

folded up the letter, and directed it in his quaint way, though he looked serious and thoughtful all the while, he never felt so happy in all his life in the thought of the answer he should get from this great Friend that Tom Nevins told him about.

The next morning, bright and early, he carried the important missive to the post-office before old Peggy was up. It was not even open, but he loitered about until it was and then deposited it. The clerks in the office were surprised to see such a strange direction. The postmaster desired it to be thrown aside, thinking it must have come from some foolish or insane person. But when all the other letters had been sent off, he took it up again, examined it, looked at the peculiar chirography and original spelling, and seeing that it came from a child, he opened it and was deeply touched by this simply written, earnest prayer.

He showed it to a friend of his, a member of a benevolent society, who was determined to leave no stone unturned to find out the whereabouts of this trustful little boy—meanwhile he thought he would take it and read it at one of their meetings.

It happened that a lady of large wealth, one who was interested in every charitable work, was present, and when she heard Willie's letter read it seemed to her a message from the very Lord Himself, telling her to take care of that desolate child of His, "one of His little ones." Next day she found out where he lived, sent for him, and, learning just what he desired to do, this good woman placed him in school where he desired to be, and then at college, and to-day he stands before the world a minister of the gospel, beloved and honoured, and faithful in every good word and work.

So we see that though the letter that was sent to heaven never got there, yet the prayer did, and the answer came all the same, and so will every prayer of God's smallest children if they have faith to trust Him.

No doubt Willie had often heard that the quickest way of sending messages to friends at a distance was by letter, and probably he had heard that Jesus had gone up to heaven, and that seemed so far away he thought this would be the best way of reaching Him and telling Him his need.

Then let this little story of Willie Bruce's written prayer show us that Christ does not care in what way we ask Him, for has He not said to us all, "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out." He looks at the heart and not at the manner in which things are done.

#### Saying Amen to Jesus.

"LIONEL, get your Bible and card, and read your Scripture portion," called mother, as she drew her work-table closer to her side, and turned up the lamp.

"All right, mother," said Lionel, although he was deep in an interesting book; and taking his Bible from his drawer, and seating himself by his mother's side, he commenced reading aloud to her. And then they had one of their pleasant talks together—talks which seemed to Lionel to bring God and Christ and Heaven so very close to him, and to help him to understand how it was his mother's face looked always calm and sweet and beautiful.

By-and-bye they got to talking about faith, and mother asked Lionel what

faith was. Lionel thought gravely, for a time, and then said:

"Of course, mother, it is the same as 'believing' and 'trusting.' I wish you would put it plainer, though, for sometimes I get so puzzled over the words, and think—and think—until I hardly know whether I do or don't believe in Jesus."

"A little child once defined faith as 'just saying "Amen" to Jesus,' Lionel" answered his mother, watching him with her tenderest smile, "and I think that is a very plain way of putting it. When Jesus hung on the cross for our sins, He said, 'It is finished.' You and I who believe He died there for our sins say 'Amen' to that. God raised Him from the dead, and tells us He is well pleased with all who look to His dear Son for salvation. Let us say 'Amen' to that. He tells us there is 'no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus,' and we gladly answer 'Amen.' It does not matter whether He bids us take up the cross, or share His joy—whether He bids us to follow Him on earth, or to serve Him in Heaven—whatever He says to us we believe and say 'Amen' to. It seems to me that our lives ought to be one long 'Amen' to all God's promises."

"I like that thought, mother," said Lionel. "It is easy to say 'Amen' to all God's love, but not so easy to say 'Amen' to all God's will, I think."

"You are right, my boy, and now run off to bed."

"Oh! wait a bit, mother; it's only nine, and I am not a bit tired," urged the boy.

"My darling," said his mother, as she closed his book and kissed his brow, "God's will for you is obedience to your mother's wishes. I know you won't always find it easy to say 'Amen' to them, but try to do so cheerfully and willingly."

"Mother; you've caught me," cried Lionel, as he threw his arms round her neck for a good-night kiss, "but I'll really try."

Young reader, have you said "Amen," to the call and promises of Jesus? Have you heard His voice saying, "Come unto Me," and have you said—Lord, I come?

And if you have come to Him, is your life saying "Amen" to His will, however that will crosses your plans and pleasures and wishes?

#### The Christian's Fatherland.

WHERE is the Christian's Fatherland?  
Is it the holy Hebrew land?  
In Nazareth's vale, on Zion's steep,  
Or by the Galilean deep?  
Where pilgrim hosts have rushed to lave  
Their stains of sin in Jordan's wave,  
Or sought to win by brand and blade  
The tomb where their dear Lord was laid?

Where is the Christian's Fatherland  
Is it the haunted Grecian strand,  
Where Apostolic wanderers first  
The yoke of Jewish bondage burst?  
Or where, on many a mystic page,  
Byzantine's prelate, Coptic sage,  
Fondly essayed to intertwine  
Earth's shadows with the light divine?

Or is the Christian's Fatherland [hand,  
Where, with crowned head and croziered  
The ghost of empire proudly sits,  
And on the grave of Caesar sits?  
O, by those world-embracing walls,  
O, in those vast and pictured halls,  
O, underneath in that soaring dome,  
Shall this not be the Christian's home?

Where is the Christian's Fatherland—  
He still looks on from land to land—  
Is it where German conscience woke,  
When Luther's lips of thunder spoke?  
Or where by Zurich's shore was heard  
The calm Helvetic's earnest word?

