

## CHOICE LITERATURE.

## MISTER HORN AND HIS FRIENDS, OR, GIVEAS AND GIVING.

BY MARK GUY FRANKS.

## CHAPTER XII.—A GAIN IN GRIEF.

Where the pulpit deliverance from the lips of Mister Horn just referred to was candidly heard, it bore good fruit; but a few of "the society" did not receive its teachings with favour. Perhaps the sermons that are most liked may sometimes do the least good; at any rate Mister Horn always took it as a good sign when the grumblers and faulty ones were louder than usual in their speaking out. "Depend upon it, if you pinch the devil a bit hard he'll squeak," was Mister Horn's explanation, "and I never think that 'tis all right unless I can get a poke at him somehow." The village shopkeeper had a visit from more than one grumbler during the next week, who growled, but paid something toward a long-neglected account.

The result on James Niggardly, Esquire, was singularly amusing. You might have supposed that he was a champion ready to die for the injured "Gospel" that he talked so much about. He declared that he would hear Mister Horn no more. He didn't think that the house of God was a place in which every one was to be made uncomfortable, that he didn't. It was a place where men and women went for rest and comfort. He would tell Mister Horn so when he saw him. And he did.

"Pre-cise—ly," said Mister Horn, very slowly, and screwing up his lips—"pre-cise—ly. But then it depends upon the kind o' men and women, you know, Jim, al-to-gether" (and he brought down his ash stick with each syllable). "The blessed Master made the house of God a very uncomfortable place to some folks, you know, Jim, and He is a good example for us to follow. People who cared more about getting than about giving were very uncomfortable when He made a scourge o' small cords and drove them out; when he upset the tables and sent the money rolling over the floor, and drove out the sheep and oxen, and turned out the dove-sellers. I dare say they were very angry, and talked about the house of God being a place where folks ought to feel very easy and comfortable. But then we are told that the blind and the lame came to Him and He healed them. He made them feel very comfortable indeed. You see it depends, Jim—depends on the kind o' men and women al-to-gether." And once more the ash stick came down with an emphatic confirmation of its master's opinion. "The Word is like salt, Jim—it's sweet and savoury to folks who are sound and right; but folks with chaps and cracks in their religion will feel it smarting and stinging, perhaps more than they care for."

Little did any one think that within a week of that Sunday morning Mister Horn's sermon would come to the mind of one of the hearers with a new meaning, and a force as if every word of it had been on fire, and had burned its way right to his heart. That one was James Niggardly himself.

Of the three daughters living at Stukeville the youngest was Marian, a little bright-haired, bright-eyed, laughing maiden of eight summers. She wore sunshine always, and wherever she stepped came gladness and happiness, like the joy that greets the sun in early spring.

All day long her sweet voice was heard singing through the house or as she was roaming in the garden, and whenever it reached James Niggardly's ears it seemed to wake up something of the old better self that lay sleeping within. Everybody loved her—they couldn't help themselves about that. But her father's devotion was more than love—she was his idol. And marvellous was the power she had with him. The hard, stern, selfish James Niggardly found nothing a trouble that little Marian asked, and nothing was a sacrifice that could please her, whatever it might be. Why you might have come upon him amid ledger and day-book, sitting there at his office-desk—he, the great James Niggardly, Esquire, with little Marian at his side making all his busy world stand still while he bent over the troublesome work of mending her broken doll. If ever his voice regained its old ring and the cheeriness of former days, it was as little Marian ran for a romp. If anything brought back the simple kindly Jim Niggardly that used to be, it was as he yielded to some request of his little maiden's.

As is so often the case with children who die young, Marian was full of an old-fashioned religiousness—very simple, yet so constant and so real that it seemed as though it were the growth of years. Does not heaven mature the spiritual in such, and make those little ones who are going to join the saints in light meet for their inheritance?

One day when she was not yet four years of age her father was lying in a darkened room suffering from some temporary indisposition. The silence was disturbed by a very gentle knock at the door, followed at once by the intrusion of a sunny face and sunny hair, and a little voice asked plaintively, "May I come in?" And Marian crept over and sat down beside the sofa.

"Papa," she whispered, "if it won't hurt you, I am come to read to you." Quite unable to read, she opened a book she brought with her, and, as if reading, she repeated with exquisite simplicity those words that she had learned—

"Al! they brought young children to Jesus that he should touch them; and His disciples rebuked those that brought them. But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them, 'Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God.' Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein. And He took them up in His arms, put His hands upon them, and blessed them."

Then she closed the book and kissed him very gently, whispering, "Good-bye, papa; I hope that will do you good. I have asked Jesus to make you better and I know He will." And she left him in tears.

