

A Little Brown Penny.

A LITTLE brown penny, worn and old,
Dropped in the box by a dimpled hand,
A little brown penny, a childish prayer,
Sent far away to a heathen land

A little brown penny, a generous thought,
A little less easily just for one day;
A young heart awakened for life, mayhap,
To the needs of the heathen far away.

The penny flew off with the prayer's swift wings,
It carried the message by Jesus sent,
And the gloom was pierced by a radiant light
Wherever the prayer and the message went.

And who can tell of the joy it brought
To the souls of the heathen far away,
When the darkness fell like wavering mists
From the beautiful dawn of the Gospel day?

And who can tell of the blessings that came
To the little child when Christ looked down;
Or how the penny, worn and old,
In heaven will change to a golden crown!

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Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

Rev. W. H. WITBROW, D.D., Editor.

TORONTO, SEPTEMBER 22, 1894.

THE TRANSFIGURATION.

BY REV. L. D. BEVAN, D.D., NEW YORK.

(Mark 9. 2-10.)

THIS passage contains the narrative of what we call "the Transfiguration of our Lord." It is one of the most wonderful incidents in his life, and you must notice, first of all, how very short the story is. The Bible does not say a great deal about the most important events of the life of Jesus Christ, if they are also very strange and out of the common. It is not like other books, which dwell long upon extraordinary events, and give a great many details, for God's Word was written not that you might be surprised, and marvel, and grow very curious, but that you may believe in Jesus Christ, who is the chief subject of all Holy Scripture.

And then you will see that the transfiguration of Jesus was not seen by everybody. All the disciples even, were not allowed to behold the exceeding glory. I suppose, all were not fit for it, or perhaps these three who saw it deserved some special favour more than the others, or we were to learn that God does give some peculiar blessings to some men which others do not receive, although all men can have the salvation of their souls, if they will accept it from God.

These three were the peculiar friends of Jesus Christ. He took them with him when he raised the daughter of Jairus from the dead. They accompanied him to the garden of Gethsemane, and it was these who were with him when he was transfigured.

You see where they went. "Up into a

high mountain, apart by themselves." We must sometimes go away from the places where we meet men and carry on the duties of every-day life. We must leave the world a long way beneath us, that, either alone or in company with a few friends who think and feel as we do, we may seek for some special sign of God's grace, something that will make us very happy, and help us when it is all over to be better servants of Christ, and more able to do good to our fellow-men. It need not be a high mountain, for we cannot always go to a high mountain. It need not be a lonely forest, for perhaps we live in a crowded city. It need not be by the side of the sea, for our life may be spent far away inland. But we can find some quiet place in our own chambers, or in some room in the church. The place does not matter much. The great thing is to have Jesus Christ with us, and then we may be sure that we shall have some great blessing, and Jesus Christ will always be with us if we ask him, for he has given that promise to all those who love and seek him.

I dare say you would like to know what the transfiguration was like. "We can only tell what Scripture has said. The face of Jesus became very bright." It shone like the sun. And the clothes of Jesus glistened most gloriously, I suppose, as if they had been made of the finest silver thread, and spangled all over with the purest diamonds. You have seen the snow just after it has fallen, when the sun has come out and shone upon it. It sparkles and shines and glistens so that you can hardly look at it. The clothes of Jesus, Mark tells us, were like that snow.

