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Buds and Blossoms,

AND

FRIENDLY GREETINGS.

"Israel shall blossom and bud and fill the world with fruit."

Vol. VIII, No. 1.

JANUARY, 1884.

Whole No. 86.

A MONTHLY ILLUSTRATED MAGAZINE

FOR THE CHURCH AND HOME.

WHAT JESUS IS ABLE TO DO.

Able to make all grace abound toward us; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work. 1 CORINTHIANS ix. 8.

Able to succor them that are tempted. HEBREWS ii. 18.

Able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy. JUDE 24.

Able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him. HEBREWS vii. 25.

What He has promised, Able also to perform. ROMANS iv. 21.

Able to make you stand. ROMANS xiv. 4.

Able to keep that which I have committed unto Him. 2 TIMOTHY i. 1.

Able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified. ACTS xx. 32.

Able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think. EPHESIANS iii. 20.

Able to subdue all things unto Himself. PHILIPPIANS iii. 21.

BELIEVE YE THAT I AM ABLE TO DO THIS!
MATTHEW ix. 28.

Buds and Blossoms,

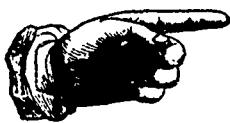
EDITED BY

J. F. AVERY,

Published Monthly at Halifax, N. S.

Price Seven Cents.

Post Free One Year, Seventy-five Cents.



PROFIT AND LOSS.

A TEXT FOR PRACTICAL AND BUSINESS MEN!

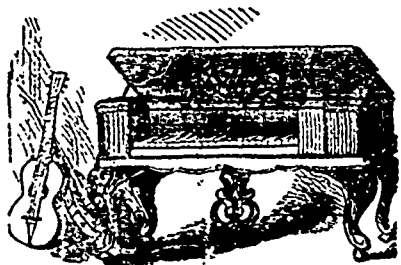
Jesus saith, What is a man profited if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?

What shall he give in exchange?

OUR LIST OF ADVERTISERS.

See Advertisements on 3rd page of cover in reversed order.

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Pianos, Organs, Sheet Music, Music Books

and everything in the musical line.

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WILL IT PAY?

Weigh well the practice of sin, and ponder this question,—remembering that

“The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is Eternal Life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.”—Rom. vi. 23.

Dare you risk your soul?

THE

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OF THE NORTH END!

Hundreds daily patronize this Popular

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Because they get better value for their money than elsewhere.

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ALWAYS TO BE HAD.

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THE TABERNACLE DIRECTORY,
Brunswick Street.

Pastor—REV. J. F. AVERY.

Residence—Mizpah Cottage, Kempt Road, Halifax, N.S.

Deacons—DAVID MCPHERSON, J. E. IRISH, CALER LANGILLE, THOS. COVEY.

A CORDIAL WELCOME

To any families who have moved into the district, and who may have no stated church-home, or Sunday School.

Motto—"THE LORD OF HOSTS IS WITH US; THE GOD OF JACOB IS OUR REFUGE."—Psalm xlvi 7. 11.

ORDER OF RELIGIOUS SERVICES.

Sundays.—Morning, preaching at 11; evening, preaching at 7. *Lord's Supper* at close of every first Sunday in the month. *Strangers are welcome. All seats free. The cause is sustained by the WEEKLY OFFERINGS OF THE PEOPLE. Sabbath School meets at 2.30 p. m.*

Week Days—Tuesday, Ladies' Prayer Meeting at 7.30, p.m. General Prayer Meeting on Tuesday and Friday evenings at 8 o'clock. Missionary Prayer Meetings first week in each month; and Conference Meeting first Friday in each month.

TABERNACLE BUILDING FUND.

Donations will be thankfully received towards completing the Tabernacle, and extending the various enterprises, by the pastor, J. F. AVERY, or treasurer J. E. IRISH.

BUDS AND BLOSSOMS.

Please try and introduce this paper into other families and you will help and encourage us. We aim to circulate a large number gratuitously, believing thus we can sow the good seed of the Kingdom. Price, if prepaid, only 75 cents.

*Halifax ... \$1.50
June 27/69*

BUDS AND BLOSSOMS,

AND

Friendly Greetings.

"Israel shall blossom and bud and fill the world with fruit."

VOL. VIII.—No. 1.

JANUARY, 1884.

{ WHOLE No. 85.

What is your Life?



It may help to strike home the question to repeat it thus. **FIRST**—*What has been your past life?* **SECONDLY**, *What is your present life?* **THIRDLY**, *What is to be your future life?*

The Editor in putting this solemn appeal, desires to awaken serious consideration, for in most cases it is not ignorance that makes men careless and irreligious, so much as inattention.

1883 is gone, gone, and gone forever!

Some of our actions during the past year gladden memory to recall, others awaken sad and solemn reflection. What is! What might have been!

Time was, time is, but already, 1884 is passing. *What is your life? What is your life to be?* **NOW IS THE DAY OF SALVATION.**

O seek the Lord, whose love draws nigh
In yearning pity, lest the door
Should shut and mock the awful cry—
"Too late, too late, for evermore!"

A life once spent is irrevocable. It will remain to be contemplated throughout eternity. If it be marked with sins, the marks will be indelible. If it has been a useless life, it can never be improved. Such it will stand for ever and ever.

The fool counts on to-morrow; the wise man saith, to-day is the day of salvation, and now the accepted time of mercy and opportunity. *Each day, when it is once past, is gone forever.* What thou doest do quickly. Time shall sometime be no more. Who knows when or where the end? Many die every hour. Time and tide wait for no man's will or pleasure. Soon the tasks undone, can never be done; the *old year 1883* is gone, gone forever. Nothing but the perfection and blood of Jesus can atone for past imperfections. He holds the balances, and can redeem the past, which cannot be ransomed with corruptible things such as silver and gold, but can be pardoned and atoned for, BY HIS OWN PRECIOUS BLOOD.

Apart from eternal motives, we do well to be sober, not wasteful of life's golden moments, lest life's winter-time find us shelterless, and comfortless in the wide, wide world.

Let us now resolve and act. Our gracious master, knowing our frailty and what the danger, teaches us humbly to pray:

"Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil," or, "the evil one."

"If aught should tempt my soul to stray
From heavenly wisdom's narrow way,
To fly the good I would pursue,
Or do the sin I would not do;
Still He who felt temptation's power
Shall guard me in that dangerous hour."

As stated elsewhere, in faith we gave orders to double our issue, and after making the contract sometimes unbelief has asked, "How about the increased expenditure?" So far whilst many have sent for specimen copies and promised to canvass, few have made returns.

Nevertheless we know the motive which started Buds and Blossoms and have faith in our God. Our large increase of advertising patronage evidences we are not reaching out in vain, and that our magazine is not only a *medium of good*, but a good medium for reaching others, and this encourages us.

The Regions Beyond, or, Mission Musings.

The Christian's *marching orders* are very plain and emphatic, "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations." Matt. xxviii. 19.

"Go" does not mean "send." "Go" does not mean "pray." "Go" means "Go," simply and literally.

"Surely Thou hast some work for me to do!

O, open thou mine eyes

To see how Thou would'st choose to have it done,
And where it lies."

Let us not forget to pray for missions and missionaries. Faithful, earnest prayer for Missions is obedience to a supreme command. "Pray ye therefore" (Matt. ix. 38) is as imperative as "Go ye therefore" (Matt. 28. 19). It is but an enlargement of the petition of the Lord's Prayer, "Thy kingdom come." It is offered in the name of Christ and in His Spirit. It is in sympathy with the labors and entreaties of the great apostles of the Gentiles, and will have all the earnestness, perseverance, and importunity belonging to that "effectual fervent prayer of the righteous man" which is commended in the word of God.

If you do not work and pray for missions, you deny God's universal love. You cannot believe that the gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. You deny its efficiency. You cannot believe that he was the Son of God, or has any claim upon your obedience who said: "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel unto every creature." You deny his authority.

For it is as clear as noonday, that if you believed in God's loving wish to save men, and the power of the Gospel to save, and that it was God's Son, and not an

impostor, who gave the command to preach the gospel throughout the world, then you must believe in home and foreign missions.

Hints and Helps for Workers.

It is every Christian's duty to watch and pray. Temptations not only lie in the idler's pathway, but empty hands invite Satan's co-operation.

A good prayer before each public service: "God bless our dear pastor; lift him above all discouragements; help him to stay behind the cross, and preach Jesus only; Holy Spirit, come; clothe our pastor's words with power; breathe upon the slain."

Why should not all the church be visited with a powerful revival of religion! Why? It is certainly God's will that such a revival should be experienced. Then let every church rally for it. Don't wait for foreign help; begin at once. Don't depend on any "revivalist" or "praying bands!" Use the ordinary means and depend on the divine blessing. Expect it. If you do not see all you desire at once, don't be discouraged. Hold on, pressing your suit at the throne of grace with more earnestness. Resolve you will not yield till the object is gained. You will succeed; the revival will be experienced.

In every body organized for action, members that do not contribute to its strength are elements of weakness; much more are any who are unfaithful to the purpose of its existence. To exclude them is to diminish the apparent but to increase the real strength. Apply this to churches.

"Love—Light—Life. You have them all in Christ. The love which loves for ever is the love which He constrains. The life which lasts for ever is the immortality He breathes. The light which is all East, and knows no setting, is the daylight of His noon. Come to Him, ye broken, and let His love encircle you. Let Him kiss thee with the kisses of His mouth, for His love is better than wine. Toss off the clods and graveclothes, ye entombed dead, and Christ shall give thee life; and hear the cry as it rings alike amidst your halls of knowledge and your hells of night: "Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee."

HOW TO IMPROVE THE PRAYER-MEETING.

1. Think about it all the day, and anticipate it with pleasure.
2. Be sure to be in time, if at all possible, and take your seat close up to the platform.
3. Sing cheerfully. Bright joyous singing wonderfully helps a live prayer-meeting.
4. If the meeting is left open for any brother to pray, rise quickly and testify how highly you value the privilege of joining in the prayer of the church.
5. When you rise to pray, be sure to be brief, burning, and believing.
6. When you pray, be thankful to God for every token of blessing He has given the church and the Sunday-schools.
7. When the meeting closes, give a hearty shake of the hand to the stranger, and speak a kindly word to your brethren. Try and make the prayer-meeting as much like a family gathering as possible.
8. When you mention the prayer-meeting during the week, tell how good and how pleasant you found it to be.

