

on better at school." So Nettie brought her her reading book, and carefully spelt out a few sentences, with her mother's patient help.

The weeks and months passed, and the day of the school examination drew near. Poor Nettie's heart beat fast when she stood up to read. But, controlling her nervousness, she began, and went on slowly, but correctly, in a clear voice, and not miscalling a single word.

Mary Anne Wilson's turn came next; she commenced reading very fast indeed; but, alas! confident of her own powers, she rattled on without paying due attention; and after making a great many mistakes, she was told to sit down before she finished her little paragraph.

Now I wonder if any of my young friends are what Mary Anne Wilson would have called stupid? Somewhat slow, perhaps, in learning, like little Nettie Brown. If so, take my advice, and don't be disheartened. Do you remember the fable of the hare and the tortoise, and how perseverance and quiet, steady effort succeeded in the long run?

Ah! the race is not always to the swift, nor the battle to the strong. God has need of every kind of character, and of various talents. Only use the material and improve the powers that He gives you, and you will be just what He wants for the work He may prepare for you.

The slowest can run God's errands; those whom the world calls dull and stupid may be quick and intelligent to do His holy will.

So take comfort, you who are working hard, perhaps, but do not seem to make much progress. You are doing your best,—a best of which your heavenly Master alone knows the value—and He accepts it and you, if you are His servants, for the sake of His dear Son.—*Child's Companion*.

GOD'S WORD HID IN THE HEART.

There was once a little boy who went to Sabbath-school regularly, and learned all his lessons well, so that he had a great many Bible verses in his mind. He was a temperance boy. This boy was on a steam-boat making a journey. One day, as he sat alone on deck looking down into the water, two ungodly gentlemen agreed that one of them should go and

try to persuade him to drink. So the wicked man drew near to the boy, and in a very pleasant voice and manner invited him to go and drink a glass of liquor with him.

"I thank you, sir," said he; "but I never drink liquor."

"Never mind, my lad, it will not hurt you; come and drink with me."

"Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging; whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise," was the boy's ready answer.

"You need not be deceived by it. I would not have you drink too much. A little will do you no harm, and will make you feel pleasantly."

"At the last it biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder," said the boy. "I feel safer, and I think it wiser not to play with adders."

"My fine little fellow," said the crafty man, putting on his most flattering air, "I like you; you are no child; you are fit to be a companion of gentlemen. It will give me great pleasure if you will come and drink a glass of the best wine with me."

The lad looked him steadily in the eyes, and said, "My Bible says, 'If sinners entice thee, consent thou not.'" That was a stunning blow to the tempter, and he gave up his wicked attempt and went back to his companion.

"How did you succeed?" said he.

"Oh, the fact is," he replied, "that little fellow is so full of the Bible you can't do anything with him."

And every boy's mind, and every girl's mind, should be so full of the Bible, that wicked tempters can not do anything with them.

Now there is one Bible verse which shows that this is just the right use to make of the Bible.

"Thy word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against Thee."

Children, hide as much of God's precious word in your heart as ever you can.—*Children's Friend*.

THE BITTER DRINK.

"I never can take it, mother; I'm sure I can't," was Bessie's repeated cry.

"But you have not tried to take it, darling," answered Mrs. Haley.

"What is the use? I never can take it, mother, and I know it," was Bessie's very querulous reply.

Bessie was sick; a slight fever had made her somewhat fretful, and this being an uncommon thing with the usually amiable child, Mrs. Haley had called in the physician, who prescribed a draught that was not just as palatable as the child would have liked it to be, for it was bitter. To her repeated unwillingness to take the medicine, her mother had but one answer to make, "I want you to try to take it."

"What is the use of trying when I know I can't swallow it?"

"Because trying to do a thing often brings success. Who ever heard of any one meeting with success who did not seek for it, my daughter?"

"Is it good, mother?"

"No, it is not."

"Will you not say that it is—so that I can believe it?"

"Certainly not; I would not be so wicked as to tell my little girl a lie."

"Would that be a lie?" Bessie asked, in astonishment; for she had never thought of it in that light.

"Everything that is not strictly the truth is a lie; and a lie is an abomination in the sight of our Heavenly Father. The medicine is nauseous, but the physician thinks that it will do you good: so I want you to be a brave little woman, and swallow it at once. Here is the glass; when I say three, drink what is in it: now then—one—two—three." And before Mrs. Haley had fully spoken the last word the glass was empty, and Bessie was making a wry face; but, with considerable courage, she said, "It was not half so bad as I thought it would be, mother."

"Is that so?" Mrs. Haley said, smiling to think how like a woman in miniature the little girl was; "I'm not surprised to know it; for I thought it very likely that the bravery necessary to the taking of the draught would sweeten it a little. We are all too apt to forget, Bessie, that no duty can be so hard that the very trying to do it will not make it easier. You will find many a thing before you far more difficult to get over than this; but try always to be as brave as you can, and never give up while you can help it. I will read a story to you."

Joyfully Bessie accepted the invitation, and was soon snugly curled up in her favorite resting-place in her mother's

lap, and long before the story came to an end she was fast asleep. So her mother laid her in her crib, that she might enjoy a good nap.

A few weeks passed by, and Bessie was as well as ever, and, like a child, had almost forgotten the above experience, when her favorite sister was removed from her side by death.

To her astonishment, her mother went about the house as quiet and as calm as ever, doing for all what they needed, and speaking as gently as if the home circle had not been broken.

"Why do you not cry, mother? Are you glad that Katie has gone away?" she asked.

"Oh, no—not glad, but willing. The cup of sorrow holds a bitter drink for me, Bessie; but what the will of God requires we must submit to. Our little one is with the Lord—free from all trouble, safe from all cure; and we must praise Him for all the wonderful goodness that is being continually sent to us. God does not promise that we shall have only sunshine in the world; there are many clouds overshadowing us; but if our eyes are looking up, through the rifts in these clouds we can see the shining of that precious love that permits them to appear; and if we keep the eyes of faith clear and the heart steady by much prayer, we shall find a silver lining to every shadow—be it ever so dark. Then, whatever He who knows what we most need shall send, we shall find the dear Saviour's hand clasping our trembling fingers, and from our very hearts be able to say.

"If Thou shouldst call me to resign
What most I prize, it ne'er was mine;
I only yield Thee what is Thine.
Thy will be done."

—*Children's Friend*.

CURE FOR LAZINESS.

The Dutch, it is said, have a singular contrivance to cure laziness. If a pauper, who is able, refuses to work, they put him into a deep cistern, and let in a sluice of water. It comes in just so fast that by briskly plying a pump, with which the cistern is furnished, he keeps himself from drowning.

We now and then hear of boys and girl who would probably be benefited by having to take a turn at this pump. If this should meet their notice, we hope they will take the hint.—*Band of Hope Review*.