And what made him to be thus transfigured? I do not think that it was any glory from outside shining upon him. It was the glory that was in Jesus Christ, which burst out through the body which as a man he possessed, and filled the disciples with such wonder and astonishment. For you know that the Son of God dwelt in human flesh in Jesus Christ, and the body which men saw, who lived when Christ lived, and know him, was a sort of veil hiding the glory which he really possessed. God has given us eyes to see with, and we see very many beautiful and wonderful objects in the world. But we see only a very small part of what there is really in the universe. We could not bear to look upon everything that God has made, in the light which God could make to shine upon it. And so Jesus Christ covered with his body the beautiful light and the heavenly glory which always shines from his divine person. But at the transfiguration this light, like the shining of a candle through the sides of a lantern, broke through the body of Jesus and astonished and almost overwhelmed the disciples who saw it. How glorious it would be to see Jesus Christ like that! Who would not be glad to be allowed such a sight! And yet I am afraid some of you are not getting ready to see the light of Christ's glory, which we are promised by God we shall see if we will believe in him and love him and serve him. In heaven, Jesus is always shining in a glory greater even than that of his transfiguration, and if you will be his dear children, you shall all see that glory, and be very glad to be always in its presence.

But the disciples did not only see their Lord transfigured. There came two persons out of the world of spirits, and they talked with Christ. They were Moses and Elias, or Elijah. Moses was the founder of the religion of the Jews, who gave them their laws, and told them how they were to serve God. Elijah was the greatest prophet who had ever appeared to the people and spoke to them in the name of Jehovah. Of course, they had died and passed away from earth many years before. Moses died and God buried him, nobody knew where. Elijah did not die, but was taken up to heaven, God thus showing how good and great a man he was. And now they were sent back to the earth, that they might speak to Jesus, and that we might know that the great work which each of them did upon earth was in some way to prepare for the greater work of our Lord, and also that we might learn that the salvation of man by Jesus Christ was something so important that even the blessed dead, the glorified spirits of the unseen world, were interested in it. For if you will turn to the

account of the transfiguration given by St. Luke, you will see that the two spirits from heaven and Jesus Christ were talking about the death which Jesus was about to die in Jerusalem. It was surely then the most important thing in the world, for heavenly beings when they returned to earth would not converse upon anything but that which was of greatest moment. And yet there are some people who think very little, or even nothing at all, about Jesus Christ's death. We may see that if Moses and Elijah and Jesus made that death the subject of their talk, we ought to think about it, and learn what it means, and find out whether it is not of the most vital importance to ourselves.

And perhaps there is another lesson which we may learn here. We think sometimes that heaven is very far away from us, and what we call the world of spirits is quite beyond our reach. Not at all. It is close by. It is all around us, and if God willed it, he could show us in a moment all the glories of that wonderful life to which he has taken those who have died. And you see, they are interested in things of the earth, if Jesus Christ has anything to do with these things. His death, from which we get our salvation, is a matter that the blessed dead think about; and surely our salvation and our good life, which springs from the death of Jesus, will therefore be interesting to those who love, who are gone before us to be with God. Fathers and mothers, and brothers and sisters and friends, who have died, do not forget us; and I do not think that they are parted from us by any great distance. If Moses and Elijah could come and talk with Christ, perhaps our loved ones may come and watch, and, may be, help us too. At all events, we will think of them very tenderly and softly, as if they were close by, and live always as if we were in the presence and under the eye of the holy and the happy dead.

Then came the greatest wonder of all. A cloud overshadowed them, and the disciples heard a voice out of the cloud which said, "This is my beloved son; hear him." Whose voice do you suppose that was? Why, of course, the voice of God. How awful must that place have seemed then to Peter and James and John! As if it were not enough that they should see the glory of Jesus, and the saintly forms of the great lawgiver and the holy prophet; but that there should be the further witness to the truth and the claim of Jesus, namely, the voice of God himself. It was only a short sentence that God spoke. One declaration and one command. The declaration was that Christ was his beloved Son, and the command was, "Hear him." Let that then be the closing lesson and appeal of my words to you. It is not I who tell you that Christ was God's Son. It is not Moses and the prophets that proclaim the Saviour to you. It is not Peter and John and James who as apostles preach the Gospel. But it is God himself. He says that Jesus is his beloved Son. God himself commands you to hear Jesus. Then surely you will honour him as the Son of God. You will give the answer of your love to him who kept not back even the Son whom he loved so much; and when Jesus speaks you will listen and learn, and trust him. Then you, too, will see a glory of the dear Lord's as much greater than the glory which the apostles saw upon the mountain of Transfiguration, as that glory was itself greater than the usual human appearance of Jesus Christ.

