the sight of Sue's woe-begone face; "what is it, dear?"

"Nothing much," responded Sue, trying to smile back, but succeeding in calling up only a very tearful one; "I'm so tired of all this, and discouraged," she said.

"Do you ever think of it as something your heavenly Father has given you to do for him, Sue?"

"Why, mother!" and Sue turned abruptly round. "You don't mean he cares or

knows anything about all this work, do you?"

"Why not, dear? Doesn't he know when even a sparrow falls to the ground? 'Are ye not much better than they?' You are just where he put you and if you do the duties he has given you to do cheerfully and faithfully, even though they are small, I believe he sees and knows, and cares too, for the faithfulness of the service."

A minute after, Sue heard her mother in the pantry preparing for baking. There was a grave, thoughtful look on Sue's face now, in place of a frown.

"Perhaps!" she thought to herself, "perhaps I can serve Jesus just as truly as Grace Dennis. It isn't as pretty work, though," she thought, with a sigh, "it would be so nice to dress daintily and prettily, as Grace always does, and have leisure to do graceful deeds of kindness as she does; but if this is what he gives me, I'll try and do it the best I know how. And cheerfully too," she added, bravely. And then, without further delay, she went about the homely duties of the day. But how different they seemed to her, viewed in the new light. If she was doing them for him, they must be done with extra care. Every little nook and corner was thoroughly swept and dusted; there was a strong temptation to slight the out-of-the-way places sometimes. Every dish was washed and wiped with utmost care, and never was cake lighter or nicer than Sue's that day.

"O mother, you don't know how much you helped me this morning!" said Sue that night.

"I think I do," answered her mother, "for I know what a difference it made in my life, when I first believed that He knew and cared not only about the great things of life but about the little, homely, every-day duties too. It is hard sometimes to accept His choice of work for us; but he knows best. If he wishes us to glorify him in home life and every-day service, let us do it as faithfully and cheerfully as though he asked some greater thing of us. 'Content to fill a little space if thou be glorified.' Can you say that, Sue?"

"I'll try to," she said softly, as she stooped for a good-night kiss.—*Church and Home.*

WHAT A MOTHER DID.

Some one who had noticed the influence of wives in promoting the good or evil fortunes of their husbands, said, "A man must ask his wife's leave to be rich." We doubt not that a similar observation of mothers upon their sons would justify the remark. "A man must ask his mother's leave to be great."

Years ago a family of four, a father, a mother and two sons, dwelt in a small house situated in the roughest locality of the rocky town of Ashford, Conn. The family was very poor.

A few acres of stony land, a dozen sheep, and one cow, supported them. The sheep clothed them, and the cow gave milk, and did the work of a horse in ploughing and harrowing. Corn-bread, milk and bean-porridge was their fare.

The father being laid aside by ill-health, the burden of supporting the family rested on the mother. She did her work in the house, and helped the boys to do theirs on the farm. Once, in the dead of winter, one of the boys required a new suit of clothes. There was neither money nor wool on hand. The mother sheared the half-grown fleece from the sheep, and in one week the suit was on the boy. The shorn sheep was protected from the cold by a garment made of braided straw.

The family lived four miles from the "meeting-house." Yet, every Sunday, the mother and her two sons walked to church. One of these sons became the pastor of the church in Franklin, Conn., to whom he preached for sixty-one years. Two generations went from that church to make the world better.

The other son also became a minister, and then one of the most successful of college presidents. Hundreds of young men were moulded by him.

That heroic Christian woman's name was Deborah Nott. She was the mother of the Rev. Samuel Nott, D.D., and of Eliphalet Nott, D. D., LL.D., President of Union College.

"Honor and shame from no condition rise; Act well your part, there all the honor lies."

But then, a man who has and accepts his mother's aid is more likely to "act well" than

his part than one who has it not, or having, refuses to accept it.—*Youth's Companion.*

CHRISTIANS IN BUSINESS.

How to be a Christian in business is a question sometimes discussed in the prayer-meeting. It may be well to reflect that we are all Christians in business, if we are Christians at all; since we all sustain business relations with our neighbors. The question concerns not the commercial classes alone, but all the rest of us. The laborer, the mechanic, the teacher, the preacher, the professional man, are all exchanging their services for money or its equivalent; there is a business side to every man's life. The lady who goes a shopping is a Christian in business—or ought to be. The same virtues that we demand of the trader we ought ourselves to possess; truthfulness and honesty and promptness and courtesy are required of all Christians in their dealings with one another, whether they belong to the commercial class or not.—*S. S. Times.*

Question Corner.—No. 24.

Answers to these questions should be sent in as soon as possible and addressed Editor NORTHERN MESSENGER. It is not necessary to write out the question, give merely the number of the question and the answer. In writing letters always give clearly the name of the place where you live and the initials of the province in which it is situated.

BIBLE QUESTIONS.

276. What happened to the people of Babylon and other places, whom the king of Assyria placed in Samaria instead of the children of Israel?
277. What did the king of Assyria do when he heard of the calamity?
278. Against what city was Jonah sent to prophesy?
279. What was Saul's first transgression after he had been made king?
280. Who was Joab?
281. Who was Abner?
282. What motive had Joab for killing Abner?
283. What rash oath did Saul take which imperilled the life of his son Jonathan?
284. How was Jonathan saved from being put to death according to this oath?
285. What warrior in a battle, although very thirsty, refused to drink the water that his men obtained for him, but poured it out unto the Lord?
286. In what city did this incident occur?
287. Against what nation were the Israelites at this time at war?
288. By what king was Solomon's temple destroyed?

BIBLE ACROSTIC.

A king of Judah.
A book of the Bible.
A relative of Abraham.
A woman of Moab.
A kind of bread.
Grandfather of a king of Judah.
Son of Elishama.
The initials make the name of a man who wrote several books of the Bible.

ANSWERS TO BIBLE QUESTIONS IN NO. 22.

253. Hezekiah. 2 Kings xviii. 13.
254. His troops were killed by the angel of the Lord in the night. 2 Kings xix. 35.
255. He was killed by his sons. 2 Kings xix. 37.
256. Jacob, 130 years. Gen. xlvii. 9.
257. One hundred and twenty years. Deut. xxxiv. 7.
258. Moses. Deut. xxxiv. 10.
259. Reuben, Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh.
260. Rahab. Josh. ii. 3.
261. To the Philistines. 1 Sam. xvii. 4.
262. He was taken there by his father by command of the angel of the Lord. Matt. ii. 13.
263. Until the death of Herod. Matt. ii. 15.
264. For fear of Archelaus who was reigning in Herod's stead. Matt. ii. 22.

BIBLE ACROSTIC.

Isaiah, Moses, Mary, Obed, Ruth, Timothy, Abraham, Lot, Ishmael, Thomas, Y. Initials Immortality.

CORRECT ANSWERS RECEIVED.

To No. 22.—A. Paterson, 10.
To No. 21.—Mary E. Coates, 12 ac; Janie Patton, 12 ac; Sarah Patton, 12 ac; Mary Patton, 12 ac; M. J. McMullan, 12 ac; Agnes McMullan, 12 ac; Janet Patton, 12; Annie M. Patton, 12; Sarah E. Patton, 12; A. Paterson, 12; Freeman H. Vickery, 11; Harry Conover, ac.