

IN TIME OF NEED.

Yes, you may do without your Bibles in the heyday of prosperity; when the sun shines, and the birds sing, and not a breath ruffles the surface of your summer sea. You may then, possibly, afford to rest satisfied with barren theoretic views, or the chill of skeptic creed—to regard the Sacred Oracles as the effete record of a by-gone economy—antiquated sophistries—some writings of Palestine peasants and fishermen, which the superstition of an after age has palmed upon a too credulous world. But wait till the sky is clouded, and the wind moans, and the hurricane of trial is let loose; and where are you without these discredited pages then? No poetry, no philosophy, can hush the sorrows, and satisfy the yearnings of the crushed and broken spirit, as that Book of books has done. When no other panacea is of any avail, it has put courage into fainting hearts, and peace into troubled hearts, and hope into despairing hearts. Greece and Rome! Socrates, Cicero, and Plato! You have, we allow, served us heirs to many golden maxims—beautiful fantasies, which read pleasingly in the sunshine, lulled by the ripples of the brook and the music of the grove—life all ecstasy and rapture.

But for the soul which, in its hour of bitter desolation, craves for realities, commend me to the Psalms of David and the promises of Isaiah—above all, to the living, loving balm-words of Him who said, "Come unto me, all ye that labor, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Every other world oracle is a Delphic one. It is either dumb, or its utterances are perplexing, dubious, misleading. But "Thy testimonials are very sure." "The word of the Lord is tried." "This is my comfort in mine affliction, for Thy word hath quickened me!" "Read, read the Bible," said William Wilberforce on his death bed. "Through all my perplexities and distresses I never read any other book, and I never feel the want of any other."—*J. R. Macduff, D. D.*

GROWING UP.

This is the same spirit which minifies everything that is near us, and magnifies the remote. The townspeople say of the distinguished preacher, or the well-known lawyer, or the distinguished politician about whom every one is talking, "Why,

that is little Johnny A——! I used to know him when he was a freckled-faced boy, and it's his mother who lives in the little house up on the turnpike." And yet, in spite of the fact that Mr. John A——was born in Squashville, and that it is his mother who lives in the little brown house on the turnpike, he may be the distinguished senator or the well-known preacher. Human nature has changed little during the centuries. The chief reason that many would not believe on our Lord, we remember, was the absurd reason that he was the one whose father and mother they knew. In the household the father is slow to acknowledge that the son who overtops his own gray head may be quite as good a farmer or mechanic as he is himself. He is still little Johnny, the boyish, the frivolous. He grew so gradually and right before the father's eyes, in such a way that he never realized when Johnny put away childish things and became a man. The mother can scarcely bring herself to believe that Mary, too, is grown up, that she is no longer to be regarded or treated as if she wore pinafores, but is a woman like herself, with a grown woman's rights, and privileges and opinions of her own that are to be respected.

Much unhappiness comes into families just by reason of this inability to recognize growth and advancement in those nearest us. It would be well for every father and mother to bear in mind the discovery that the genial Dr. Deems made at a recent convention of young people, "that a young man of to-day who is twenty-five years of age is just as old as he was himself when he was twenty-five years of age."

"The oldest minister of the Gospel in active service is Rev. William Stoddart, of the parish of Moderty, in Scotland. The baptismal register shows that he was baptized on the 29th of March, 1787, and is now in his 102nd year. Father Stoddart walks about a mile to his preaching service every Sunday with buoyant step, and preaches a sermon of about an hour's length, discharges, unaided, all his pastoral duties, and is a most efficient chairman of the County School Board."

There are twenty-two Protestant places of worship within the walls of the city of Rome. There are twenty six in Bombay.