If this does not improve the prayer-meeting, then be more earnest in private prayer on behalf of the church, and resolve, whoever else may be absent, you will not forsake the opportunity of assembling yourself, together with your brethren, in earnest waiting upon God, until He is pleased to command the blessing.

At any rate, resolve if the prayer-meeting be not in a healthy state *it shall not be your fault.*

A Happy New Year to All.

WE feel our responsibilities in editing and sending forth the *Eighth Volume* of BUDS AND BLOSSOMS, and hope for a kind and friendly greeting.

By the blessing of God we fully expect to scatter more pages every month, than we issued during the entire year, the first few years of our struggling into existence. If our friends heartily co-operate in extending the circulation so as to make a paying list sufficient with our advertisements to meet actual expenses, and the demands of others, we shall be thankful, and willing to give as heretofore our time and effort, conscious that we shall gather fruit, if not in time, by-and-by. Please give us your prayers and a kind word, and thus help on the good work of sending Friendly Greeting and a Gospel Message unexpected into many a home. Our BUDS AND BLOSSOMS go regularly into India, England, Bermuda, United States, Cape Breton, P. E. Island, New Brunswick and Canada.

WE thank the following who in paying their subscription sent \$1.00, and credit 25c. each to our free list. Many during the past year have kindly and thoughtfully taken an interest and aided in this good work. Mr. Elias Covey, Mr. F. J. Wyatt, Mr. F. Cooper, Mr. W. Davies, Mr. Halliday, Mr. Burgis, Mrs. Spry, Enos Mason, Ellen Ernest, Mr. Gaston, William Pearce, 2 subscriptions. Mr. Clayton kindly paid \$1.00 and sent \$1.00 donation. Hon. Dr. Parker, D. C L., \$2.00. More to follow.

The Study Table, New Books and Exchanges, &c.

Booth, or the factory boy who became a Gospel Temperance Evangelist. Preface by Canon Basil Wilberforce. Published by Passmore & Alabaster, London, England. It is a touching story well told. A tale of deliverance from the drink's power, and it is a wonderful illustration of the mighty result of sanctified effort. By the grace and blessing of God, Booth the rescued, has been grandly successful in rescuing the perishing. Figures cannot tell the results of the *Bit of Blue*, for by his persuasion and eloquent gospel addresses, a multitude have been led to pledge themselves.

The Roll Call, or erasure column of our Baptist Year-Book. Published by E. Marlborough & Co., London, England.—Is a circular letter by Rev. W. March, and contains important facts, confessions, suggestions and tabulated statistics on a very important subject. Price 5c.

This being our new year's number, press of matter will compel us to hold over the other notices. Publishers if they wish can state the prices when sending books to the editor. See full address on cover.

Thoughts Gathered and Kindled by Reading Thoughts of the Thoughtful.

CHURCH FINANCE.

There seem to be three classes of givers. First of all, the liberal man who is a joy to the office-bearers and all who have the responsibility of carrying on church work. Then there is the not illiberal man, but the fitful irregular giver who gives according to the pressure put upon him, who seems to have no definite or systematic plan, giving according to the melting mood in which he may happen to be. A third class of givers are those who habitually give as little as is decent.

Paul gives an apostolic injunction to the Corinthians to lay by as the Lord has prospered them. If we look at the working out of this plan of storing we shall see that it removes a difficulty. If we first of all lay by a portion of our gettings for the Lord, whether they come into our possession weekly or at longer intervals, we have only to divide it as we think it should be applied. I fear this storing is anything but general, and the result is that when an appeal is made we have to consider what we have in pocket, and whether we can spare it. Give frequently. That is very important. We certainly ought to give something every time we enter the house of the Lord. It is a very much easier matter to give regularly in that way than at longer intervals. Suppose a man is in the habit of giving half-a-dollar as he enters his place of worship. If he forms that habit he may do it with the utmost pleasure and comfort. But suppose he leaves it off and gets into arrears; suppose he does not give for four or six weeks, perhaps from carelessness in not preparing the way; he feels in his conscience he ought to give it; he looks in his purse; it is more difficult to give six or eight half-dollars than one. That is human nature, and so for this among other reasons, I say it is a duty to give what we ought to give every Sunday morning in the year.

We shall never be in a condition of perfect solvency as to our finances, either in churches and societies, until we admit boldly, honestly, and conscientiously the Scriptural principles of voluntaryism.

The pros and cons of two who recently debated on this subject are worth notice. "Pew-rents are mischievous in every possible way." I quite agree with him. He says that the expenses of public worship should be defrayed by the voluntary subscriptions of the seat-holders. I quite agree with him. He advises that envelopes should be distributed to those who will consent to give weekly, and papers to those who prefer to give quarterly. That is a good system, but it is not voluntaryism. It is simply a system of pew-rents with one or two redeeming qualities. It is better a good deal than the pew-rent system, but it is only a modification of it, substituting for a hard and rigid sum fixed by the deacons a more elastic and flexible arrangement between the individual and the deacons—a sort of obligation or contract under which the man may place himself. It is not, therefore, voluntaryism. What is voluntaryism? It is a matter between God and ourselves, not between man and man; it is not a reckoning or a bargain between the deacons and the seat-holder, but a heart-searching reckoning between God and ourselves, with which a

stranger may not inter-meddle. We ought to give according as our hearts and consciences direct—give first of all this affectionate and grateful tribute to God for His mercies toward us. And until we throw ourselves into this broad and Scriptural principle of voluntary giving, we shall never cover the deficiencies of our churches. Look at the expedients which have been tried for fifty years or more to enable us to pluck the fowl without making it cry.

THANKSGIVING DAY we have generally had a tea meeting to help raise the rental or interest, \$105, on our lot, independent of our Weekly Offering, which has hitherto, and we believe always will be whilst we are honest one to another and faithful to our God, (read article on finance) sufficient to sustain the regular service of God's house. This year it was proposed to try an experiment, to do away with the tug and toil, and try and meet the expense by an extra offering from the church and congregation. Without any formal programme, Mr. G. Street and Mrs. W. Davies kindly consented to take charge of the subscription list, and the result below shows how cheerfully and effectually they and all worked in this, as in other things. The result in no small measure cheered us. Far exceeding our expectation, and any thing we ever did at our semi-annual tea-meetings for this special object.

Collected and paid by Mr. Street.—Mr. J. E. Irish, \$5. Mr. and Mrs. Street, \$2.00; Miss Smith, \$1.00; Mr. and Mr. Phillips, \$1.00; Mr. Crow, \$1.00; Mrs. Estano, \$1.00; Miss Salsman, \$1.00; Mr. Whidden, \$1.50; Miss E. Whidden, 50 cts.; Mr. W. Hubley, \$1.00; Mr. Manuel, \$1.00; Mr. S. Richardson, 50 cts.; Mr. Hartlin, \$1.00; Mr. M. Trider, 50 cts.; Miss Lizzie Clawson, 50 cts.; Miss A. Clawson, 50 cts.; Mr. Wyatt, 50 cts.; Mr. Herman, \$1.00; Mrs. J. F. Avery, \$2.00; Mr. Blakney, 25 cts.; Miss Blakney, 25 cts.; Mrs. Corkum, 50 cts.; Mr. and Mrs. Covey, Sr., \$1.00; Mr. Thos. Covey, 50 cts.; Miss McCabe, 50 cts.; Mr. and Mrs. Amer, \$1.00; Mrs. Bartlow, 25 cts.; Mrs. Corkum, 25 cts.; Mr. Cyrus Hubley, Sr., \$2.00; Miss Ella Covey, 50 cts.; Mr. Myers, \$1.00; Miss Davies, 50 cts.; Mrs. Hunt, 50 cts.; Mrs. Dalrymple, 50 cts.; Mr. Myers, \$1.00; Mrs. Baker, 25 cts.; Friend, 50 cts.; Mr. Inglis, \$1.00; Mr. and Mrs. Mason, \$2.00; Mr. Byers, \$2.00; Mr. Lawler, \$1.00; Miss E. Ernest, 50 cts.; Capt. Hire, \$1.00; Mr. and Mrs. Evans, \$1.00; Mr. and Mrs. O'Donovan, \$1.50; Mr. T. J. Halliday, \$2.00; Mr. Langille, \$2.00; Miss S. Chadwick, \$1.00; Mr. E. Hubley, 50 cts.; Mr. Keddy, \$1.50; Mr. Geo. Hushman, \$1.00; Miss S. Blakney, 50 cts.; Mr. Rooome, 1.00; Mrs. Keith, 25 cts.; Mrs. Mrs. Trenaman, 50 cts.; Mr. Gabriel, 50 cts.; Mr. J. K. Hubley, \$6.00; Miss E. Hubley, 50 cts.; Mrs. Wilson, \$1.00; Mr. Gaston, \$3.00; Mrs. Dr. Clay, \$1.00; Fredrick Clay, 25 cts.; Thomas Clay, 25 cts.; Grace Clay, 25 cts.; Mattie Duckworth, 25 cts.; Mr. James McPherson, \$20.00.

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We are thankful, 1st to our God; 2nd to our earnest co-workers.

Ribbon of Blue, or Temperance Jottings.

Questions Needing an Answer.

Will it pay to rob a town of much of its sense, morals and intelligence by selling its citizens intoxicating drinks as a beverage and making them drunk?

Does it pay to have our sons and daughters, the joy, pride and light of our homes, thus robbed of their brains and sent early to fill a drunkard's grave and find their hell at last, just that one son of Belial may live without work and grow rich out of our misery?

Does it pay to compel a hundred families to endure grief and loss, to subsist on beans and chopped feed, and often not enough of that—not an overdrawn picture as thousands can testify—that one saloon-keeper, the legal leech of society, may live on fat turtle dress in broadcloth, live in a palace, drive fast horses and ride in a silver mounted carriage, while the victim of his greed goes hungry, ragged and cold, an outcast in society and a vagabond, while his hapless wife and helpless, innocent children live in hovels and perish with hunger, want and cold?

