

DON'T TELL IT AT THE GLOAMING.

BY ADELAIDE STOUT.

WE gather at the eventide;  
Each came a different way,  
But many paths have brought us all  
To sunset of the day,—  
To the sweet hush that God's dear hand  
Spreads o'er us like a tent;  
To shut out all the sounds that jar  
Its folds were surely meant.

Now, Pilgrim, from the desert sands,  
Put off thy dusty shoon,  
But do not tell us how the sun  
Smote sorely at the noon.  
And, shepherd, from the quiet meads  
If any feet have strayed,  
Let story of the weary search  
Upon thy lip be stayed.

The young child does not watch to-night  
The lengthening shadows creep,  
The crimson of the sunset sky  
Is flushing its soft cheek.  
O mother, it hath sinned, mayhap,  
But let it rest from blame,  
Within thy bosom let it hide  
The tear-wet cheek aflame.  
The twilight hour flits quickly by,  
But its great peace may run  
Thro' many hours if to thy soul  
Its first tide waves be won.

We gather at the evening hour;  
And all day long we set  
Our feet on stones, or secretly  
Some grain of sand would fret.  
All came by different paths; and each  
Was dangerous, rough, or steep.  
The truest hero in the throng  
The stillest lip will keep.  
We rest till morning 'neath the calm  
That cometh on, and so,  
Unbroken by a sound of plaint,  
Its deepening grace should grow.

O dusk pavilion whose firm stakes  
The hand of love hath set,  
Not to thy folds we come to tell  
How tiny sands can fret;  
Nor even of the burdens borne  
Tho' sorely they have pressed,—  
We toil on bravely thro' the day:  
The gloaming gives us rest.

O light of even, softly toned  
To suit our weary eyes!  
O sweet hush breathed by God, that deep  
Upon our spirit lies!  
Sometime our soul will watch to see  
Our life-day fading so;  
That God will tone its noonday glare  
And give His peace we know.

And we believe no memory  
Of all the weary ways  
We left, shall ever come to break  
That deeper calm that stays  
Upon our soul; and so we pray  
With tender eyes of those  
Who gather in the waning light,  
To watch the twilight close,  
To hush discordant sounds that mar  
Our beautiful, pure type  
Of that near day close, when for us  
"At eve it shall be light."

—The minister of a country parish in Scotland called one day, in the course of his pastoral visitation, on a decent old woman who was a member of his congregation. Engaging in friendly conversation with her, he said, "I hear your potatoes are not very good this year, Jennet." "Deed they are no', sir," said Jennet; "they're very bad; but I've reason to be thankfu' that ither folks' are as bad as my ain."

WAITING FOR THE GRIST.

BY MINNIE B. FENWICK.



"Tis strange," said a gentleman, who sat next to me in the car, and with whom I had struck up quite an acquaintance, "what an influence a look, a word, or the little act of a perfect stranger will sometimes have upon a person."

"Yes," said I; "more than any of us realize."

"It was the simple act of a stranger that changed the whole course of my life."

"Indeed! How so?"

"When I was a boy, my father moved to the then Far West, —Ohio. It was before the days of steam, and no great mills thundered on her river-banks, but occasionally there was a little grist-mill by the side of some small stream, and hither, whenever the water was up, the whole neighbourhood flocked with their sacks of corn. 'First come, first served.' Sometimes we had to wait two or three days for our turn. I generally was the one sent from our house, for, while I was too small to be of much account on the farm, I was as good as a man to carry the grist to mill. So I was not at all surprised one morning when my father said, 'Henry, you can get up old roan and go to the mill to-day.'

"Saunders' mill was ten miles away, but I had made the trip so often that it did not seem so far. I believe one becomes more attached to an old mill than to any other building. I can see just how it looked as it stood there under the sycamores, with its huge wheel and rough clapboard sides.

"When I arrived, I found the North Branch and Rocky Fork folks there ahead of me, and I knew there was no hope of getting home that day; but I was not at all sorry, for my basket was well filled with provisions, and Mr. Saunders always opened his big barn for us to sleep in; so it was no unpleasant time we had while waiting for our grist. This time there was an addition to the number that had been in the habit of gathering, from time to time, in the old Saunders' barn,—a young fellow about my own age, probably a little older. His name was Charley Allen, and his father had bought a farm over on the Brush Creek road. He was sociable and friendly, but I instinctively felt that he had 'more manners' than the rest of us. The evening was spent as usual, in relating coarse jokes, and playing cards. Although I was not accustomed to such things at home, I had become so used to it at the mill that it had long since ceased to shock me, and indeed, I was fast becoming a very interested spectator.

