

THE WONDROUS STORY.

BY REV. I. L. KEPHART.

DOWN to earth, from his home in glory,
Jesus came. Oh, wondrous story!
Yes, he came—
Came to earth to save us.
Oh, he came to earth to save us all
From the dreadful curse of Adam's fall;
Yes, he came—came to earth to save us.

On the cross he purchased pardon;
Matchless love! his life the ransom!
Yes, he gave—
Gave his life a ransom!
Oh, he gave his life to save us all
From the dreadful curse of Adam's fall!
Yes, he gave—gave his life a ransom.

Children, sing this great redemption;
Fathers, mothers, all make mention
Of his love!
Wondrous love of Jesus!
Oh, the wondrous love that brought him
down
To give to us a righteous crown!
Oh, the love—the wondrous love of Jesus.

Hear it, all ye heavy laden;
Come to Christ and be forgiven.
All may come—
Come and be forgiven.
Oh, may come to Christ, who died to save;
For all his life a ransom gave.
All may come—may come and be forgiven.

By and by he'll take us over,
Through the golden streets to wander;
Then we'll sing—
Sing his praise forever!
Oh, we'll sing his praise through endless days,
And laud and magnify his grace;
Then we'll sing—sing his praise forever!

RAGGED JACK.

I WAS once doing my best to interest the children of a mission school. The task was difficult, for they were a hard set, of rude and rough material, full of animal life, but small in religious development. My words and illustrations accomplish little. I was worried by the overflow of turbulent natures, here and there a shrill whistle, and once by an actual somersault in the aisle. In my despair I was on the point of giving up all attempt for their good, when I caught sight of a single face in the crowd aglow with interest. The face was that of an exceptionally ragged boy. I saw by his kindled eyes and earnest look that I had him fast; and, encouraged, made the most of my opportunity. The service closed, for a few moments I was occupied with the superintendent of the school upon details, and then looked for my boy. He was gone, but as I went out I found him at the door. Asking him in and sitting down, I drew him to my knees. At first he was very timid, but gradually and very soon he was at ease.

"Where do you live, my little fellow?"

"I lives nowhere," was the answer, "I just stays in Slingstone Alley. I has no father, no mother; but folks down there lets me stay with 'em. And I begs, I do."

"Slingstone Alley?" I said. "Where is that? I never heard of it."

"Oh!" was the reply, "it is a run place down by the river. We coves call it so coz we throw stones at each other and at the dogs and cats. Lots of 'em there."

"Did you hear what I said to-day about Jesus?"

"Yes, that I did, mister. Where does he live?"

"In heaven."

"What a jolly place it must be. Spose he would let such a feller as me live with him?"

And the little waif looked down upon his soiled and ragged clothing.

"I wants a place, mister. Nobody wants me down there. They kicks me and cuffs me hard. Look."

He rolled up his trousers and pointed to black and bruised legs.

"That's what they does with me. S'pose that Jesus would take me to live with him? I would try to be good and black his boots every morning, only the boys have stolen my kit. P'raps he would trust me to get a new one. Won't you speak to him, mister? Seems like you knows him. Tell him that Ragged Jack—that's my name—wants to live with him, and he'll be powerful good all the time."

Need I say that Jack was taken to my heart, that then and there a new life began for us both? How he went to live with Jesus, and what came of it, Jack is telling for himself out in the great world of thought and action to-day.—*F. B. Wheeler.*

"STEER STRAIGHT FOR ME, FATHER."

THERE is scarcely a man so hardened but that one tender spot may be found in his heart. If that is gently touched, the man responds. At a religious meeting in Scotland, some time ago, the following anecdote was told because it illustrated a drunkard's sensitiveness to the influence of a dead child whom he had tenderly loved. A fisherman, who habitually drank to excess, used to sail from a small cove on the Scotch coast to the fishing grounds, several miles out in the ocean. There was no light-house to guide him, not even a beacon-light, and the channel was intricate. When the fisherman had taken a drop too much and the night had fallen, it was dangerous work entering that cove. His little son used to watch his father's coming, and as soon as he saw him he would run down to the point, and cry out, "Steer straight for me father, and you'll get safe home!"

The boy died, and one evening the father was sitting at the lonely fireside. His conscience troubled him, for he had been thinking over the sins of his life. As the night settled down, he thought he heard the voice of his boy ring out through the darkness:

"Steer straight for me, father, and you'll get safe home!"

Springing to his feet, he called out "You're right this time, my son!"

From that moment he was a changed man, one whose sobriety and pious life attested the genuineness of his conviction of truth and his wise purpose.

HOW TO SUCCEED.

EVERY healthy, promising boy or girl is ambitious. They long to take a front rank among their fellows. The purpose to succeed must follow the desire. Decide carefully and prayerfully what your vocation shall be, and then determine that all your ability, strength and brain shall be exercised in the effort to succeed. Let nothing discourage you. Are you only a butcher's boy? So were Daniel Defoe and Cardinal Wolsey. A grocer boy? Howard, the great philanthropist, began his apprenticeship in that business. Are you so unfortunate as to have a whisky distiller for a father? Oliver Cromwell was the son of a brewer, and George Whitefield the son of an inn-keeper. You cannot begin lower in the social scale than many illustrious men began. John Bunyan was a tinker. Terence, and

Homer was a beggar. Never mind where you begin.

