

But I will turn away from Ned Higgins, the hardened sinner, to Thomas Chantry, the penitent, whom I have just left at the cottage of his poor old mother. Ten years ago Thomas Chantry was as good and as active a lad as any of his age, and his father and mother, very honest people, were very fond of him, he being their only child; but Thomas got into bad company, and so, what with the wickedness of his companions, and the indulgence of his parents, he sadly went astray. He first got into one scrape, and then into another, until he almost brought down his parents to the grave. On one unhappy day he was induced by his companions to join them in robbing Benjamin Hollins, brother to the butcher. Benjamin Hollins was as hard-hearted and cruel then, as his brother is now, and vowed that, if he could, he would hang all who were concerned in the robbery. Thomas Chantry heard this fled from the village, and enlisted in the service of the East India Company. Poor Thomas bitterly repented of his conduct, and in many of the letters that he wrote home he begged pardon of his parents for the disgrace he had brought upon them, and promised that, if it should please God ever to allow him to return, he would work his fingers off before he would again touch what did not belong to him. Chantry's father never held up his head after, for Hollins vowed that he would hang his son if he ever returned home. Hollins, however, died after a few years. Last winter a letter came to say that Thomas Chantry had got his discharge, and would shortly return home. He hoped to find his parents well, and to obtain their forgiveness from their own mouths, without which he never should be happy, the longest day he had to live. Alas! the letter never came to hand till Thomas's father lay under the turf in the churchyard, and his mother was a half broken-hearted widow. There was something in Thomas Chantry that I always liked; and often and often I have begged of him to leave of his bad habits, and turn to the Lord that he might have mercy upon him, and to our God that he might abundantly pardon.

It is a blessed thing to show mercy to those who have gone astray, and to manifest long-suffering towards them, for kindness has melted many a heart that severity would never have broken. I used to reply to Chantry's letters, for his parents could not write, and I never failed to encourage him in his determination to act uprightly. A verse I once put into one of the letters, made, as he said, the tears roll down his cheeks. The verse was the following:

For though seduced and led astray  
Thou'st travelled far and wander'd long;  
Thy God has seen thee all the way,  
And all the turns that led thee wrong.

The news that Thomas Chantry was about to return home was as a cordial to the drooping spirits of his desolate mother, who hard-

ly ever thought to see his face again. Thomas Chantry had been a transgressor, but God had not dealt with him after his sins, nor rewarded him according to his iniquities. No! He had showed him the evil of his own heart, and conducted him once more in safety across the raging deep, to be a comfort and a stay to his widowed mother in her old age, and to atone in some degree for the grief he had occasioned her. It was this morning that he arrived at the village. I was sitting with his mother in her cottage, talking of the wonderful dealings of God with his people, and consoling her on the loss of her husband with the prospect of the return of her son, who would, I hoped, be a greater blessing to her than he had ever been a trouble. "Poor lad," said she, wiping her eyes with her apron, "he will be sorely cut up to find that his father is dead, but it will give him some comfort to know that he left him his forgiveness and blessing." Just then a soldier-looking man came into the cottage. It was Thomas Chantry. As soon as he saw his mother he stopped for a moment, for years and sorrows had much altered her; the next moment he sprang forward, fell upon her neck, and burst into tears. When he was a little recovered, he turned his head towards me, and came forwards a step, and then stopped short. He saw I was not his father. But I will not dwell on that scene, for I sobbed almost as loudly as Thomas Chantry and his mother. I left mother and son together, and came away putting up a prayer that they might be a blessing to each other. "There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth;" and I believe that Thomas Chantry has been visited with that "godly sorrow which worketh repentance to salvation, not to be repented of."

#### SIMPLICITY.

If there is any beauty, or grandeur, or power in nature, it is the simplicity of nature. If there is any sublimity, or power, or excellence in the gospel, it is the simplicity of the gospel. If there is anything that darkens science, or bewilders and perplexes its patient followers, it is the contrivances of men. If there is any thing that is doubtful or discouraging in the precepts or the spirit of the gospel, it is made so by the devices of men.

While the student and the lover of science takes it directly from the hand of nature, and looks at its simple elements, and its various and beautiful combinations, his way is clear, his steps strong, and his progress rapid. But when he looks at words or books instead of things, at technicalities instead of principles, at the conflicting theories of men instead of the harmonious operations of nature, he loses his way, his steps falter, and he is landed in a maze.

While the humble follower of the messenger of peace and love adheres to the simple principles of the gospel, his duty is plain, his conscious integrity consoling and animating, and his hand, his mind, his heart firmly united and vigorously employed, in answering their separate and mutual design in the exercise of good will, and the dispensing of good deeds to man. But when, instead of the simple principles of the gospel, which the little child can understand and feel, the searcher after heavenly wisdom, looks to the dogmas and the cunningly devised fables of men for instruction, his light becomes darkness, his love hatred, and his good deeds an ungodly persecution or revenge.

The simplicity of science is alike striking and alike beautiful and dignified, whether it relates to the physical, the intellectual or the moral kingdom of our Creator. And it matters not in which of these kingdoms the humble and child-like disciple of nature looks for instruction and truth. While he is humble and child-like in his search after it, it is sure to come. It is also sure to enlighten, animate and ennoble its pursuer. He is sure to understand nature better, himself better, his duty and his happiness better. He is sure more fully to answer the purposes of his existence, and to make nearer approaches in character, in mind and in spirit, to Him who gave him existence, and who is the sum of perfection and of happiness in the universe.

#### CHANGE OF THE SEASONS.

The hottest and the coldest regions of the earth have only two seasons which materially differ from each other. The coldest have a summer of about four months, during which the heat is intense, on account of the great length of the days; and a winter of eight months. Their spring and autumn are imperceptible, for in the space of a few days extreme heat is succeeded by extreme cold, and intense cold by heat equally intense. The hottest countries have a dry and scorching season for seven or eight months, and a temperate season, with abundant rains, during the remainder of the year; this being the only distinction between their summer and winter.

This change of the seasons is one of those that deserve our admiration. It is impossible to ascribe them to chance, for in fortuitous circumstances there can be neither order nor regularity. But in all the regions of the globe, the seasons succeed each other as regularly as day and night, and change the face of nature at the appointed time. We see the earth successively clothed with verdure and foliage, crowned with flowers, and decorated with fruits. It is then stripped of all its beauties till spring returns to rouse it, as from the sleep of death. Spring, summer, and autumn nourish the animal creation by the fruits which they furnish in abundance. And though in winter Nature