

world of light and peace. There, seated on a throne exceeding high, clearer than crystal, fairer than ivory and pearl, more precious than much fine gold, is Jesus waiting for the ransomed soul. Yes, they know what it is for a soul to be saved. They could tell you what is meant by "glory," by "a crown of life," by "pleasures for evermore," by "the Kingdom of God," by "paradise," by "everlasting salvation," by "immortality," and by "eternal life." Hence their joy when a sinner repents and is saved. They know that the gates of hell have been closed and the gates of heaven opened. They know that another name has been written in the Book of Life. They know that another on earth is fitted to become a dweller in heaven. And knowing this they look down with complacency and hope upon "one sinner that repenteth."

We can conceive, moreover, of this reason: *The angels of God anticipate our fellowship in heaven.* The celestial country is not like that new north-land of which some of us have read so recently in the public journals. A land of snow and silence and solitude; a land without trees, or flowers, or fruits, or birds, or men. Desolation and death there? Beauty, concourse, song, joy, life, yonder! Oh! think of the countless congregation of the blessed in glory. We shall, if we believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, come unto Mount Zion; we shall come unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem; we shall come to an innumerable company of angels; we shall come to the general assembly and church of the first-born; we shall come to God, the judge of all, and the spirits of just men made perfect. "To an innumerable company of angels." Yes, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and to Gabriel and Michael, the archangels of God. Yes, to David, Samuel and all the prophets, and the beautiful ones who watched the sepulchre of Christ. To Paul and all the Apostles, and Stephen and all the martyrs, and to all the angelic ministers of God who wait for them and us. The angels know that the saints shall join them in heaven, purified from all the stains and tears of earth, and hence their joy when the sinner repents. They, then, have another friend, companion, lover, another brother and sister in Christ Jesus, and this enhances and enlarges their present joy.

THE GLOOMY SUNDAY-SCHOOL.

BY REV. A. R. TAYLOR.

THE religion of Jesus Christ is the gladdest thing on earth. It is not a system of penances, or of slavery to rigid enactments. It does not imprison its followers in a bondage of legal restrictions, but opens wide to them the doors of Gospel freedom. The liberty with which Christ makes us free is a liberty which entitles us to continual and grateful joy.

There have been captives set free from dungeons who had, by reason of long imprisonment, acquired such a love for their dungeons that they did not know what to do with themselves when they were set free. There have been slaves who, when they were told that they were no longer in bondage, but were free to go where they chose and to act for themselves, showed such a reluctance as to prove themselves entirely unacquainted with the advantages of freedom. So there are people who are in bondage to imaginary requirements of Christianity, only because they do not practically understand the principles of the redemption with which Christ has made them free from the curse of the law. These well-meaning but mistaken souls prefer to shut themselves down in the dark cellar of their own restricted rules of faith, rather than, with manly Christian step, to walk in the glad sunshine of true Gospel liberty. They "call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable," and think they are not doing their own ways, nor finding their own pleasure, while really what they call the ways of the Lord are their own substitutes for them, and as for pleasure in serving God, it is not in the list of things which they consider excellent. It is a sin to make the fires on Sunday, or to wash the breakfast dishes; it is no sin to be cross and dismal on the holy day of gladness. To help a hymn along with a good piano or melodeon would be scandalous; but it is no sin to crack Johnny's knuckles with a stick, because the little fellow did whistle a few more notes after he heard the chilling "Ho-o-o-sh! Johnny mustn't whistle on Sunday!"

It sometimes happens that these cloudy persons get possession of the Sunday-school. When the leading spirits in the

school are of this sort we generally see the whole corps of the same disposition. Those who take a more cheerful view of religious things have gone to some more sunshiny establishment. Mr Grim, who is known to be a very good man, and one of the pillars of the church, and who therefore thinks it is his duty to wear a forbidding countenance, is the superintendent. He sometimes says pleasant words and does pleasant things, but in such an austere way that they seem like clothes that do not fit. He can pray for twenty minutes without stopping to take breath, and says that he prefers that kind of prayer to the kind which people hurry over in three or four minutes. He is right in telling us that we ought not to hurry the prayers, but wrong in spinning them out to such a wearisome length. His idea of rules and regulations is from the Jewish dispensation, and goes into considerable depth, into small details, in which he exacts a rigid obedience. He has a great quantity of "constitution and by-laws," which he keeps bottled up in suitable doses, to be administered to teachers and scholars, as occasion calls for. His efforts at keeping order in school are of the most ponderous description.

The chorister of this school is a gloomy genius, and the singing is doleful business. He sings with an unmusical twang, which he thinks is an essential element of good music. He got it by imitating some forefather who could not sing any better. The forefather was a good man, so this man thinks that he must sing as that good man sang. He tells the children that they must and shall sing, and that they are bad children if they do not. This is apt to give the children the sulks, and to render their vocal exercises more like groaning than like the voice of sacred song.

The children are taught. They are made to learn their Bible lessons, and the lessons are explained to them. But they learn rather to be afraid of God than to love Him; more about the terrors of the law than the riches of the Saviour's grace. They come to school not so much because they like it, as because they are taught that they are idle and wicked children if they stay at home.

The library is a battery of solid doctrine. Most carefully have all those books been excluded which are not strictly true in point of fact of every detail. Story books would no more be admitted than would flash novels. Even those books which are only "founded on fact" are strictly kept out. It was from this school that the small boy took the book labelled "Five Points," which he supposed to be a stirring work on a certain locality in the city of New York, but which he discovered, his regret, was Dickinson's able little treatise on the "Five Points of Calvinism." From this school also it was that a little girl took home a "Treatise on Backsliding," which she thought would help her to learn to skate backward on the ice! The gloomy Sunday-school is not a pleasant place to stay in very long. Let us shut the door and run away.

REMEDY FOR TROUBLE.

WORK is your true remedy. If misfortune hits you hard, you hit something else hard; pitch into something with a will. There's nothing like good, solid, exhausting work to cure trouble. If you have met with losses, you don't want to lie awake and think about them. You want sleep—calm, sound sleep—and eat your dinner with appetite. But you can't unless you work. If you say you don't feel like work, and go loafing all day to tell Tom, Dick, and Harry the story of your woes, you'll lie awake, and keep your wife awake by your tossing, spoil your temper and your breakfast next morning, and begin to-morrow feeling ten times worse than you do today. There are some great troubles that only time can heal, and perhaps some that never can be healed at all; but all can be helped by the great panacea, work. Try it, you who are afflicted. It is not a patent medicine. It has proved its efficiency since first Adam and Eve left behind them, with weeping, their beautiful Eden. It is an efficient remedy. All good physicians in regular standing prescribe it in cases of mental and moral disease. It operates kindly as well as leaving no disagreeable sequelæ, and we assure you that we have taken a large quantity of it with beneficial results. It will cure more complaints than any nostrum in the *materia medica*, and comes nearer to being a "cure all" than any drug or compound of drug in the market. And it will not sicken you, if you do not take it sugar-coated.