Be true to your love and your country
The dastard wins never a prize;
But the earnest are ever the victors,
And he who on justice relies,
Who wins the good guerdon by labor,
Will garner sweet rest as his crop,
And find, as the hills sink below him,
That there's room enough on the top.

Oh! let not the evil disturb you,
There a goal if you but search it out:
Make pure thine own conscience, my brother,
Nor mind what the rest are about.
And whether your work may have fallen
In sanctum, or office, or shop,
Remember the low grounds are crowded,
But there's always room at the top.

Room for you if you will earn the right to it. Be true. Be industrious. Be thorough. Be polite.

Do not seek honor, nor fame, nor wealth for its own sake. See that your motive is pure. Decide that whatever God gives you shall be used to his glory. There can be no true success which does not look further than the things of this world.—*Christian Advocate.*

A BOY'S ADVICE TO BOYS.

COME boys, what are we going to do? The new year has begun its work, now how are we going to begin ours? You know we are to be the men some day, and will have to take the place of our fathers, just as they took the place of our grandfathers, thirty years ago. You know men are just boys grown up, just the same as we are boys growing up. How should we spend our Sundays, is the first question? I think it would be best to keep away from taverns, and not to lounge around the corners of the streets, or in the back lanes, for these are the places where boys generally learn to chew tobacco and smoke. I don't mean that it is only on Sunday we are not to do these things, but every day and all the time. Instead of going to these places, let temperance boys and Sunday school boys. Let us all go to Sunday-school, we can help our teacher by paying attention to what he says.

If my story will not be too long for Mr. Editor's patience, I will tell you about some boys and young men in a town where we lived one summer. These boys just began by hanging around the street corners and back lanes, and planned schemes for thieving. Then they formed themselves into a band of robbers. They then began their work by entering people's houses at night, and taking anything they could find. One night they broke into the Presbyterian minister's house and took his coat and pants, also some canned fruit and pork. At last they quarrelled among themselves around a tavern, and one told on another. After this the people found they had a place where they stored all they stole, and in this place was found jars of fruit and many other things. A few days after they were all arrested and put in prison; this put an end to their work.

Now, boys, I'm sure we don't want to grow up like these fellows. I move we shun the back lanes and keep in the house at nights. Who accords the motion, and who votes on my side? Perhaps I'm saying too much. It used to be the rule that boys ought to be seen and not heard. Now, boys, I think we can surely be of some use in the world if we only put ourselves to work; for, you see, some of our best kings in Bible times were just boys. Some took

the throne at seven, eight, and twelve years old. Why, Samuel was only two or three years old when he was placed in the temple with Eli, and as he grew up his work was to look after the lamps and do chores in the temple. Eli was judge at that time, and after his death Samuel was judge. Then there is Jeremiah, the prophet, when the Lord first spoke to him and told him to go and speak to the people of Judah, Jeremiah answered and said, "Ah, Lord God, behold I cannot speak, for I am but a child;" and the Lord said, "Say not that I am a child, but go wherever I send thee, and speak whatever I tell thee," and told him not to be afraid of them, for he would be with him. Read for yourselves the first chapter of Jeremiah. And there is Josiah; he took the place of his father as king at eight years old, and see what he did. And there are others, but it would make my story too long to name them. Now, boys, it may be we can't be kings, prophets, or judges, but it may be we can light the lamps in the house of God.

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THE FIRST OFFER.

NOR long since a clergyman was visiting one of his parishioners, who was a man of business, when the following conversation substantially occurred:

"It is true," said the merchant, "I am not satisfied with my present condition. I am not of a settled mind in religion, as you express it. Still, I am not utterly hopeless; I may yet enter the vineyard, even at the eleventh hour."

"Ah! your allusion is to the Saviour's parable of the loitering labourers, who wrought one hour at the end of the day. But you have overlooked the fact that these men accepted the first offer."

"Is that so?"

"Certainly. They said to the Lord of the vineyard, 'No man hath hired us.' They welcomed the first offer immediately."

"True; I had not thought of that before. But, then, the thief on the cross, even while dying, was saved."

"Yes; but is it likely that even he had ever rejected the offer of salvation, as preached by Christ and his apostles? Like Barabas, he had been a robber by profession. In the rescuer to which he had been accustomed the Gospel had never been preached. Is there not some reason to believe that he, too, accepted the first offer?"

"Why, you seem desirous to quench my last spark of hope."

"Why should I not? Such hope is an illusion. You have really no promise of acceptance at some future time. Now is the accepted time! Begin now!"

"How shall I begin?"

"Just as the poor leper did when he met Jesus by the way, and committed his body to the Great Physician, in order to be healed: so commit your soul to him as a present Saviour. Then serve him from love; the most common duty of life that you have to perform, do it as service to him. Will you accept the first offer? Your eyes are open to see your peril. Beware of delay. Beware!"

"You are right, may God help me! I fear I have been living in a kind of dreamy delusion on this subject."