PRACTICAL TRUTHS.—The woes of the drunkard are many. (1) A bad conscience. (2) A diseased body. (3) A life of bondage. (4) Liability to early and sudden death. (5) Eternal banishment from God and heaven.

A story is told of a tavern-keeper in Rensselaer county, N. Y., who abandoned the traffic in alcohol after having been engaged in it for several years. Whenever the subject of his selling liquor was referred to he seemed to feel deep sorrow and regret, and a friend one day inquired the cause. In reply he opened his account book. "There," said he, "are forty-four names of men who have been my customers, most of them for years. Thirty-two of these men now lie in a drunkard's grave, and ten out of the remaining twelve are confirmed sots."

We rejoice insteadily picking up recruits and pinning on a piece of blue at our Tabernacle meetings. A soldier returned us a pledge card sent to him, saying "you will be glad to know one of our worst tipplers signed it. Go on and God bless your efforts."

PASS IT ROUND.—People generally like to see BUDS AND BLOSSOMS in winter. If you get one or two extra, remember we want you to pass it round with a kind word; maybe it will increase the demand when it is known we send out such a pleasing variety of BUDS & BLOSSOMS, during winter, spring, summer and autumn, brought to the door for only seventy-five cents a year.

The offer of 5 DOLLAR GOLD PIECES for 20 new subscribers, and a good WATCH, strong and durable, for 25 new subscriptions still stands good,

Home Circle.

JOSH BILLINGS: "Next to a clear conscience for solid comfort comes an old shoe."

"WHAT are you doing there?" calmly asked an elderly and pious-looking skater of a young man who

had fallen on the ice and was rubbing his thigh with considerable energy. "Doing?" he exclaimed, pressing his jaws together to keep back a volley of profanity, "I'm trying to be a Christian."

SCOLDING.—Why do Christian parents scold? For two reasons, as it seems to us. First, from lack of self-control; secondly from habit. Children are often terribly trying, and loud, angry tones seem a safety valve for our stired tempers. Besides, we feel that gentleness alone can never safely steer the family bark over life's troubled sea. Force, firmness, decision, sternness, even severity, are often necessary. A suitable degree of these is not incompatible with gentleness. The gentleness that makes one great comes from subdued strength.—*Good Words.*

PATIENCE is always crowned with success. This rule is without an exception. It may not be a splendid success, but patience never takes anything in hand that she does not succeed with in some form.

SOME folk's tongues are like the clocks as run on strikin' not to tell you the time o' the day, but because there summit wrong i' their own inside.—*George Elliot.*

Olive Branches.

BIRTH, November 2nd, the wife of Mr. B. Fielding, a son.

FADED LEAVES.

When recording the above birth, we little thought that in one week we should have to announce that the reaper Death had cut down the little flower. "Ye know that the Lord gathers them into His Kingdom, it is well and may His grace comfort the wounded.

We have with sorrow to chronicle the death of a brother, beloved to the Lord, A. N. Archibald, Died Nov. 27th.

Devout men carried him to his burial and made lamentations. His record is on high. At the early age of 34 his Master called from us one who was a diligent worker amongst us as Superintendent of our Sabbath School, during which time as since, he was loved for his work's sake. His personal character, both as a man and Christian was such as to win our love, confidence and respect. We sympathise with the Tract Society, of which he was such an efficient secretary. But more so with his loved ones left behind. May the God of all grace supply them with needed comfort.

As our brother said during his last sickness "Heaven is my home." So we too realize, he is now resting from his labors, and believe his works will follow.

DIED—Nov. 22nd, aged 58, the father of our brother and Sister Meyers; deceased had long been feeding upon his earthly tabernacle, but within the grace of God had been graciously building him up in faith so that he had a desire to depart, knowing that it was far better to leave the body and go to be forever with the Lord, and to dwell where the inhabitants never say, "I am sick."

DIED—Dec. 1st, James Hurshman, aged 75 years. A few days before his death he said, "Long I have wandered from the fold. Last communion Sunday at the Tabernacle the preciousness of Christ's forgiving love was made manifest unto me, and now I am so happy in Jesus. If spared, my first journey shall be to tell saints and sinners what a pardoning God I have found. My soul longeth to sit with his people at the Lord's supper."

Look over this record of faded leaves; does it not prove we all do fade. 1st the little one, 2nd the strong man, cut down in his strength; 3rd, the old man with locks all white with the winter of age.

NOW IS THE DAY OF SALVATION.

FEEDING HIS ENEMY, AND OTHER SKETCHES.



THERE was once a slave in one of our West India islands, who, after his conversion to Christianity, was greatly valued by his master for his integrity and general good conduct. After some time he was raised to a position of importance in the management of the estate. His owner, on one occasion, wishing to purchase twenty additional slaves, employed him to make the selection, giving him orders to choose those who were strong and likely to make good workmen.

The man went to the slave-market, and commenced his scrutiny. He had not long surveyed the multitude offered for sale, before he fixed his eye intently upon one decrepit old slave, and told his master he must be one. The master appeared greatly surprised at his choice, and remonstrated against it; but the poor fellow begged that he might be indulged, when the dealer remarked that if they were about to buy twenty he would give them the old man into the bargain. The purchase was accordingly made, and the slaves were conducted to the plantation of their new master; but upon none did the selector bestow half the attention and care

he did upon the poor and decrepit African. He took him to his own habitation, and laid him upon his own bed; he fed him at his own table, and gave him drink out of his own cup. When he was cold he carried him into the sunshine, and when he was hot he placed him under the shade of the cocoa-nut trees.

Astonished at the attention bestowed on a fellow-slave, his master interrogated him upon the subject. He said :

"You could not take so intense an interest in the old man but for some special reason; he is a relative of yours, perhaps your father?"

"No, massa," answered the poor fellow, "he no my fader."

"He is then an elder brother?"

"No, massa, he is no my broder."

"Then he is an uncle, or some other relative?"

"No, massa, he no be of my kindred at all, nor even my friend."

"Then," asked the master, "on what account does he excite your interest?"

"He my enemy, massa," replied the slave. "He sold me to the slave-dealer; and my Bible tell me, 'When my enemy hunger, feed him; and when he thirst, give him drink.'"

Might not this slave teach a good lesson to many a finished lady and gentleman in this Christian land? But some whose conscience tells them that they have not acted entirely in conformity with our blessed Lord's command, and who, without actually doing any harm to those who, they feel, have acted badly towards them, are still content to live estranged from them, without meeting, or speaking, or showing brotherly love in any way, may say, "Oh yes, it is not difficult to act as the slave did toward an enemy! I, too, could do the same. But it is very different when one's own brother or sister, or one's intimate friend, to whom one has shown many kindnesses, becomes cold or unkind; and I do not see that, in such a case, one is called on to make the first advance."

SHALL I MEET YOU THERE?



"Why did you stay so long last night, father? Mother cried."

Such was the mournful but piercing cry of Helen Rich to her father, as he sat at breakfast one morning, when his haggard countenance told too plainly the melancholy reason of his being so late. The affectionate earnestness of his artless daughter, scarcely four years old, the consciousness

of his own guilt and folly, and the sight of his wife's tears—for the fountain of grief was again unsealed—went like an arrow to his heart, and awakened deep and bitter feelings in his soul.

Mr. Rich was the son of a planter in Virginia, United States. In his early life no pains were spared to instruct him in the principles of morality. Naturally possessed of a noble and aspiring disposition, and endowed with strong intellectual powers, the facilities provided for their cultivation were improved with diligent care. He entered upon the profession of the law, with bright anticipations and the most flattering prospects. He fixed his residence near his father's house, and soon found himself completely

settled, and occupied the position of one of the brightest ornaments of the vicinity.

He found a congenial spirit in Caroline Brown. The standing of Miss Brown's family was equal to that of his own. Her father had sacrificed most of his property in the land speculations which prevailed to a great extent throughout Virginia. He had, however, bestowed upon his daughter every accomplishment that wealth could supply. They were married. Everything in anticipation appeared bright and glowing. But one thing was wanted to make the reality correspond with the external appearance, neither of them being a professor of religion.

For a year or two all seemed fair and happy. The birth of a daughter had cemented their union, and furnished another pledge to industry and morality. About this time, however, Mr. Rich began to associate with a circle of gay companions, who unhappily soon obtained a complete ascendancy over him. "Live while you may," was their motto; and its effects were soon visible in Mr. Rich. His business was deserted for the sports of the turf, to which he had become passionately attached, and this at once introduced its attendant vices and shame.

Of course his home no longer retained its former attractions, and the entreaties and tears of his wife proved weaker than the persuasions and company of his companions. We need not repeat the familiar, melancholy tale of business deserted, family forsaken and reduced to penury, and all the catalogue of evils consequent upon an intemperate husband and father. They all followed. "Lo! this is the man that made not God his strength."

Such was the state of things when our readers were introduced to Mr. Rich at the breakfast table. Soon after the scene we have narrated had taken place, the daughter was attacked with a serious illness, and for several days lingered on the border of the grave.

This painful event seemed to call back the father from the fatal scenes to which he had been drawn. With his wife he watched the bedside of the little sufferer, day by day, as her disease progressed with a rapidity that soon banished all hope, and bade the sorrowing parents prepare for the severing of the dearest tie which had bound them together.

The day before her death Mr. Rich came to the bedside of his daughter.

Turning upon him the calm and expressive look of a sainted sufferer, and stretching towards him her emaciated arms—"Father," she said, "I am glad to see you; I am going to die; I shall go to heaven and live with Christ. Oh, father! shall I meet *you* there?"

Had a revelation from heaven burst upon the astonished father it would hardly have subdued him more. "Shall I meet *you* there?" in the sweet tones of his dying daughter, rang in his ears and pierced his soul. His own salvation became with him the subject of serious inquiry, and, together with his wife, he soon after found "peace in believing," and united himself with the church. Both became active and influential instructors in the Sabbath-school, and honourable and respected members of society.