HINDU GOD KRISHNA.

KRISHNA is the greatest favourite with the Hindus of all their deities. Some worship him as the supreme spirit and the cause and substance of creation. He excites great enthusiasm, especially among his female worshippers. He is presented in many different forms, and is made to appear as beautiful as Apollo.

His festivals are very popular. His images are carried about in palanquins and on elephants and horses. In one of the festivals the Hindus spend the night in singing and dancing and wandering about the streets besmeared with the doli powder, which is red; in the daytime they carry about with them a quantity of the same powder, and, with much noise and rejoicing, throw it over the different persons they meet.

A LESSON FROM THE OYSTER.

BY ETHEL ORERS.

HAVE you ever thought, or perhaps noticed, that pearls are formed by the secretion of oysters, and have you ever cared to know something of that wonderful little animal which so greatly benefits mankind in many ways? First the flesh of the oyster, then the pearls, if they happen to be of a valuable kind; also the shell, pounded, gives us lime, which is useful in many ways. And see how wonderfully God takes care of the oyster, as well as all his other subjects, for if one grain of sand happens to be washed into its shell by the waves it would irritate its tender flesh and end in certain death; but no, the same secretion immediately begins to form around this tiny particle which has made such a rude intrusion, and ere long it is the foundation of one of these beautiful pearls, so pure and attractive, that delight everybody.

And why not liken ourselves to the oysters, calling those tiny particles of sand every little trouble that enters our daily life, and why not bear it with Christian fortitude and braveness, and turn that into a beautiful pearl. If we did so always our life would be one continual bright sunshine, and when the end came we would not only have had the great joy of a life so full of pearls, but to know that the Master awaits us with the words, "Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." (Matt. 25. 21.) Louisville, Ky.

Faith in the Boys.

HAVE faith in the boy, not believing
That he is the worst of his kind,
In league with the army of Satan,
And only to evil inclined;
But daily to guide and control him,
Your wisdom and patience employ,
And daily, despite disappointments
And sorrow, have faith in the boy.

Ah! many a boy has been driven
Away from his home by the thought
That no one believed in his goodness,
Or dreamed of the battles he fought;
So, if you would help him to conquer
The foes that are prone to annoy,
Encourage him often with kindness,
And show you have faith in the boy.

IN MEMOIR OF MOHAMMED.

WHEN Mohammed was a young man he used to travel with some of the caravans which went northward into Syria for trade. During these journeys he doubtless saw and heard of the Christians and Jews. But he learned little of what Christianity was from what he saw. Sad corruptions had crept into the Christian Church, and Mary and the saints were worshipped in place of God. But, in some way not quite clear, Mohammed was led to accept the grand truth, of which the Christian Church had nearly lost sight, that there was but one God, and that it was sacrilege to worship images. So he entered the Kaaba, the most celebrated mosque, and preached this truth. He announced himself as the prophet of God, and sought to destroy all idols. This aroused the opposition of his fellow-townsmen. After a time they planned to destroy him, but he escaped them.

It was during this flight of Mohammed from Mecca to Medina, in the year 622, that the life of the prophet is said to have been saved once by a spider, and once by pigeons. The spider spun his web and the brooding pigeons remained undisturbed by the mouth of the cave where Mohammed had hidden, and his pursuers, thinking that no man could have been there, passed on. It is in remembrance of this deliverance that to this day pigeons are fed from the tower of one of the mosques of Constantinople.

GENERAL BOOTH, on his voyage out to Cape Colony, was introduced by Lord Carlington to the saloon passengers to talk about his "Darkest England scheme" in the following terms: "He is the best known, best abused and most misunderstood man of the day." That sounds wonderfully like the characterizations that were made of John Wesley in his later days.