"Well, boys, it is time for us fellers to go to roost," said Jim Finley, one of the greatest roughest on the Rocky Fork, as he threw down his pack of cards and began to undress. We all followed his example, although it was not much undressing we did to sleep on the hay-mow; but we were so busy with our own affairs that we did not notice Charley Allen, until Jim exclaimed, 'Heydey! we've got a parson here; we hev!' Charley was kneeling by the oats-bin, praying. Jim Finley's jest met with no response. The silence

was only broken by the drowsy cattle below, and the twittering swallows overhead. More than one rough man wiped a tear from his eyes as he went silently to bed on the hay. I had always been in the habit of praying at home, but I never thought of such a thing at Saunders' Mill. As I laid awake that night in the old barn, thinking of Charley Allen's courage, and what an effect it had upon the men, I firmly resolved that in the future I would do right. I little thought how soon my courage would be tested. Just after dinner I got my grist, and started for home. When I arrived at Albright's gate, where I turned off to go home, I found the old squire waiting for me. I saw in a moment that something had gone wrong. I had always stood in the greatest awe of the old gentleman because he was the rich man of the neighbourhood, and now I felt my heart beginning to beat very fast. As soon as I came near he said, 'Did you go through this gate yesterday?' I could easily have denied it, as it was before daylight when I went through, and I quite as often went the other way. Charley Allen kneeling in the barn came to my mind like a flash, and before I had time to listen to the tempter I said, 'Yes, sir, I did.'

"Are you sure that you shut and pinned the gate?" he asked.

"This question staggered me. I remembered distinctly that I did not. I could pull the pin out without getting off my horse, but I could not put it in again, so I carelessly rode away, and left it open.

"I—I—I—"

"Out with it; tell just what you did!"

"I left it open," I said abruptly.

"Well, you let the cattle in, and they have destroyed all my early potatoes,—a terrible piece of business!"

"I'm very sorry, I'd—"

"Talking won't help matters now; but remember, boy, remember that sorrow don't make potatoes,—sorrow don't make potatoes."

"I felt very badly about the matter, for I was really sorry that the old gentleman had lost his potatoes, and then I expected to be severely reprimanded at home; but I soon found that they knew nothing of the matter, and after several days had passed, I began to rest quite easy. Alas for human hopes! one rainy afternoon I saw the squire riding down the lane. I ran off to the barn, ashamed to face him, and afraid to meet my father. They sat on the porch and talked for a long time. At last my curiosity overcame my fear, and I stole back to the house, and went into mother's room to see if I could hear what they were talking about. 'Why, the boy could be spared well enough, but he don't know anything about the business,' said my father. 'There is one thing he does know,' said the squire, 'he knows how to tell the truth.' He then related the circumstance which I so much dreaded to have my father hear. After he had gone, my father called me to him, and told me that the squire was going to start a store in the village, and wanted a boy to help, and that I could go if I wanted to. I went, and remained in the village store until it blossomed out into a city store; and people say that I got my start in life when I entered Albright's store; but I always maintain that I got it while I was waiting for the grist."

HOW TO STUDY THE BIBLE.



ON the summit of Mount Holyoke, which rears its crest in Central Massachusetts, nine hundred feet above the town of Northampton, there is an observatory attached to a public house, where a good telescope is kept for the use of visitors, in charge of one who knows how to use it with advantage. With this he shows you, now the time of day by the college clock in Northampton, now the flag that waves over the United States Armoury in Springfield, now the distant summit of the grand Monadnock, in New Hampshire. Without the intelligent assistant, who knows the salient points in the wide field of view, and knows how to focus his glass upon whatever one wishes especially to see, most visitors would come back with an impression of much in general, and very little in particular. The Bible, in like manner, spreads a wide field of view before us. The Bible teacher must know the main points in the landscape upon which attention should be focused. We characterize a mountain view by instancing the principal objects, the lakes, cities, or the sea, which can be seen from the summit. So of the Bible view. The competent interpreter and guide is the teacher who turns eye and mind continually on the everlasting mountains of God's love and righteousness in the background; the broad river of salvation flowing thence, and the peaceful city of God which this supplies, on the right, the troubled, treacherous, restless sea of sin on the left, and the monument of the Cross in the foreground, with its time-defying inscription, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son." An ancient philosopher gave the advice to learn not many things, but much. Here, in the little field of view, I have instanced not many things, but much, and he who shows, he who comprehends this much, shows all, comprehends all.

When a railway is to be laid out through a country of uneven and diversified surface, the plan of the surveyors is to find and keep to, so far as possible, the natural highways. These lie mostly along the river valleys, and are shut in on either side by boundary ranges of hills. The object of the railway projectors is to traverse the region so as to lay open its varied resources, and make connection between its fields, and forests, and mines, and the wants of consumers. This is accomplished, not by berrying parties, or rambling excursions, but by surveying parties discovering the natural route which the valleys open and the hills compel. There is Bible study which goes on the berrying party plan,—a mere ramble after a few baskets of perishable fruit, profitless information. The teacher needs to follow the surveyor's plan to find the natural highway which the features of the region of study have determined, and to open this up from end to end, so as to develop the staple truths which are there, for the supply of spiritual life. In the light of whichever of these two illustrations we view the subject, we shall admit that the teacher needs to conceive of the Bible as being essentially a presentation of some salient and striking truths in which its teaching power lies; as presenting some main lines of thought along which all profitable Bible study must run.—Rev. Dr. Whiton.