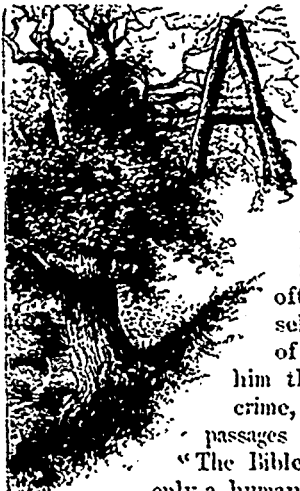
Helen Rich, though less than five years old, had died in all the bright faith and hope of the Christian. What had thus contributed to fix her tender affections on the Saviour? All was mystery to the parents. Never had she been taught the way of salvation from their lips or by their actions. Inquiry solved the mystery.

A few weeks before her death, her former nurse, a pious member of a Methodist church, had passed through the place, and in spending a few hours with her former charge, had seized the occasion to impress upon her infant mind the more obvious and simple truths of Christianity.

The seed thus sown by the very wayside soon took root, and brought forth rich and abundant fruit. An illiterate Methodist woman had been the means of converting to God an entire family, and the instrument of their restoration to happiness and respectability. Mr. Rich was for many years one of the most distinguished lawyers of his native state, while his influence, brought through this poor woman to aid the cause of religion, is now, perhaps, telling upon the destiny of thousands.

Thus it is that God works by the humble and obscure. A word in season, how good is it! It is in the cottage and in the cabin—ay, often in the meanest hovel—that the truths of the Saviour have flourished with the greatest luxuriance. Driven from palaces and halls of wealth, often has Religion assumed the garb, and sat in brightest joy at the fireside of the poor, where her purest followers, as well as at times her most effective advocates, have been found. No truth is brighter on her front than that no sphere is too humble to spread her conquests, no station too low to preach her truths.

THE BLIND MERCHANT.



MERCHANT who had thought only of making his fortune, was suddenly visited with a terrible affliction; he became blind. Knowing that there was no hope of any cure, his life appeared to him an intolerable burden, and he often talked of freeing himself from it by suicide. One of his friends represented to him that this would be a great crime, proving it by different passages of Scripture.

"The Bible," said the merchant, "is only a human invention, made to keep the people in ignorance."

"May I ask if you have ever read it?"

"Yes, when I was at school; but since that time I have not."

"If that is the case, I hope you will not say any-

thing more about the Bible, for you have not opened it since you have been capable of forming a mature judgment respecting its contents."

The merchant became more serious, and requested his friend to read the Bible to him in his leisure hours. This proposal was joyfully accepted. The pious friend began with the Old Testament, taking care to point out the passages in the New which attest the fulfilment of each promise. He read thus the first chapters of Genesis; and already the infidel could not repress his admiration. "I have never," said he, "read anything approaching to this sublime language."

The second day he exclaimed, "What a wretch I am to have spoken against such a book, when it was utterly unknown to me!"

The readings were continued, and the impression produced upon his mind became deeper and deeper. The blind man ceased to complain and murmur, for he saw the hand of God in his affliction. His desire to hear the Bible became so great that he could occupy himself with nothing else. He became very anxious; he wept over his iniquities and his delay in seeking the way of salvation; and he heartily thanked the Lord for having closed his bodily eyes, in order to open the eyes of his soul. At length he was fully converted.

"This merchant still lives among us," adds the writer from whom these details are taken. "He is a devoted Christian, and, amid natural darkness, walks in the light of faith."

TRUE HAPPINESS.

THE true happiness and the true dignity of man can be founded only upon the faith of Christ, and this is alone maintained and nourished by the earnest study of the Word of God.

William Penn, the founder of Pennsylvania, relates an excellent saying on this subject of Count Oxenstiern, Chancellor of Sweden, who governed the kingdom after the death of Gustavus Adolphus.

The Count received a visit in his retirement from the English ambassador, and concluded a long conversation with these words: "I have seen much of the world, and partaken of all its enjoyments, but only now have I begun to live. I thank God that He has given me time to know Him, and to know myself. All the happiness I enjoy—and I have more than the whole world could give—I find in the love of God, and in reading this blessed book," placing his hand as he spoke on the Bible.

"You are now in the flower of your age, and in all the strength of youth; you are in high favour, and employed in great affairs; but all this will pass away from you, and you will one day remember what I now say to you. You will feel then that there is more wisdom, and truth, and contentment in turning away your heart from the world, and giving it to the Lord, than in living in courts and possessing the favour of kings."

THE END OF THE UPRIGHT.



DR. SHIRLEY, the subject of the following sketch, shortly after having been appointed bishop of the diocese of Sodor and Man, was, while traveling, attacked by an illness, which, without at first seeming very dangerous, speedily assumed a fatal aspect. The subjoined extract from his biography will show what "perfect peace" attended the closing scene of his eminently holy and useful life.

The bishop had earnestly requested his wife not to conceal the result of the consultation, adding, "I should wish to know it, whatever it may be."

Accordingly, when sufficiently recovered from the dreadful shock (the physicians report had been decidedly unfavourable) to be able to speak, Mrs. Shirley, accompanied by her son, went into the room, and asked if she should read to him a chapter from the Bible.

John xiv. was proposed, when he immediately said, "Why do you choose that chapter? Walter read it to me yesterday." It was then changed to 2 Corinthians v.

He listened with great attention, repeating after his wife parts that particularly struck him: especially the fourteenth verse, "For the love of Christ constraineth us," which he dwelt on with great emphasis; making, however, no remarks excepting on the vividness and earnestness of feeling displayed by the apostle in that chapter—so different from our own lukewarmness.

Prayer was then offered up, his wife and son both kneeling by his bedside; after which he was told that the chapter and prayer had his case in view, and that the fatal termination of his illness was but too probable. The look of earnestness which he turned on his wife and son can never be forgotten by them; but he said nothing, and showed no signs whatever of emotion, excepting that a slight perspiration appeared on his forehead.

In about a minute after he said, "What a very happy and blessed life I have had!" After this, some necessary allusions were made to his worldly affairs, and he became too much exhausted to converse.

In the evening, the same members of his family being present, he was asked whether he felt happy. "Perfectly," was his reply, "perfectly happy! The Lord knoweth them that are His."

Dr. Young, who was present, said afterwards, more than once, "The calmest man there! I could not have conceived it. I have been by hundreds of deathbeds, and never saw anything like it. Not a look, not a tone! and they seemed to have loved him so!"

In the course of the following day he said to his wife, "Oh, I have had during this illness such an in-

sight into the eternal world, that death seems a mere transition. I believe heaven to be only an expansion of that intense happiness which I am now enjoying in communion with God. Oh, what a bauble is this world! what a mere bubble to be caring about!"

Early on Friday morning, the 19th, Mr. R—— accidentally set the bed on fire whilst giving his patient some barley-water, and the whole furniture above his head was instantly in a blaze; but happily it was soon extinguished by the exertions of Mr. R—— and Sir M. Blakeston, who was then in the room.

Meanwhile the bishop was perfectly calm and placid, and did not speak or move a muscle.

When the fire was put out, he said, "You should never hold a candle inside a bed; it should be put on a table near."

To Dr. Young, who inquired on coming into the room if he had not been agitated by the frightful accident, he replied, "No; I am in God's hands. It would not certainly have been a pleasant death, but if it were His will that I should die so, what have I to say?"

Dr. Young immediately felt his pulse, and declared that not the slightest alteration in it had been occasioned by this strange and alarming occurrence.

Every morning he had a chapter from the Bible read to him, and afterwards a prayer offered up suitable to his state. He always chose a passage of the chapter on which to make a short practical comment.

When Mrs. Shirley was reading to him 1 John iv., he stopped her at the eighteenth verse, and repeated, "Yes, perfect love casteth out fear. He that feareth is not made perfect in love."

In the course of the afternoon he illustrated the meaning of the passage by saying, in answer to her question whether he was happy or comfortable, "Yes, I am quite content to live or die. I am in perfect peace. Yes, perfect love casteth out fear. I have no little scruples; a child who loves its father is not always thinking whether he is offending. He does his best to please him, and feels assured of his love."

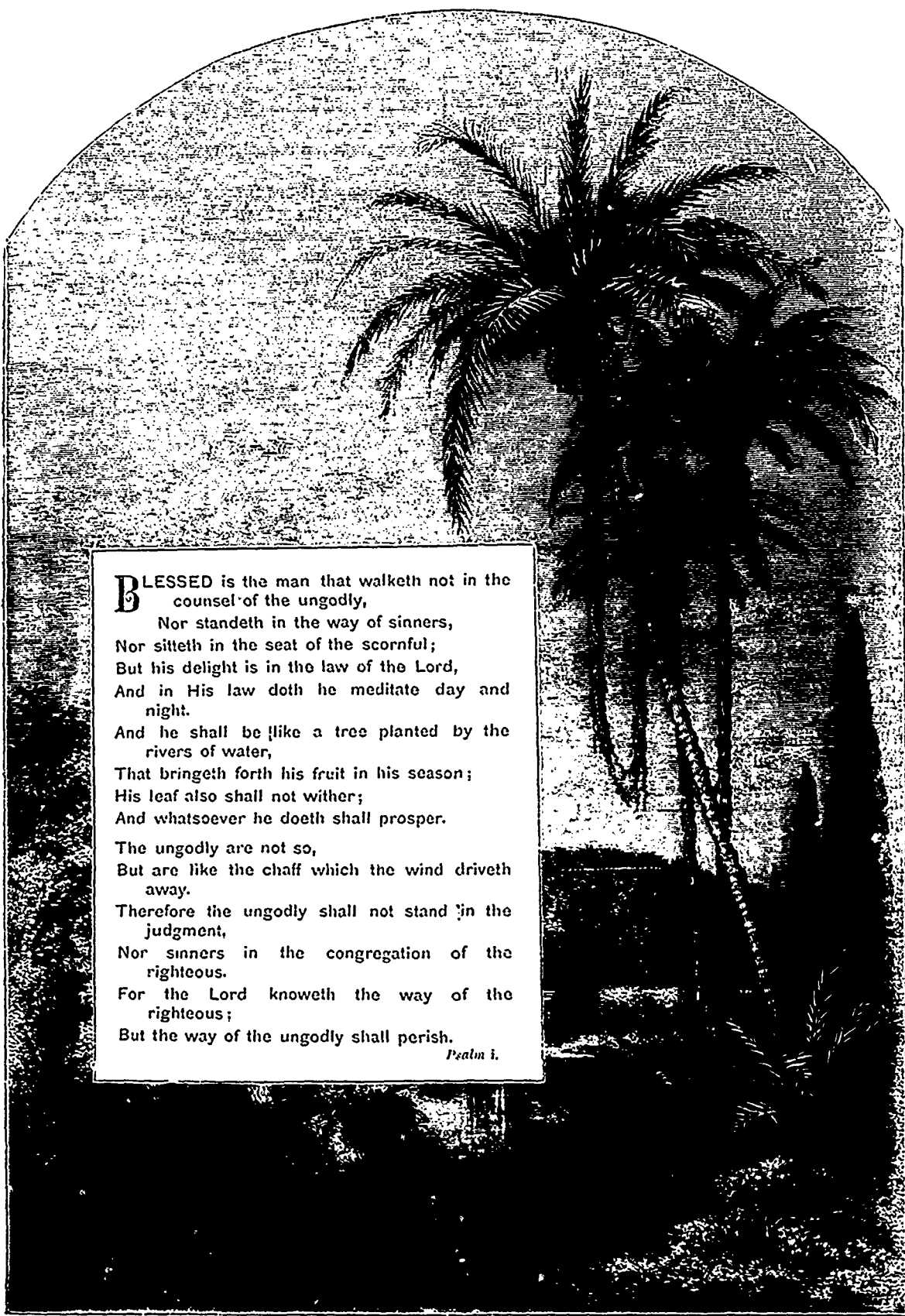
At another time he exemplified the same text thus to Dr. Young. On a female servant entering the room, he addressed her in terms of great kindness; when she left it he said, "I cannot treat servants as some people do; I could not bear to be served with fear; where there is fear there is no love. Perfect love casteth out fear."