Or where, beside the rushing Rhone,  
Stern Calvin reared his unseon throne?  
Or where from Sweden's snows came forth  
The stainless hero of the North?

Or is there yet a closer band,  
Our own, our native Fatherland?  
Where law and freedom, side by side,  
In heaven's behalf have gladly vied; [rung  
Where prayer and praise for years have  
In Shakespeare's accents, Milton's tongue,  
Blessing with cadence sweet and grave  
The fire-side nook, the ocean wave,  
And o'er the broad Atlantic hurled,  
Wakening to life another world?

No, Christian, no, not even here,  
By Christmas hearth or church-yard dear;  
Nor yet on distant shores brought nigh  
By martyr's blood or prophet's cry;  
Nor Western pontiff's lordly name,  
Nor Eastern patriarch's hoary fame; [star;  
Nor e'en where shone sweet Bethlehem's  
Thy Fatherland is wider far.

Thy native home is wheresoe'er  
Christ's Spirit breathes a holier air:  
Where Christ-like faith is keen to seek  
What truth or conscience freely speak;  
Where Christ-like love delights to span  
The rents that sever man from man;  
Where round God's throne His just ones  
stand:—

There, Christian, is thy Fatherland.

#### New Shoes.

"I WONDER if there can be a pair of shoes in it!"

Little Tim sat on the ground close beside a very ugly dark-coloured stone jug. He eyed it sharply, but finding it quite impossible to see through its sides, pulled out the cork and peered anxiously in.

"Can't see nothin', but it's so dark in there I couldn't see if there was anything. I've a great mind to break that hateful old thing."

He sat for a while thinking how badly he wanted a pair of shoes to wear to the Sunday-school picnic. His mother had promised to wash and mend his clothes so that he might go looking very neat indeed, but the old shoes were far past all mending, and how could he go barefoot?

Then he began counting the chances of his father being very angry when he should find his bottle broken. He did not like the idea of getting a whipping for it, as was very likely, but how could he resist the temptation of making sure about those shoes? The more he thought of them the more he couldn't. He sprang up and hunted around until he found a good-sized brick-bat, which he flung with such vigorous hand and correct aim that the next moment the old bottle lay in pieces before his eyes.

How eagerly he bent over them in the hope of finding not only what he was so longing for, but, perhaps, other treasures. But his poor little heart sank as he turned over the fragments with trembling fingers. Nothing could be found among the broken bits wet on the inside with a bad smelling liquid.

Tim sat down again and sobbed as he had never sobbed before; so hard that he did not hear a step beside him until a voice said:

"Well! what's all this?"

He sprang up in great alarm. It was his father, who always slept late in the morning and was very seldom awake so early as this.

"Who broke my bottle?" he asked. "I did," said Tim, catching his breath half in terror and half between his sobs.

"Why did you?" Tim looked up. The voice did not sound quite so terrible as he had expected. The truth was his father had been touched

at sight of the forlorn figure, so very small and so sorrowful, which had bent over the broken bottle.

"Why," he said, "I was lookin' for a pair of new shoes. I want a pair of shoes awful bad to wear to the picnic. All the other little chaps wears shoes."

"How came you to think you'd find shoes in a bottle?"

"Why, mamma said so. I asked her for some new shoes and she said they had gone into that black bottle, and that lots of other things had gone into it, too—coats and hats, and bread and meat and things—and I thought if I broke it I'd find 'em all, and there ain't a thing in it—and mamma never said what wasn't so before—and I thought 'twould be so—sure."

And Tim, hardly able to sob out the words, feeling how keenly his trust in mother's word had added to his great disappointment, sat down again and cried harder than ever.

His father seated himself on a box in the disorderly yard and remained quiet for so long a time that Tim at last looked timidly up.

"I'm real sorry I broke your bottle, father. I'll never do it again."

"No, I guess you won't," he said, laying a hand on the rough little head as he went away, leaving Tim overcome with astonishment that father had not been angry with him.

Two days after, on the very evening before the picnic, he handed Tim a parcel, telling him to open it.

"New shoes! new shoes!" he shouted. "O, father, did you get a new bottle, and were they in it?"

"No, my boy, there isn't going to be a new bottle. Your mother was right all the time—the things all went into the bottle, but you see getting them out is no easy matter, so I'm going to keep them out after this."

#### A Monkey's Trick.

In the south of France there lives a man of wealth, whose residence has around it very tall trees. The cook has a monkey, a pert fellow, who knows ever so many tricks. The monkey often helps the cook to pluck the feathers from fowls. One day the cook gave it two partridges to pluck, and the monkey, seating himself at an open window, went to work.

He had plucked the feathers from one of the partridges, and placed it on the outer ledge of the window, with a satisfied grunt, when lo! all at once a hawk flew down from one of the tall trees near by, and bore off the plucked bird. Master monkey was angry. He shook his fist at the hawk, which took a seat on a limb not far off, and began to eat the bird with great relish.

The owner of the residence saw the sport, for he was sitting in a grape arbor, and crept up to watch the end of it. The monkey plucked the other partridge, laid it on the ledge in the same place, and hid behind the window screen. When the hawk flew down after the partridge, out reached the monkey and caught the thief. In a moment the hawk's neck was wrung, and the monkey soon had the hawk plucked. Taking the two birds to the cook, the monkey handed them to him, as if to say, "Here are your two partridges, master." The cook thought one of the birds looked queer, but served them on the table. The owner of the house shook his head when he saw the dish, and, telling the cook of the trick, laughed heartily.