

parts knew the blind carrier—and who lent a ready ear to Metcalf's talk on this, his favourite theme. This was Mr. Ostler, of Farnham, near Knaresborough—a man of some ability as a surveyor. Mr. Ostler told the carrier that an Act of Parliament had just been obtained to make a turnpike road from Harrogate to Boroughbridge, and that he had been appointed to undertake the work. Here was the opportunity that the blind waggoner had so long hoped for. Struck by Metcalf's earnestness, and having confidence in his abilities, Mr. Ostler finally consented to allow the amateur road-maker to undertake three miles of the new highway; and Metcalf, abandoning his carrying trade and all its vexations and annoyances, joyfully betook himself to his new employment. "The materials," says the "Life of Metcalf," "were to be procured from one gravel pit for the whole length. He therefore provided deal boards and erected a temporary house at the pit, took a dozen horses to the place, fixed racks and mangers, and hired a house for his men at Minskip, which was distant about three-quarters of a mile." He always joined his men at six o'clock in the morning, and by the originality of his whole method of conducting the work, he completed it much sooner than was expected, and to the entire satisfaction of the surveyors and trustees. During his leisure hours he studied measurement in a way of his own; and when certain of the girth and length of any piece of timber, he was soon able to reduce its contents to feet and inches, and could also bring the dimensions of any building into yards and feet.

"Near the time of his finishing this road," says the writer of the "Life," the building of a bridge was advertised to be contracted for at Boroughbridge, and a number of gentlemen met for that purpose at the Crown Inn there. Metcalf amongst others, went also. The masters varied considerably in their estimates. Metcalf's friend, Ostler, was again appointed to survey the bridge and Metcalf told him that he wished to undertake it, though he had never done anything of the kind before. The surveyor, on this, acquainted the trustees with what Metcalf proposed. When the latter was sent for and asked what he knew about bridge-making, he told the trustees that he could readily describe the structure required if they would take down his words in writing, and he immediately dictated the following statement: "The span of the arch 18 feet, being a semicircle, makes 27; the arch stones must be a foot deep, which if multiplied by 27, will be 486; and the bases will be 72 feet more. Thus for the arch. It will require good backing, for which purpose there are proper stones in the old Roman wall at Aldborough, which may be bought if you please to give directions to that effect." The readiness of this statement determined them to employ him, and the blind road-maker proved again successful in a new kind of industry. Metcalf's reputation now rapidly increased, until he became one of the most important road and bridge contractors then living. He made the roads between Harrogate and Harewood Bridge, between Skipton and Colne, in Lancashire, between Wakefield and Ansterland, Chapel-le-Firth and Macclesfield, and numerous other places in Yorkshire, Lancashire, Derbyshire, Cheshire, and other counties. Among other of his occupations he opened new stone quarries, built toll-gate houses, and undertook numerous other works indirectly connected with his new profession. In none of his surveys did he use any implement but his long staff, with which he felt his way over hill and dale, determining the quality of the soil and other particulars. For all these labours Metcalf received large sums of money, and with few exceptions, made profits from his contracts.

This singular man had married early in life, and had a daughter married to a cotton manufacturer who lived in Cheshire. Those were the days of Arkwright and Crompton, and the rumours of large sums of money made in this business, induced the blind road-maker again to turn his attention to new ventures. But this time he appears to have been less fortunate. His biographer tells us that he got six jennies and a carding engine made, with other utensils proper for the business, and bought a quantity of cotton, and spun yarn for sale, as others did in that county. But it cost him much trouble and expense to get his machinery fixed. The speculation failed, and a time came when no yarn could be sold without loss. Nothing daunted, Metcalf then got looms and other implements proper for calicoes, jeans, and velveteens; for having made the cotton manufacture an object of particular attention, he had become well acquainted with its various branches. "He got," continues the author of the "Life," "a quantity of calicoes whitened and printed, his velveteens cut, dyed, etc., and having spun all his cotton he set off with the finished goods to sell them in Yorkshire, which he did at Knaresborough and in the neighbourhood. His son-in-law was to employ his jennies until he came back." But his passion for his late occupation was too strong to be subdued. It is related on his return from this journey, coming to Marsden, near Huddersfield, where he had made a road some years before, he found that

there was to be a meeting to let the making of a mile and a half of road and the building of a bridge over the river which runs by the town, so as to leave the former road in order to avoid the steepness of the hill. Metcalf determined to stay till the meeting, and he agreed with the trustees to undertake the work. The narrator of this anecdote adds: "The bridge was to be twelve yards in the span and nine yards in breadth. These too, he completed, and received a thousand pounds; but the season being wet, and the ground over which he had to bring his materials very swampy, and at a distance from the road, he lost considerably by it." In the year 1792 Metcalf returned to Yorkshire, and having now retired from his profession, he occasionally purchased hay from the farmers to sell again, measuring the stacks with his arms, add having learnt the height, it is said that he could readily tell what number of square yards were contained, from five to one hundred pounds' value.

Metcalf's biographer tells us that this extraordinary man enjoyed the perfect possession of his mental faculties, and could converse with ease and propriety, still enjoying the company of his numerous friends, until April, 1810, on the 27th of which month he finished his busy career, in the ninety-third year of his age, eighty-seven years of which had been passed in total darkness. The "Gentleman's Magazine" for that year, in recording his death, adds that his living descendants were then "four children, twenty grandchildren, and ninety great and great-great-grandchildren."

#### AMEN SOCIETY.

"This parish needs to have an organization called 'The Amen Society.' Well, what is that?"

Every person promises to say AMEN in a loud, clear tone, and also make the other responses with *audible voices*.

Every member promises to say "amen" to every reasonable request made by the rector for money, or time, or labour, or self-denial.

