

THE KEY FOUND.

BY FRANCES RIDLEY HAVERGAL.—John xiv, 6, 7; II Cor. iii, 15, 16.



HERE is a strange wild wail around, a wail of wild unrest,
A moaning in the music, with echoes unconfessed,
And a mocking twitter here and there with small notes shrill and thin,
And deep, low, shuddering groans, that rise from cases of gloom within.

And still the weird wail crosses the harmonies of God,
And still the wailers wander through His fair lands rich and broad,
Grave thought explorers swell the cry of doubt and nameless pain,
And careless feet among the flowers trip to the dismal strain.

They may wander as they will in the hopeless search for truth,
They may squander in the quest all the freshness of their youth;
They may wrestle with the nightmare of sin's unresting sleep;
They may cast a futile plummet in the heart's unfathomed deep.

But they wait, and wail, and wander, in vain, and still in vain,
Though they glory in the dimness and are proud of very pain,
For a life of Titan struggle is but one sublime mistake
While the spell dream is upon them, and they cannot, will not, wake.

Awake, O thou that sleepest! The Deliverer is near!
Arise, go forth to meet Him! Bow down for He is here!
Ye shall count your true existence from this first blessed tryst,
For He waiteth to reveal Himself, the Very God in Christ.

For the soul is never satisfied, the life is incomplete,
And the symphonies of sorrow find no cadence calm and sweet,
And the earth-lights never lead us beyond the shadows grim,
And the lone heart never resteth till it findeth rest in Him.

Do ye doubt our feeble witness? Though ye scorn us, come and see!
Come and hear him for yourselves, and ye shall know that it is He!

Ye shall find in him the Centre, the Very Truth, the Life!
Resplendent resolution of the endless doubt and strife,

Ye shall find a perfect fitness, with your highest, deepest thought

In Him the fair Ideal that so long ye vainly sought,
In Him the grand Reality ye never found before,
In Him the Lord that ye must love, the God ye must adore.

Ye shall find in Him the filling of the aching void within;
In Him the instant antidote for anguish and for sin;
In Him the conscious meeting of the soul's unuttered need,
In Him the All that ye have sought, the goal of life indeed.

As the light is to the eyes, with its sensitive array
Of delicate adjustments with their finely balanced play,
With its instinct of perception, and its craving for the light,
So is Jesus to the spirit when he gives the inward sight.

As the full and clear translation of some characters of fate,
With their sibylline enfoldings of dim, mysterious weight,
And a haunting terror, lest the real be darker than the guessed,
So is Jesus to the questions and enigmas of the breast.

As the key is to the lock when it enters quick and true,
Fitting all the complex wards that are hidden from the view,
Moving all the secret springs that no other finds or moves,
So is Jesus to the soul, when His saving power He proves.

As the music to the ear, when the mightiest anthems roll
With its corridors conveying every echo to the soul,
With its exquisite discernment of vibration and of tone—
So is Jesus to the heart that is made for Him alone.

No need to prove the sunshine when the eye receives the light;
When the cipher is deciphered we know the clue is right.
The key is known by fitting the strange intricate wards,
And the ears must own the music when they recognize the chords.

No need to prove a Saviour, when once the heart believes,
And the light of God's own presence in Jesus Christ receives!
No need for weary puzzle with heart-lore strange and dim,
When we find our dark enigmas are simply solved in Him,

We cannot doubt our finding the very key indeed
When Jesus fills up every void, responds to every need
When all the secrets of our hearts before Him are revealed,
And all the mystery of life alone with Him unsealed.

We cannot doubt when once the ear of listening faith has heard,
With all responsive thrill of love the music of His word!

He gives the witness that excels all argument or sign—
When we have heard it for ourselves we know it is Divine.

And then, oh, then the wail is stilled, the wandering is o'er,
The rest is gained, the certainty that never wavers more;
And then the full unquivering praise arises glad and strong,
And life becomes the prelude of the everlasting song.

SOME CURIOUS CUSTOMS.

In some parts of Australia when a man marries, each of the bride's relations gives him a good blow with a stout stick, by way, it may be supposed, of a warm welcome into the family. Among the Kalmucks of Central Asia, again, the marriage ceremony is very romantic. The girl is put on a horse and rides at full speed. When she has got a fair start the lover sets off in pursuit; if he catches her she becomes his wife, but if he cannot overtake her the match is broken off, and we are assured, which I can well believe, that a Kalmuck girl is very seldom caught against her will. This idea of capture in marriage occurs almost all over the world. Hence, no doubt, the custom of lifting the bride over the doorstep, which occurs, or did occur, among the Romans, the Redskins of Canada, the Chinese, the Abyssinians, and other races. Hence, also, perhaps, our custom of the honeymoon, and hence, may be, after a wedding, things are thrown, as some one has suggested in mock anger after the departing bride and bridegroom. It is remarkable how persistent are all customs and ceremonies connected with marriage. Thus our bride-cake, which so invariably accompanies a wedding, may be traced back to the old Roman form of marriage by *confarreatio* or eating together, and is found also in other parts of the world, as for instance, among the Iroquois of North America.

It is stated that a nephew of the late King Cetewayo, after spending six years in Sweden in theological and other studies, has gone back to carry on mission work in his native land.

A WORTHY example. An exchange says that a brewer who did a large business at Mishima, Japan, has become a Christian and joined the Church. He had a long and hard struggle to give up his profitable business, but at last the grace of God triumphed; he gave up brewing and gave his large and costly building to be used as a church.