Little Marian's love to Jesus was not only an affection for Him who had long ago lived a life of yearning pity, and who

had died for all men on the cross; nor was it only the thought of the glorious King who hears and helps us when we cry unto Him. It was the devotion of her whole being to One who was to her a constant presence and a personal friend. There was not a thought, not a feeling about anything that she did not share with Him. Her toys, her dresses, her opinions of people, all the little incidents that made up each day of her life, were talked of to Him with a confidence and simplicity that realized Him as "the Friend that sticketh closer than a brother." The little maiden loved Him with all her heart, and could keep nothing from Him.

With Mister Horn she was a great favourite, and many a visit was paid for an hour's talk in the garden with Marian. To him, perhaps, she owed much of the intense love that she felt for the Saviour, for he, more than any other, had told her of Him. She had learned his favourite text when she was very little, and all the thoughts and motives of her life were shaped and coloured by it.

"Mamma," she often said, "can you tell how it is that Jesus should care so much for me and love me? Isn't it wonderful, mamma? He gave Himself for me! I do love Him for it very, very, very much. Don't you, mamma?" Sometimes she stood quietly by the window, rapt in some deep thought, and then looking up, she would say, "Oh, mamma, I do love Jesus so, I want to give Him everything—you, and papa, and all of us, and Mister Horn, and all that I have got, and the sun, and the flowers, and everything there is. You know He gave Himself for me."

Without any formal resolution on her part, she instinctively came to look upon all her money as belonging to her dearest friend. It was perhaps the only thing that she had absolutely in her own disposal, and so she naturally gave it to Him to whom she was so devoted. A money-box was the treasury of her little offerings and of her possessions; nothing was more prized than this. To her mind Jesus was still standing watching the gifts that came into the treasury. One day her father thought that the sum was too large to be given all at once, and hinted as much. Little Marian looked up in wonder and said, "I must put it all in, you know, papa, or else Jesus won't be able to look at me with a smile and say, 'She did cast in all that she had.'"

She had not been well for two or three days previous to the Sunday of Mr Horn's sermon. On the Monday she got much worse, and all were alarmed. For two weary days all was hopeless, and before the week was over it was plain that the end was approaching. Her father could not leave her—day and night he remained at her side. His love grew jealous at the thought of losing her. He was jealous of those to whom she spoke a word; jealous of every look that wandered from him; impatient that any other should minister to her wants but himself.

Propped up on the pillows, she lay with flushed face, the thin white fingers resting upon her little money-box—an angel already in purity and celestial beauty. As the breath grew quicker her lips moved. All listened to catch her words; her father stooped over her, most greedy for every loved sound. She whispered, "He is coming now! Dear Jesus!" And the eyes were fixed as a little lit up all her face. "I am coming. . . . Now I shall be able to tell Jesus how much I love Him; and that mamma loves Him, and sisters, and you, papa, and Mister Horn."

The voice grew fainter, slowly and scarcely audible the voice was heard again, "Now I can't give Him my money any more. Please, papa—do it—for—" The head fell upon the father's shoulder, the soft bright hair hung over his arm, and little Marian was with Jesus.

That night James Niggardly sat vacantly staring into the fire, numbed with grief to the very bone. All was dark, accursed, and utterly forsaken. At first a wild rebellion filled his soul, but the storm had spent itself in a flood of tears. And now he could scarcely resist the memories of little Marian that began to crowd in upon him, memories that at first he had flung forth angrily as unbearable. Soon they seemed almost to quiet and soothe him. Among the visions there rose one more distinct, more impressed than any other—it was of her coming in four years before when he was lying in this very room. He almost heard her gentle voice go through the words again "Jesus said, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein." Again he seemed to hear her voice saying, as if it were a prayer more than a wish, "Papa, I hope that will do you good."

A prayer it was, a prayer answered that night as James Niggardly fell on his knees and poured out his soul to God. "As a little child, as my own little Marian, as Thine own. O Lord, help me to receive thy kingdom."

Bravely did he fight against the selfishness that had become habitual, nerved and inspired whenever he recalled the dying words, now made sacred to him, "Please, papa, do it for—"

Mr. Horn was now a frequent visitor at Stukeville, and his prayers and counsels led James Niggardly back to the man he had been—farther back than that, until he became humble and simple, and received the kingdom of God as a little child.

It was twelve months after, on the anniversary of Marian's death, that they talked of the little maiden. James Niggardly stood leaning against the mantelpiece as he held in his hand the money-box. "Ah, Mister Horn," said he with tears of gratitude, "her death was my life; her loss saved me."

Many a generous deed was done, and many a noble gift was sent without any other explanation than this, which was written within:

"J. N. FOR MARIAN."

THE END.