Every member promises to heed the sermons and all godly exhortations given by the regularly appointed "spiritual pastor and master."

Every member, when convinced of the duty of Church-going, alms-giving, fasting, prayer and receiving the Holy Communion, is expected to say AMEN and AMEN: and not only say, but do Amen.

#### DUTY AND DELIGHT.

THERE are three kinds of people in this world; those who are reckless of duty, those who do duty because it is duty, and those who delight in duty. The first are slaves of sin—the second are slaves to the law—the third are the freedmen of the Lord. It is a great thing to know our duty. It is greater to be willing to try to do our duty. But the highest achievement of a human soul is to delight in the law of God, to love the right, the pure, the true, with all the heart. How full the 119th Psalm is of this spirit: "I will delight myself in thy commandments, which I have loved"—v. 47. "Thy statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage"—v. 54. "Thy law is my delight"—v. 77. "O how I love thy law: it is my meditation all the day"—v. 97. "I love thy commandments above gold"—v. 127. "Consider how I love thy precepts"—v. 150.

Now it is not natural for men to love law. They regard it as coercion or restraint. And he only can rise above this slavish feeling who has learned to love the law-giver. Duty, without affection, is cold and hard. It is so much work for so much wages. But where love is the motive—the impelling power—duty becomes privilege, and there is music even in the clanking of our chains.

We see this beautifully illustrated sometimes in our homes. It is the mother's duty to take care of her sick child. But does she ever think of it as duty? It is the father's duty to toil for his children. But the toil is not slavish, for it is cheered and brightened by thoughts of those for whom he toils. Do you need to appeal to the conscience of a true parent, to remind him of his obligations to his offspring? No; the instincts of his heart anticipate all you can say. And thus there are millions of men and women who do, every day and night, what money could not hire them to do, because they love their children. They do not think that their lives are hard, though they seem so to others.

We see, then, why God said that to love Him with all the heart is the first and great commandment. This love will be a perennial fountain. Streams will flow from it in all the channels of duty. To serve Him whom we love will be as easy as for the river to turn the wheels of the mill, and to water the trees that line its banks. And we see that the secret of a useful and a happy life is to obey the "first and great commandment." "Love is the fulfilling of the law."

I find many young Christians troubled about questions of duty. "Can't I do this?" and, "Must I do that?" they ask. Now to all such let me say, you need not ask these questions. Go above them. See that the fountain is full. Cultivate love for God until it becomes the absorbing passion of your soul. Then wherever love flows it will be right for you to go. The life of a loving disciple is like the brook that runs down the hillside, singing in the channel that God has made for it; turning when the channel turns, without stopping in its song to wonder or ask why; most musical when that channel is most rugged; doing good as it has opportunity; giving freely to all who thirst, trusting that he who made the fountain will keep it full. Such a life was that of the great Apostle to the Gentiles—a hard and yet a happy life; for the love of Christ constrained him. If we all felt the impulse of that wondrous love we should scarcely think of duty. We should say ever, with our Divine Master and model, "I delight to do thy will. O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart."

#### A YOUNG HERO.

Nor long ago a terrible railway accident took place. Amongst the injured was a boy about fourteen years old. His foot was completely torn off. But when, after some delay, the surgeon came to attend to him, he exclaimed, "Don't mind me, sir; look to my father, he's much worse than I am."

#### COURAGE.

If we are to rise near to Christian perfection, we have need of courage. You know it every day you live. You know it in every station of life that you occupy. You and I want courage to speak the truth in ordinary social life, courage to throw ourselves against the affectations of society, courage to declare God's counsel in the face of a world that more than half denies Him; you need courage to go into your ware-houses and act honestly, courage to sit in your drawing-rooms and conduct yourselves, not as society demands in its unreality, but as God insists; courage to speak out for God in life, courage to meet the dead and vacant stare, courage to confront the sneer of ridicule, courage to support you against the cold, hard pressure of a heavy and unbelieving world.—*Knows Little*.

#### A STATE OF SALVATION.

BAPTISM saves us: so the Bible says. But many people stumble at the saying, because they think it means that all who are baptized will be saved eternally. Of course nobody believes that, and the words do not imply it. What they really do mean the Catechism tells us. They mean by Baptism we are brought into a state of salvation; that is a state in which, while we continue in it, we are saved from sin; and in which, if we continue in it to the end, we shall be saved from eternal damnation. I will illustrate this. Suppose there were a fever about, and the doctor came and told you to avoid the society of those who had it, and to take good strengthening food, and observe some simple rules, that you might be safe. You would then be in a state of safety or salvation. But if you neglected the doctor's advice, and neither took the food he recommended nor avoided infection, the chances are you would catch the fever, and perhaps lose your life. This is just what people do as to their souls. God, having at Baptism put them into a state of salvation, gives them rules to keep for their soul's health, and provides them spiritual food to preserve them unto eternal life. If they neglect the means of grace and disobey His rules, they endanger their souls: they are no longer in a state of safety, and instead of being saved run great risk of being lost. But that is their fault not His.

#### TURKISH PROVERBS.

A FOOLISH friend is, at times, a greater annoyance than a wise enemy.—Eat and drink with thy friend, but never buy and sell with him.—If a man who lives in peace, he should be blind, deaf, and dumb.—A drop of honey will catch more flies than a hog's-head of vinegar.—A fool's heart is never on his tongue; a wise man conceals his tongue in his heart.—Good wine and fair women are sweet poison.—Do good, and throw it into the sea; if the fish know it not, the Lord will.—If thy foe be as small as a gnat, fancy him as large as an elephant.—They who know most are oftenest cheated.—More is learned from conversation than from books. Death is a black camel, that kneels before every one's door.