An expression of individual tenderness and love was also directed to all around, as he evidently bade them each farewell in his heart. He also gave his blessing to one or two present, and again sent affectionate messages to friends. His last conscious act was to reprove his wife for weeping, by shaking his head. Soon after he became quite insensible whilst she was endeavouring to repeat to him Cowper's hymn, beginning—

To Jesus, the crown of my hope,
My soul is in haste to be gone:

and at eight o'clock a.m., April 21, 1847, after three deep sighs, he exchanged time for eternity.

BLESSEDNESS OF THE RIGHTEOUS.



BLESSED is the man that walketh not in the
counsel of the ungodly,
Nor standeth in the way of sinners,
Nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful;
But his delight is in the law of the Lord,
And in His law doth he meditate day and
night.
And he shall be like a tree planted by the
rivers of water,
That bringeth forth his fruit in his season;
His leaf also shall not wither;
And whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.
The ungodly are not so,
But are like the chaff which the wind driveth
away.
Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the
judgment,
Nor sinners in the congregation of the
righteous.
For the Lord knoweth the way of the
righteous;
But the way of the ungodly shall perish.

Psaln i.

THE WHOLE SCHOOL LOOKING ON.

I HAPPENED one day to be in a little village school, when I noticed one of the boys, whom I saw at once to be quite blind.

The mistress of the school was not very strict, at any rate, in regard to him. I dare say she was especially indulgent to him because of his blindness.

I was greatly amused by his antics. His sightless eye-balls rolled about in every direction, as though he saw everything, his face beamed with fun, and he was never at rest. It was as though he were strung on wires, kept in perpetual motion by a current of electricity. First, he brought his varied treasures out of a deep side-pocket, and spread them on his knee. He had a top, some marbles, a pea-shooter, a knife, a coil of string, and I can scarcely tell what besides. Tired of all these, he put them back again into his pocket, but it was only to play some sly pranks on the boys who sat next him.

The school was one of the old-fashioned sort, which existed long before the days of board schools; and it was kept by the wife of a worthy home-missionary in one of the colliery districts in the North of England.

Speaking afterwards to the minister and his wife of what I had seen, the good man said, "Ay, he's always after some mischief, and he thinks nobody sees him. Many a time when he thinks he has all his fun to himself, the whole school is looking on, and laughing at him."

I have often thought how many people there are in the world who are in one respect very like that poor blind boy. They think when they are doing things which they don't want to be known that nobody sees them.

There are many wrong things which men do which they do quite openly. Though they ought to know that they are wrong, they persuade themselves that there is at least no great harm in them; and perhaps the people with whom they associate think no worse of them because they do them. There are other things, however, which they would not dare to do if they thought they would become known.

A shop-boy or an assistant, for instance, robs his master's till, quite sure that nobody sees him, and that the money will never be missed; or a clerk falsifies his accounts; or a tradesman is guilty of some systematic dishonesty in the way he conducts his business. In regard to these and a great many other ways in which men sin, they feel quite sure that nobody knows.

Yet how often somebody does know! One of whom they may have no idea whatever that he suspects anything, may be watching them closely; letting them alone, perhaps, for a time, and so lulling them into a more complete security, and then startling them by telling them that he knows everything. It may be that he uses his knowledge like a tyrant, to keep the hapless wrong-doer in perpetual fear, or perhaps to compel him, for his own advantage, to do even a greater wrong. Or he may tell it to those who are injured by the wrong, and who will be sure to punish

it. Or it may be that many eyes are on the transgressor, and that his fault is widely known.

No doubt many bad things are kept secret for a long time, perhaps for years; nay, so far as men are concerned, they may be kept secret for ever. But then, hidden things do come to light so frequently that it would be wise for any man to regard it as very likely indeed that the evil thing which he is tempted to do, however secretly he may do it, may still be exposed.

And would it not further be wise to resolve that we will do nothing of which we should be ashamed, though parents, or master, or all the world should hear of it? Never let it be forgotten that one act of wrongdoing may blight a man's character for all his life. Nor let any one be ever sure, however long a secret may be concealed, that it will not come to light after all.

A case of this kind occurred within the writer's own knowledge. A man had committed a great wrong, which was known only to himself and another. It was kept secret for twenty-one years, but then his partner in sin confessed it when just about to die, and, hard as it might seem—for during all that time he had lived an upright and useful life—the survivor had to pay the penalty.

But there are far stronger motives for the avoidance of sin than any which can arise from the fear of exposure before men.

We should avoid what is wrong, *because* it is wrong, and we should do what is right *because* it is right. Think, too, there is an eye, unseen indeed, which never for a single instant loses sight of any one of us, and which marks, not only what we do, but even our most secret thoughts. Need we say it is the eye of the great God our Maker, who is also our Judge, and who will bring every secret thing we do into judgment, whether it be good or bad? Well may we say as we ponder this—

Oh may these thoughts possess my breast,
Where'er I rove, where'er I rest;
Nor let my weaker passions dare
Consent to sin, for God is there.

And if, having truly repented of sin, and believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, we try by His grace to fulfil all duty, He will acknowledge us as His own in the great and final day, and welcome us to "the joy of our Lord."

S. G.

PRECEPT—PROMISE—PRAYER.

PRECEPT.—Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus. *Heb. xii. 1, 2.*

PROMISE.—In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness. *Zech. xiii. 1.*

PRAYER.—O remember not against us former iniquities; let Thy tender mercies speedily prevent us: for we are brought very low. *Psal. lxxix. 8.*

HOW TO DO GOOD.

DR. JOHNSON wisely said, "He who waits to do a great deal of good at once, will never do anything." Life is made up of little things. It is but once in an age that occasion is offered for doing a great deed. True greatness consists in being great in little things.

How are railroads built? By one shovelful of dirt after another; one shovelful at a time. Thus drops make the ocean. Hence we should be willing to do a little good at a time, and never "wait to do a great deal of good at once."

If we would do much good in the world we must be willing to do good in little things, little acts one after another; speaking a word here, giving a tract there, and setting a good example all the time; we must do the first good thing we can, and then the next, and the next, and so keep on doing good. This is the way to accomplish anything. Thus only shall we do all the good in our power.



FAITHFUL JACKEY.

IN 1844-5, under the auspices of the government, an attempt was made to raise the veil from the mysterious central region of Australia—an undertaking requiring the most patient perseverance, the greatest fortitude, and the highest moral courage, to be attended with any measure of success. Captain Sturt, already distinguished in the field of adventure, was appointed to the command of a party of seventeen assistants and followers.

Starting from Adelaide, his object was to strike through the country from south to north; and though he did not accomplish half the distance during an absence of eighteen months, the journey threw great light upon the condition of the interior, and is one of the most remarkable on record. It was appropriately commenced by the leader.

"I felt it a duty," says he, "I owed both to myself and to my men, before they finally left the habitations of civilised man, to address a prayer to Almighty God for His protection and guidance. The men stood uncovered around me; and having concluded it, I directed them to proceed on their journey."

On leaving the known districts, he was emphatically warned by the aborigines against proceeding into the interior.

"The bullocks," said they, "will hold their tongues out; the drays will be upset; you will all die; for there is neither water nor grass on the hills nor a stick to burn."

To this appalling picture of inland terrors, Sturt adds: "We have now arrived at the borders of the desert, which has foiled the most enterprising and the most undaunted of Australian explorers, and have now to try if we can penetrate its recesses. I can only say, that if I succeed in this great undertaking, it will be from the guidance of that good Being on whose aid and protection I have firmly relied."

The prediction of the aborigines proved true only in part. The expedition reached one of the most gloomy deserts ever trod by the foot of man. It consisted of small flats surrounded with sand-ridges, from eighty to a hundred feet in height. Tussocks of thick wiry grass and bushes mostly dead covered the sand-hills. Day after day presented the same scene. No shelter was obtainable from the fierce rays of the sun, except under the cart; and the deserts were silent as the grave.

Sturt advanced to within two degrees of the tropic of Capricorn, but no rain falling from July 17 to September 9, with another summer setting in, he wisely returned, and entered Adelaide, January 19, 1846.

"I could not," he observes, "bring myself to retreat; but, for some wise purpose of His own, it had not pleased Providence to prosper me on this as on former occasions, and in yielding at length to the force of circumstances, I did so under the influence of a Power I could not resist—a Power that extended His hand to save me from that destruction in which my own impulses would otherwise have involved me."