## LEARN A TRADE.

I never look at my old steel composing rule that I do not bless myself that, while my strength lasts, I am not at the mercy of the world. If my pen is not wanted I can go back to the type case and be sure to find work; for I learned the

printer's work—newspaper work, job work, book work, and press work. I am glad I have a good trade. It is a rock upon which the possessor can stand firmly. There is health and vigour for both body and mind in an honest trade. It is the strongest and surest part of a self-made man. Go from the academy to the printing office or to the artisan's bench; or, if you please, to the farm—for, to be sure, true farming is a trade, and a grand one at that. Lay thus a sure foundation, and after that branch off into whatever profession you please. You have heard, perhaps, of the clerk who had faithfully served Stephen Girard from boyhood to manhood. On the twenty-first anniversary of his birthday, he went to his master and told him his time was up, and he certainly expected important promotion in the merchant's service. But Stephen Girard said to him, "Very well. Now go and learn a trade." "What trade, sir?" "Good barrels and butts must be in demand while you live. Go and learn the cooper's trade; and when you have made a perfect barrel, bring it to me." The young man went away and learned the trade, and in time brought to his old master a splendid barrel of his own make. Girard examined it, and gave the maker two thousand dollars for it, and then said to him, "Now, sir, I want you in my counting-room; but henceforth you will not be dependent upon the whim of Stephen Girard. Let what will come you have always a good trade in reserve." The young man saw the wisdom and understood. Years ago, when the middle-aged men of to-day were boys, Horace Greeley wrote, "It is a great source of consolation to us, that when the public shall be tired of us as an editor, we can make a satisfactory livelihood at setting type or farming, so that while our strength lasts, ten thousand block-heads, taking offence at some article they do not understand, could not drive us into the poor-house. And so may a man become truly independent."

## WAS IT AN ACCIDENT?

Many a seeming accident illustrates Cowper's lines:

"God moves in a mysterious way,  
His wonders to perform."

Dr. Hamlin, so long the head of Robert College, Constantinople, tells of one of these "accidents." One hot day in July, 1839, while passing the Galata custom-house, a crowd attracted his attention. Forcing his way through it, he saw a poor sailor lying by the side of the wall, apparently dying of cholera.

"Do you speak English?" asked Dr. Hamlin.

"Yes," said the man following the word with an oath.

"Are you an Englishman or American?"

"American"—another oath.

Worse expressions showed that profanity had become his mother tongue. Dr. Hamlin, after many appeals to the crowd, whose brutal natures were stirred by the prospect of seeing him die, secured assistance and removed the sailor to a house.

For several weeks he was nursed and visited by the missionaries. He recovered and sailed for Boston. On the morning he left, he called on his missionary friend to say good-bye. Lingered for a moment by the door, he said:

"I have been a very wicked man, Mr. Hamlin, and have done all the evil I could in the world, and now I am going to do all the good I can."

Three years after, Dr. Hamlin received a letter from him, which thus began:

"DEAR MR. HAMLIN:—Thank God, I still survive the deed I am here workin' and blowing the Gospel-trumpet on the *En Kanal*."

When Dr. Goodell, an old missionary, saw the letter, he asked that he might begin the answer, and taking a sheet of paper wrote:

"DEAR MR. BROWN:—Blow away, brother, blow! Yours, in blowing the same Gospel-trumpet."

"WM. GOODELL."

Twenty-five years after, Dr. Hamlin, while dining at a hotel in Paris, was accosted by an American gentleman:

"I am just from Honolulu, Sandwich Islands," said the gentleman. "I have known a man there by the name of Brown, who has done a great deal of good among the sailors. He can go everywhere and anywhere with the Bible. He has told me how he was once dying, a blasphemous dog (his own words) in the streets of Constantinople, and you picked him up and saved him, soul and body. Is it all true, or is it in part a sailor's long yarn?"

What seemed the accidental passing of Mr. Hamlin down a street in Constantinople was the means by which God saved "a blasphemous dog," and sent him "blowing the Gospel-trumpet" along the "*En Kanal*," and among the islands, the Pacific. Is there such a thing as an accident in God's moral government?—*Christian Observer*.

## JONATHAN'S PICNIC.

"Come, Jonathan, can't you leave that mallet and chisel for one day, and go a pleasuring? Two hundred of us, man, to-morrow at Leech's Grove! Don't you like a picnic now and then?"

"Yes, I like a picnic amazin', and I mean to have one, but my own kind."

"And what kind is that?"

"First, it's a picnic that won't take bread out of my mouth by losing a day's wages, nor anger the boss by deserting my work. I'll bide till a slack day comes, and then ask for my holiday, and get it and welcome. Then mine will be a family picnic. The wife works as hard as I do, and needs a pleasuring as much, and the children are all the better for a jaunt with their parents."

"Bring 'em along to our picnic to-morrow, man."

"Not I. Your picnic will take a keg of rum, and two or three barrels of beer, and some demijohns. There will some get drunk, and all will be noisy, and late quarrelling will begin, and a few heads will be broken, and horses frightened, and wagon-wheels cracked. How do I know but my boys might be lured to try the tippie, and my arm get broken in stopping a row?"

"And how will your style of picnic go off, Jonathan?"