

A STORY OF DIVINE PROVIDENCE.

In the Scriptures the obligations resting on the followers of Christ to consecrate themselves, and whatever talents are entrusted to them, to the Master's service, are enforced by a great variety of arguments and motives. The leading ones are such as these: "Ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price; therefore, glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are His." "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." "Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich."

The following touching incident of the kindness of the poor to one another is taken from the interesting book "Memoirs of the Past," by the Rev. James Griffin.

"Then shall the King say unto them on His right hand, 'Come, ye blessed of My Father; inherit the kingdom prepared for you. Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye did it unto Me.'" When the people are habitually under the influence of such solemn and weighty Scriptural teachings, they need but little exhortation to prompt them to deeds of liberality. Their benevolence will be spontaneous and unostentatious. Many a hidden stream will be flowing forth in various directions. Many a mite will be cast into the treasury of the Lord, seen by no other eye than His. Often will "the poor and needy" be made glad by the kindly hand of secret charity, moved by "the love of God shed abroad in the heart."

A widow named Turner called on me one day, and said, "Sir, I should like to tell you of something that took place last Sunday, and to know what you think of it. I came to chapel without any breakfast, for there was nothing in the house, and——"

I immediately interrupted her, "What, Mrs. Turner? No food in the house! How could you be in that state? Why did you not let us, or some friend, know?"

She replied, "I had had no mangling in the week, and I did not like to trouble any one with my wants—so I committed my case to my Heavenly Father, and came to chapel. But let me go on, sir; you preached, you know, from those words in Isaiah xxix. 19, 'The meek also shall increase their joy in the Lord, and the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel.' While you were preaching, I quite forgot that I had had no breakfast, my soul was so lifted up; I felt no want of food, and the kind of faintness I had when I entered the chapel had entirely passed away. The Lord indeed 'increased my joy' at that time. But that was not all. As soon as the service was over, a man who had always sat in the next pew, but whom I had never spoken to me, and who I had never noticed, put his hand over, and put something

into my hand, and then got up at once and left without speaking, and I was astonished to find he had given me half-a-sovereign. I don't know who he is, or where to find him. What do you think of it, sir?"

"What do I think of it, Mrs. Turner! why, of course, I think this, 'When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth, for thirst, I, the Lord, will hear them, I, the God of Jacob, will not forsake them.' Don't you remember how I was showing that the Lord is the God of providence as well as of grace to the 'meek and the poor,' and that He often makes them unexpectedly 'rejoice in Him' in both respects? So, now He was giving you a proof of it."

I need not say the poor woman was never suffered to be in want of a breakfast again. The deacons took care of that, and thus "the God of Jacob" was showing that as she had cared for His house, He was caring for her wants.

EVEN TO HOAR HAIRS.

REECE BOND, agricultural labourer, cowman, sheep-keeper, and farm-drudge in general, had very little room for the sense of wonder in his mind.

When he did wonder, it was that he had lived to be so old—on the way to fourscore years of age. He had outlived his wife, who had died at threescore years and ten. He had outlived his children, some of whom had died grey-headed, and seemed to be the brothers of their father rather than his sons. He had outlived most of the associations of his early years, when he came to the farm a sprightly young man, desirous above all things of marrying one blooming little dairymaid, his faithful Hannah of married life for nearly fifty years afterwards.

"And pray, Reece," said Farmer Edwards, "what prospect have you of keeping a wife, even if our little Hannah will take you?"

"I think," replied Reece, slowly measuring his words, "that the Lord will take care of us, so long as we faithfully keep His commandments. Do you remember this morning's text, master?"

Mr. Edwards reflected for a moment or two, and then candidly confessed he did not.

"It may seem strange to you, sir, that a young man of my age, bent upon marrying, should think of old age; yet when the parson said, with his venerable grey hair about his shoulders, 'Even to hoar hairs will I carry you,' I thought of the banns having been asked for the third time, and then saw myself an old man, and Hannah an old woman; but both of us—both of us," he repeated emphatically, "believing in the promise, and feeling sure it would not fail."

"Well," said Farmer Edwards, "Hannah may do the work she has been used to do, and you may keep on as you are now; but I cannot hold out any hope that, if you live to be fifty years old, you will be any better off than you are now."