While searching for water on his retreat, a solitary pigeon, the only living thing that had been seen for some days, came flying over the sand-hills, pitched for a moment in some grass at a little distance, and then flew away. On going to the spot, a clear small pool was found by the thirsting wanderers. The bronze-winged pigeon has often in this way guided the Australian traveller to water.

Sturt, justly regarded as the father of South Australia, became blind soon after his journey, and was liberally provided for by the colony.

In 1848, Mr. Kennedy, an officer in the survey department, was despatched to examine York Peninsula, the northern extremity of Australia. He was landed at Rockingham Bay for the purpose, with eleven or twelve Europeans and his servant, an aboriginal native boy. They proceeded for the interior in high spirits, but unexpected difficulties arose, and the stock of provisions failed. It was then resolved to divide the party, the leader with four others pushing on to Cape York, to which point supplies were to be sent from Sydney, leaving nine behind.

Of the latter seven perished of ague, the effect of fatigue and unwholesome food; for they were compelled to subsist on the flesh of their horses dried in the sun. The two survivors were too weak to bury their deceased comrades, though eventually rescued themselves. Equally sad was the lot of the other company. One of the five of which it consisted accidentally shot himself, and was left in charge of two others, all of whom afterwards perished.

Mr. Kennedy himself, while pursuing his way to



The Dying Australian Explorer.

obtain succour, was speared to death by the hostile natives, but lingered two or three days affectionately attended by the native boy, his sole companion.

The latter following the directions of his dying master, buried his journals, and reached the point where the relief schooner was lying, the captain of which immediately proceeded in search of the first-mentioned party, and rescued the two survivors.

The account given by the native of his hapless master's death is simple and touching. "I asked him, 'Mr. Kennedy, are you going to leave me?' and he said, 'Yes, my boy; I am going to leave you.' He said, 'I am very bad, Jackey; you take the books, Jackey, to the captain; but not the big ones; the governor will give anything for them.' I then tied up the papers; he then said, 'Jackey, give me paper, and I will write.'

"I gave him paper and pencil, and he tried to write; and he then fell back and died; and I caught him as he fell back and held him, and I then turned round myself and cried; I was crying a good while, until I got well; that was about an hour; and then I buried

him. I dugged up the ground with a tomahawk, and covered him over with logs, then grass, and my shirt and trousers; that night I left him near dark.

"I would go through the scrub, and the blacks threw spears at me, a good many, and I went back again into the scrub; then I went down the creek which runs into Escape river, and I walked along the water in the creek very easy, with my head only above water, to avoid the blacks and get out of their way; in this way I went half a mile; then I got out of the creek and got clear of them, and walked on all night nearly, and slept in the bush without a fire."

Mr. Kennedy's journals were ultimately recovered, and the faithful Jackey was properly rewarded with a pension of twenty pounds a year for life.

Such a friend as this poor black was indeed faithful unto death; but the incident reminds us of the inspired words: "For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

MARTIN LUTHER AT HOME,

AND OTHER SKETCHES.



Christmastide in Luther's Home.

LUTHER's home at Wittenberg was a very humble cottage; but it was bright and cosy, with vines running over the windows, the chambers neatly kept, the little parlour opening out into a garden, in which the proprietor busied himself and took a special pride. He supplied his own table with vegetables and fruit, and—what was considered quite as important—with flowers. He boasts of his melons and cucumbers, and he writes to a friend that he “shall be crowned with roses” if he will come and see him. There was one gift which he said he could never decline—seeds for his garden. He constructed arbours, and kept a pretty fountain playing in the middle of the garden.

In that home he was himself its “fountain of joy.”

FRIENDLY GREETINGS. No. 176.

He had his fits of depression, for his health was never good, and his labours were exhausting, but he seldom showed them there. Cheerfulness was one of his most marked traits. He never lost his hopefulness, and rarely his flow of spirits. This was largely due to his unwavering faith in God. Out of the midst of the gloomy and sequestered Wartburg, we hear his strong voice rising through the foliage and echoing along the crags in the hymn, written there, which sounds the key-note of his whole career:—

“A mighty fortress is our God,
A bulwark never failing.”

When expecting hourly the Papal thunderbolt to fall upon his head, he quietly set his house in order,

so that he might "go forth prepared and girded, like Abraham, not knowing whither—or rather knowing most certainly, since God is everywhere." It was part of his creed to maintain a heart of hope. "God loveth not heaviness and doubtfulness of spirit; He hateth discomfoting doctrine, heavy and sorrowful cogitations, and loveth cheerful hearts."

He not only would not mope, but he kept open the vent and safety-valve of his humour. He enjoyed fun and made it. Often would he set the table in a roar with his quaint and witty sayings, and make the garden ring with his romps with the children. He would have his play and recreation. Amusement was as needful to his mind, he said, as food was to his body. He loved a game of chess; he busied himself in turning with a lathe; he enjoyed open-air exercise, such as throwing at a mark. He betook himself at all times to music as a resource and mental refreshment.

He must have been capital company. He had hosts of friends, and his cottage was the centre of attraction. Albert Dürer was an intimate acquaintance and visitor at his house. So was Lucas Cranach, who drew illustrations for some of his publications. His relations with the Electors Frederick and John of Saxony were most cordial. Count Mansfeldt, at whose house he died, and the Lady Alice, who was converted from bigoted Romanism by him, were on fraternal terms with himself and wife. His love for Melancthon was as that of David for Jonathan. The attachment between him and the fiery but faithful Justin Jonas, who attended him in his last journey and stood by his death-bed, was hardly less close or beautiful.

He was fond of companionship, of a pleasant chat with his friends and neighbours, and was social even to gaiety and joviality. "I am often glad to have even a child to speak to," he says. He goes further still, and confesses that, rather than be too long alone, he was wont to take great comfort in running out to the pig-pen, to look at the sturdy fellows there and hear them grunt. He found still better company, as well as better music, in his flute, on which he played the popular and patriotic songs of his day, and the more solemn anthems and chorals of the church.

The hymns which he composed, many of which are permanent additions to the worship of the church, are like the Psalms of David, the breathings of his own heart and the vital expression of his profoundest experience.

His letters to his wife and children are delightful. Catherine he would address as "My Rib," and write in an airy, loving strain which must have been as cheering to her as it is charming to us. To his children he would write quaint little allegories and fables, embodying wholesome instruction and admonition.

He was a firm and faithful father. On one occasion he would not suffer his son to appear before him for three days, till he had humbled himself and written an apology, and yet he was his children's favourite comrade. His recorded sayings of and to them give us some of our sunniest, as well as profoundest, glimpses of the nature of the man. He

and they would talk together with a prattling simplicity about Jesus and the Father and heaven. "My little Magdalene and Hans," he said, "are my effectual intercessors." When his infant child was brought to him in the nurse's arms, his blessing was, "Go thy way and be good. Money I shall not bequeath thee, but I shall leave thee a rich God, who will not forsake thee." When his infant daughter Elizabeth died, he writes: "How sick and wounded she has left my heart, almost as tender as a woman's . . . pray the Lord for me."

The death-bed scene of Magdalene, fourteen years old, is one of the most beautiful passages in Christian biography. "Oh, how I love her!" he exclaimed. "The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." He opened his Bible at Isaiah xxvi. 19, and tried to strengthen his own heart. And then he went to the child and said, "My darling little Magdalene, thou wouldest stay with thy father; but thou wilt gladly go to thy Father in heaven?" "Yes, dear papa, as God pleases."

A little later, as the end drew near, he said, "My daughter, enter thou into thy resting-place in peace!" She turned her dying eyes towards him, and said with sweet simplicity, "Yes, papa." Then the strong man bowed himself by the little bedside, weeping bitterly, and prayed for her soul and his. And, rising up, he took her in his arms, and there she fell asleep. He wrote brave and beautiful letters, though "quivering with vengeance against death," and inscribed over her grave in Latin the following epitaph:—

"Here sleep I, Luther's little daughter Magdalene,
And rest with all the saints in my little bed;
I was the child of death, and born of a sinful stock,
But by Thy blood redeemed, O Christ, I am alive!"

It is hard to tear ourselves from that bright and beautiful home, the happy harbour of God's saint on earth, the "behind the clouds," where the sun still shone, in the stormiest day. The emblem of that home was to be found in a picture which he had before him on his study wall, of the infant Jesus in the arms of His mother. Childhood and motherhood were the sweet sacraments of that home-religion.

He cared tenderly for his parents to the last, and had the joy of bringing them into the light of the Gospel. Writing to his father in his last sickness, he makes grateful mention of the "calumny, hatred, and danger," which he had borne for his son's sake. He writes touchingly to Melancthon of the "shock to his heart," at the loss of his father's "most sweet converse," and in thankful remembrance of one, who "through the sweat of his brow," had made him what he was.

His relations with his servants were kind and companionable. He and Wolfgang used to have merry times together turning on the lathe. When John left him after a long term of faithful service, Luther wrote to his wife to be sure and send him off with a handsome present, at any sacrifice to themselves. Though always a poor man, in part by his conscientiousness in giving up money derived from sources tainted with Romanism, he was magnificently generous. "Dear Kathie," he writes, "when we have no more

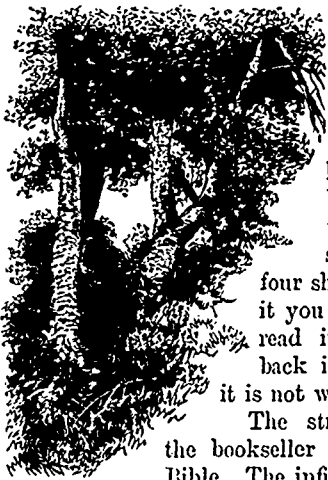
money, we must give the silver tankards;" and actually did give them, when he had no other means of helping the deserving poor.

He was thoroughly contented with his lot, and overflowed continually with thankfulness and keen enjoyment of God's most common and daily mercies. The world, whithersoever he turned his eyes, was full of miracles—miracles of mercy which the blind world perceives not, but winceat those who love God "rapturously rejoice and cannot enough wonder and praise."

