

REV. MR. P.—'S TALK WITH THE
CHILDREN OF HIS CHARGE.

"Children, how many of you know the 'Lord's Prayer?'" said Mr. P., pastor of —, to the children of his congregation, who had, by his invitation, gathered in the Sunday school room.

"We all do," cried a score of voices all at once. "We would be very stupid if we did not know that."

"I am very glad that you do," answered Mr. P. "I suppose you very often repeat it; but I wonder if you always think what it is you are saying, and to whom you are saying it. Let us look at it for a moment. Let us altogether now repeat the first few words of the 'Lord's Prayer.'"

So there were several dozen voices joined with Mr. P. to lead them in saying:

"Our Father who art in heaven."

"Now, dear children, let us all stop and think together how much there is in those words which we have spoken. We say, 'Our Father.' You all love your parents. You know how hard they work and toil to get for you food, and clothes, and a home to live in. And how you love to meet them when you have been for a little while separated; and how they love you; and how many nice things they get for you; and how they try to give you pleasure in every way they can that is right.

"I remember when I was a boy we lived away out in the country, and we didn't have so many books and nice papers as you children now have to read, but our father used to talk to us a great deal about things that happened when he was young, and about his own life; and it was, perhaps, more interesting and profitable to us than any book would have been that we could have possibly found.

"Then, too, you know how your parents want you to be good, and to improve in every way. You all go to school, and many of you take music lessons. Sometimes you think it's pretty hard, and you don't like to go to school all the while, and you don't like to practise your music, and wish you could go and play. But all these things your parents are having done, often at a great expense and trouble to themselves, for your own good; they are so anxious to have you good, and useful and happy.

"Moreover, when you are sick how anxious your parents are, and what sacrifices they will make for your comfort and benefit. I went the other day to see a little boy who was very sick; his mother was dead, and his father just sat by his bed and watched him pretty nearly the whole time, day and night. He said that friends had offered to stay with Georgie (for that was the boy's name), but if he went away to lie down he could hardly get to sleep; and if he did, he would waken up with such a terrible feeling that it was almost worse than to not go to sleep at all. All these things show to us, my dear children, something of what a parent is to us.

"Now, God has been pleased to represent himself as 'our Father.' He teaches us to call Him that. So now we can feel that all

that our earthly fathers are to us, at least all that is good, God is to us, and a great deal more, for He is our Father, who is in heaven. Our earthly parents are not always with us; and when they are they cannot always do for us that which they would like to do, and then they might possibly do something which was not right, and often perhaps they may do what is not best; but 'our Heavenly Father' is always present. He always knows what is best, and always does that which is right. His love is far greater than an earthly parent's love, for His is infinite, and His love is unchangeable. Such, my dear children, is the being to whom we speak when we say, 'Our Father who art in heaven.' While He is God, who is so very great and very high, He is 'our Father.'"

"WHO FIRST LOVED US."

Saviour! teach me, day by day,
Love's sweet lesson to obey:
Sweeter lesson cannot be,
Loving Him—

WHO FIRST LOVED ME.

With a childlike heart of love,
At Thy bidding may I move,
Prompt to serve and follow Thee,
Loving Him—

WHO FIRST LOVED ME.

Teach me all Thy steps to trace,
Strong to follow in Thy grace;
Learning how to love from Thee,
Loving Him—

WHO FIRST LOVED ME.

Love in loving finds employ,
In obedience all her joy:
Ever new that joy will be,
Loving Him—

WHO FIRST LOVED ME.

Thus may I rejoice to show
That I feel the love I owe;
Singing, till Thy face I see,
Of His love—

WHO FIRST LOVED ME.

BEGINNING A JOHNNY-CAKE.

All things have a beginning, and it is well for us sometimes to trace back the stream to the fountain-head, and find the beginning of things which we see around us. John Spicer, writing in the *Wide Awake*, tells a story of a little girl who said to her mother:

"I want to begin at the beginning and make a johnny-cake. How does it begin?" Her Mother said: "If you want to begin at the beginning you must go into the kitchen and begin it with meal." She went to the kitchen and said to Bridget: "Does a johnny-cake begin here? I want to begin at the beginning and make a johnny-cake. Please give me some meal." Bridget said: "If you want to begin at the beginning and make a johnny-cake you must go to the grocer's. Meal comes from the grocer's." She went to the grocer's and asked him: "Does a johnny-cake begin here? I want to begin at the beginning and make a johnny-cake." The grocer said: "If you want to begin at the beginning you must go yonder to the miller's. My meal comes to me from the miller." She went to the miller's and said to him: "Does a johnny-cake begin here? I want to begin at the beginning and make a johnny-cake." The miller said: "If you want

to begin at the beginning you must run over the fields to the farmer's. The farmer brings corn to my mill, my mill grinds it into meal for the grocer, the grocer sells meal to people living in houses, and people living in houses make the meal into johnny-cakes." She ran over the fields to the farmer's and said to him: "Does a johnny-cake begin here? I want to begin at the beginning and make a johnny-cake." The farmer said: "The beginning was last spring when I planted my corn. When the snow had all melted away I planted my seed. From the seed-corn sprung up corn-stalks. All summer these grew and grew and grew, taller and taller and taller, and when summer was over there were gathered from them bushels of corn. I sell the corn to the miller, the miller grinds it to meal, and sells the meal to the grocer; the grocer sells meal to the people, and the people make it into johnny-cakes. But you see if you begin at the beginning it takes all summer to make a johnny-cake. If you want to begin at the beginning, come next spring and plant some seed-corn."

This was about as far as a little girl could go, but she was yet a long way from the beginning of the johnny-cake. To find that, she must go back through the cornfields year after year, for centuries, tracing the corn-crop back to seed, and the seed back to the previous crop, and so on, for hundreds and thousands of years, following it from one end of the land to the other, wherever it has been planted and grown, until she at last finds the first stalk of corn that ever grew, "in the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens and every plant before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew." Gen. ii. 4, 5. Here is the beginning of the johnny-cake, as here is the beginning of everything else. The first book in the Bible is called Genesis, which signifies "*Beginning*," and as we open it we read: "In the beginning, *God*."

THE DIFFERENCE.

"Willie, why were you gone so long for water?" asked the teacher of a little boy.

"We spilled it, and had to go back and fill the bucket again," was the prompt reply; but the bright, noble face was a shade less bright, less noble, than usual, and the eyes dropped beneath the teacher's gaze.

The teacher crossed the room and stood by another, who had been Willie's companion.

"Freddy, were you not gone for the water longer than necessary?"

For an instant Freddy's eyes were fixed on the floor, and his face wore a troubled look. But it was only for a moment—he looked frankly up into his teacher's face.

"Yes, ma'am," he bravely answered; "we met little Harry Braden, and stopped to play with him, and then we spilled the water, and had to go back."

Little friends, what was the difference in the answer of the two boys? Neither of them told anything that was not strictly true. Which of them do you think the teacher trusted more fully after that? And which was the happier of the two?