The union of love and fear which he felt towards God as his Father is illustrated in the following, which is as characteristic as it is charming, and illustrative of his own paternal relations with his children. "When I am sitting and writing, my little son Hans sometimes sings a little song to me the while; if he makes it too loud I tell him so, and then he still sings on, but makes it softer, crowing on with a sweet little subdued voice, slyly watching me all the time. So would God have it with us, that we should be always rejoicing, yet with fear and reverence before Him."

Dr. Zabiskie.

THE POWER OF THE BIBLE.



STRANGER, who went to inquire for the writings of a famous sceptic, was told by the bookseller that he had not got them, but that he had another work far superior. "I sell it," said he "for four shillings; but I will lend it you if you will promise to read it, and I will take it back if you then think that it is not worth its price."

The stranger consented, and the bookseller fetched a copy of the Bible. The infidel smiled on seeing it, but would not retract his promise.

Some time afterwards, having read the Bible, he returned to the bookseller, and expressed his gratitude to him.

"You have given me," said he, "more than I can ever pay. I was miserable, and now I am happy. I have found in your book the way of salvation." From that time he lived a life of faith, and he died in the hope of a glorious eternity.

A French lady, a Roman Catholic, who had escaped the massacre of the whites in San Domingo, and through a long life had experienced great diversity of fortune, came to live in a small village. She scrupulously observed the forms of religion, but, not having received it into her heart, when sickness came upon her the fear of death filled her with the most painful anxiety; and she found that her religious exercises gave her no consolation.

She was struck by the contrast between her own case and that of one of her servants, who seemed to be always happy and contented in the performance of her humble duties. "My servant's religion makes her happy," said the lady to herself, "yet I am not comforted and supported by mine. Why is this?"

In her ignorance she betook herself to Voltaire and other infidel authors; but she was only the more cast down, and the fear of death haunted her continually.

At length a friend lent her a Bible. She read it most eagerly, and remained for several days shut up in her room, meditating and praying. At the end of that time she came again into her family, who were becoming anxious at her prolonged seclusion, and told them that the Lord had had mercy upon her, and that she had received the pardon of all her sins in Christ.

From that time, far from being afraid of death, she spoke of it with joy, and her last wish was that her husband should enter upon the same path into which the Lord had graciously guided her.

Make the experiment for yourself. Perhaps you have become an unbeliever only because you have always looked at religion through human weaknesses. Man and his miseries have concealed God from you. Try another way. Let there be no longer anything that comes between your soul and Christ—no veil to intercept the rays of the Divine light. Study the religion of the Lord in the book which He has dictated. You will at least learn not to confound the faith with the preacher of it; not to impute to it passions which it has already condemned more strongly than you can do. You will at least come into a calm, and pure, and holy atmosphere; and who can tell but that you may come out with a renewed heart, acknowledging, as so many others have done, that the Word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword?

GOOD AND BAD MATCHES.

SOME persons will suppose, from my title, that I am about to give a lecture on unsuitable marriages; others may imagine that my matches will be either lucifer, brimstone, or magic congreve; while it is possible that, knowing me to be a little excursive, a third party may expect from me a few remarks on the matches of running-horses at Ascot, Epsom, and Newmarket, or on those of sailing yachts on the river Thames. A few words will render my subject clear and intelligible.

Such of my readers as are acquainted with London, know very well that there is near Ludgate-hill a draper's shop of an imposing appearance. Having met with attention there, and good articles, now and then I have stepped in with a friend to become a purchaser. While there this morning, a lady, who was sitting at the counter ordering silks, satins, and other things, made use of the expressions, "That is a bad match!" "Oh, that is no match at all!" "Do

you think this will match?" and, "That is a very good match indeed!" There was enough in these expressions to catch my attention. I came away turning them over in my mind; and here am I seated at my study table writing this article on Good and Bad Matches.

A week ago I saw, in a party, two sisters, whose dresses showed great taste. They seemed to be perfect in fit, form, and the harmony of their colours. The conduct of the sisters was in keeping with their clothes—mien, manner, and behaviour, all was lady-like. The dresses and the wearers were an excellent match.

Well do I remember seeing a stranger, who seemed to have a decent black coat on his back, go suddenly into the sunshine, when it appeared that his coat was made of two kinds of cloth, very ill matched, for the body of the coat was of jet black, and the sleeves of blue-black; the latter, in the sun, having a purple hue. The stranger was a perfect fright. Thus it is with many; they are not what they appear to be, and they can no more bear the light of truth than the black coat could bear the sunshine.

A man with a new hat, and a pair of shoes out at the toes, a gold chain round his neck, and no gloves on his fingers, would be out of order; his gloveless hands and shattered shoes would be a sad match to his new hat and gold chain. In like manner, for one to be very poor, and exceedingly proud; very rich, and extremely parsimonious, must be out of order too, for parsimony and riches, poverty and pride, are unquestionably bad matches.

I do not point out these things by way of information, for everybody knows them, but merely to make myself clearly understood.

The more I reflect on this subject, the more interesting it seems to become. It is as though I were looking through a multiplying glass, for it presents itself in such numberless forms. Good matches there are, nay, excellent; but oh, what a number of bad matches are to be seen! What a strange mixture of wisdom and folly; prudence and recklessness; learning and levity; profession of piety and polka-dancing, there is in the world!

Let us try to put the subject in a yet stronger point of view. Who would wrap himself up in a shaggy great-coat in summer, and dress in nankeen during the winter; take coals to Newcastle to sell, or build a house for fresh air in St. Giles's; use water to trim a lamp, or oil to extinguish a fire; walk for pleasure in the fields when the storm was abroad, and remain indoors when the sun was in the sky?

These things would be out of the question; but are there none as strange as these that we perform? We see the mistakes and bad matches of others; are we equally lynx-eyed with regard to our own?

We think it odd that in Paris they should have masses in the morning, and masquerades at night; but do we never go to Divine worship in a light-hearted, merry-making spirit, and return home from the house of God talking of sticks and straws, or of things equally unimportant? We regret that heathens should bow down to stocks and stones, and worship what is made by men's hands; but have we no idols to whom our desires cling, and to whom we devote more time than we give to our heavenly Father? Let us be honest to ourselves, let us come home to our own hearts, and let our good and bad matches be more narrowly inspected than they have been.

I could not but observe that the lady whose words in the draper's shop supplied me with the title of this paper, did her best, not to hide, but to discover, the bad matches before her. She turned them to the light, and examined them again and again. Now I fear that many of us are apt to reverse this practice, and to do our best, where we discover a bad match in ourselves, to hide, and not to make it appear.

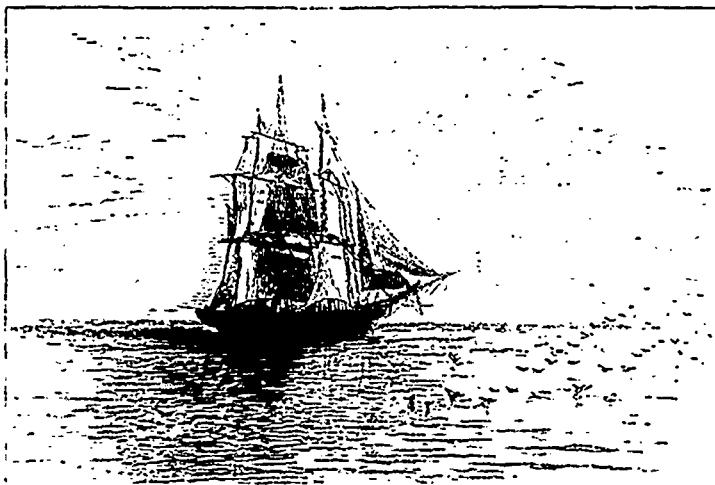
When Cain rose up against Abel his brother and slew him; when the children of Israel made the molten calf, when Korah, Dathan, and Abiram rebelled against Moses; when Judas betrayed his Master; and when Ananias and Sapphira kept back part of the price of the possession they had sold, and lied to hide what they

had done; how ill did their actions match with their duty! and what a price did they pay for their transgression! Were history, sacred and profane, to be searched for the bad matches it contains, the exhibition would affright us. A smooth tongue and deceitful bosom; an erring heart and an unforgiving spirit; promised bread and a given stone; a smile and a dagger; a kiss and a stab under the fifth rib, have too often gone together.

A hasty glance of my past life presents so many bad matches to my view, that, had I availed myself of no other, they would abundantly supply me with ample materials to illustrate my present remarks. Indeed, I am by no means certain that this paper will not be considered by some as one of my most striking examples. I will here, then, leave the subject to your consideration, only just reminding you that there are not only good and bad matches in dress, but also in language, manners, morals, politics, philanthropy, and religion.

Old Humphrey.





THE CREW OF THE "FLORENCE BARTON."

THE following striking narrative is taken from the very interesting volume by the Rev. Dr. J. D. Craig entitled, "Real Pictures of Clerical Life in Ireland."

My brother minister and I, one winter evening, at Kinsale, were startled by the intelligence that a barque-rigged craft, laden with palm-oil, from the African coast, had been brought into our harbour by the crew of the revenue cutter, who had found her drifting helplessly towards the coast.

Upon hailing her, a black face appeared over the bulwarks, and a voice replied that they were all dead or dying on board. Some of the crew of the cutter bravely volunteered to bring the barque into port, and she now lay at the mouth of the harbour, rising and sinking in the long swell that rolled in from the Atlantic.

Our Wednesday evening service had been concluded. The worshippers had left the stately old church of St. Multose, and we walked down to the pleasant little village of Cove, in order to procure a boat to put us on board the ill-fated craft.

After some delay, partly arising, I imagine, from reluctance on the part of the boatmen to approach the ship, we succeeded in getting a four-oared wale boat. Pushing off we pulled toward the mouth of the harbour.

The darkness of the winter's night fast shrouded the lessening shore, as we rapidly glided on our way; and a dense black funeral bank of clouds hung away to seaward, between which and our boat's head the taut spars and tracery of the African barque gleamed indistinctly on our view.

"That is the cutter on our starboard bow," said one of the men, as we swept by.

We were now nearing the object of our journey. A light spray, driven in our faces by the wind, told us that the breeze was freshening. All before us was thick, murky gloom. A light suddenly gleamed out from the fore-castle. We rowed alongside the ship, and in a few moments found ourselves on deck.

A coast-guard came forward to receive us. "I am truly glad to see you, gentlemen," he said; "the crew are in an awful state below. Here is the revenue doctor."

A young man in a sort of undress costume came forward, and welcomed us courteously, telling us that he would show us the cases most urgently requiring our attention.

"Take care of that coil of cable, gentlemen," said he; and on we passed by the long-boat, between the masts; and, under the guidance of the doctor, my fellow-labourer went aft, and I moved forward to the fore-castle.

"This case is one of the worst. I'll just strike a light—mind your head there. Ah! here we are."

All around was dense darkness. The coast-guard held the light. Presently its rays fell upon the black faces of three men who sat upon the floor. The white hammocks hung over their heads. The Krumen gazed curiously upwards, and then towards the side bunk.

The moans of the sick and the dying in the berths all round mingled with the melancholy wailing of the wind through the shrouds. The rolling of the ship rendered it somewhat unsteady footing as I bent over the sufferer beside me.

The light flickered, then fell steadily upon the pale, emaciated, ghastly features of a young lad. Scurvy had played fearful havoc with that face. The fever had clenched him in its firm grip. The cap upon the head and the pea-jacket told the tale that he had struggled to the last, and then turned in—never more to rise from that narrow, stifling bunk.

A horrible odour filled the fore-castle. The fever-stench mingled with the scurvy atmosphere. Altogether, I could scarce hold on by the poor boy's side. The dying face was painfully and slowly turned towards me.

"Boy," I said, "my boy, you are dying."

The eye languidly shut—then re-opened. "I know it," he gently said. Pointing into the gloom—"I

have a mother," he muttered; "she taught me to pray—I have been at Sabbath-school—yonder in my box is my Bible."

There was a something in the way wherein the words were uttered, and in the loving gleam that stole across the pale, sick-worn features as he looked toward the Bible, that I felt the boy had long since rested upon his Lord and Saviour. I bent in and whispered—

"Rock of Ages, cleft for me."

The words had barely passed my lips, when he took them up, and feebly said—

"Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee,
Let the water and the blood,
From Thy riven side which flowed,
Be of sin the double cure,
Cleanse me from its guilt and power."

I had heard the words sung by rough Piedmontese sailors; I had given them in sweet Italian cadence to swarthy Sardinian troopers to read while war-bound; I had oft felt their power 'mid little congregations worshipping in far distant lands; but never had the words so thrilled through my heart as when repeated by those dying lips in that dark, pestilential fore-castle.

"I wish," he said, "I wish I could be moved out of this berth. For the last seven days I have been lying in the wet; but," he continued, "it's no matter. I feel my soul is safe."

Bending over him, I prayed earnestly; and then the poor thin lips moved, and the dim eye brightened, as he united in the prayer that his blessed Saviour would sustain and comfort him in his dying hour.

It would be well, I thought, that many a careless man should stand by that dying boy's side that solemn night, and see how the blessed Lord can whisper peace, and hope, and joy, even in the dark passage through the valley of death's shadow.

The boy now quietly laid himself back in the narrow berth, as though overcome by the exertion of speaking, and as though the light pained his wearied eyelids. My companion's voice reached my ear, as he now entered the fore-castle, and spoke to the dying men on the opposite side.

Passing aft, I entered the captain's cabin. Opening a side door the coast-guard pointed to what at first seemed to me a heap of blankets, but which, as the light fell upon it, assumed the form of a dark-moustached and bearded man, lying in a berth. He was quite insensible, breathing loudly, the face flushed and swollen.

"He is a German, sir," said the seaman; "he is dying now."

I bent over the dying form—I placed my mouth close to his ear; I tried to raise him; I spoke in his own tongue.

"It is no use now. The die is cast, sir."

We passed on into the steward's pantry, lighted by a swinging lamp. Lying in his berth, the sides of his cabin filled with the various utensils of his calling, there we found the poor fellow.

"Oh, sir," he cried, as his eye glanced upon me,

"oh, sir! can I be saved? Oh, this voyage! this fearful voyage! Day after day lying here! night after night tossing about with this fever—no medicine—no care—all dead or dying. Oh, my sins! my sins! how they stood round about me, night after night, like so many fiends coming to accuse me! I have been in many a craft, sir; I have sailed under a God-fearing master, who mustered us daily for prayer; but I have forgotten my God, and now——"

He paused, and looked aghast and terror-stricken.

"There is full and free pardon even for you, my friend," I said. "Look to Jesus. He came to seek and save that which was lost."

"Ah! sir, but I have been too wicked."

"Man," cried the old coast-guard at my side, "don't sin the more by refusing to believe what your God has said of His desire to pardon you. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."

"The Bible! the Bible! Oh, how I have longed for one all this weary voyage through! Have you a Bible, sir?"

I gave him the only Bible which I had about me, and then, uniting in prayer with him, I left him.

The time was now wearing on. From man to man we both had gone. The wind was freshening, and the barque rolled before it. One more glance at the dying lad—one more word of comfort. When morning came, and they went to move him, the lad fell back dead. Dead?—Yes, that is a glorious declaration in the Book of Revelation—"Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord."

The German died the night of our visit to the barque.

It was a solemn scene when by torch-light they were buried in the old churchyard upon the hill. A solemn voyage from Africa to that old weather-beaten church!

The barque had lain in the river, getting in a cargo of palm-oil. Whilst there fever made its appearance among the men. Their quinine bottle—their great resort in fever—was exhausted. The captain sickened and died. The hands dropped off one by one. Day after day, 'neath that burning sun, body after body was consigned to the deep.

Then another master was sent out from England, and the barque weighed anchor homeward.

Alas! the fever burst forth again with renewed virulence.

"Oh, sir," said the steward, "how fearful a voyage it was! Man after man dying by our side, and we tossing about, unable to hand a sail! And then the green shore hove in sight, and we helpless lay there, hoping for relief, yet fearful that the wind might change once more, and drive us seaward back again. As for me, sir," he continued, "by God's help, I will be a better man for the future. This voyage has given me a solemn warning that I never can forget. 'Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner, for Christ's sake!'"

After lying at Kinsale for some time, the *Florence Barton* was towed across to Liverpool. And then, after the lapse of a few days, there came a letter—a

sad, a touching, yet a glorious letter—from the poor lad's mother.

"His father and I," she said, "had but one child. We went to the *Florence Barton* to seek him. A sailor said he was dead; and when we learned how sweetly he fell asleep in Jesus, with the big tears rolling down our faces, we knelt down by the little cot in which he used to slumber when a child, and blessed the Lord Jesus that we had our child safe at home in heaven."



WHAT ALL MUST EXPECT.



MANHOOD will come, and old age will come, and the dying bed will come, and the very last look you shall ever cast on your acquaintances will come, and the agony of the parting breath will come, and the time when you are stretched a lifeless corpse before the eyes of weeping relatives will come, and the coffin that is to enclose you will come, and that hour when the company assemble to carry you to the churchyard will come, and that minute when you are put into the grave will come, and the throwing in of the loose earth into the narrow house where you are laid, and the spreading of the green sod over it—all, all will come on every living creature who now hears me; and in a few little years, the minister who now speaks, and the people who now listen, will be carried to their long homes, and make room for another generation.

Now all this, you know, must and will happen—your common sense and common experience serve to convince you of it. Perhaps it may have been little thought of in the days of careless, and thoughtless, and thankless unconcern, which you have spent hitherto; but I call upon you to think of it now, to lay it seriously to heart, and no longer to trifle and delay when the high matters of death, and judgment, and eternity are thus set so evidently before you.

And the tidings wherewith I am charged—and the blood lieth upon your own head, and not upon mine, if you will not listen to them—the object of my coming amongst you is to let you know what more things are to come; it is to carry you beyond the regions of sight and of sense to the regions of faith, and to assure you, in the name of Him who cannot lie, that as sure as the hour of laying the body in the grave comes, so surely will also come the hour of the spirit returning to the God who gave it.

Yes, and the day of final reckoning will come, and the appearance of the Son of God in heaven, and His mighty angels around Him, will come, and the opening of the books will come, and the standing of the men of all generations before the judgment-seat will come, and the solemn passing of that sentence which is to fix you for eternity will come.

Dr. Chalmers.

GLAD SERVICE.

THE service of the Lord is the delightful employment of holy angels, and of the spirits of the just made perfect. Something of it was doubtless seen by St. Paul when he was admitted into the third heaven; and St. John was permitted to describe what the Holy Spirit revealed to him, as taking place before the throne of God and the Lamb. On earth, and in the church, we are called to imitate them. The life of heaven above differs only from a heavenly life on earth in its duration and completeness; this life is the beginning of that which never will end. Therefore, if the service of God in heaven is a delightful employment, may we not say the same of His service on earth?

What is the service that we are called to render to God? Is it not the joy of the heart, a holy cheerfulness, which should be the beginning and end of all true obedience to Him? But, says the convinced sinner, how can a soul that is under condemnation by sin serve the Lord with gladness? To such a heart the thought of God, as perfectly holy, is terrible, for He is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity.

The Gospel, however, points out Jesus as the Saviour of sinners. And did not Jesus come to make known the way of mercy, the way of peace, the ways of pleasantness and joy? Oh, sinner, seek to look upon God as revealed in Jesus, and you will find three causes for rejoicing. 1. As to what is passed, when you remember that you are redeemed by Him. 2. As to what is present, if you have received the blessing of adoption into the family of God. 3. As to what is to come, when you reflect on your future happiness, and on the faithfulness of God to His promises.

Your gladness then will arise from the view of that Divine love—1. Which existed before the world was. 2. Which supports the believer through the whole of his earthly course. 3. Which reigns in eternal glory.

None can enter into the house of the Lord with thanksgiving, or His gates with praise, but those who are obedient to His voice, and give to Christ Jesus the whole glory of their salvation, which is due unto His gracious name. None can serve Him who distrust His mercy, and none can trust Him but those who see His grace revealed to them in the Gospel.



A PRECIOUS STOREHOUSE.

THE Bible is a precious storehouse, and the Magna Charta of a Christian. There he reads of his heavenly Father's love, and of his dying Saviour's legacies. There he sees a map of his travels through the wilderness, and a landscape, too, of Canaan. And when he climbs on Pisgah's top, and views the Promised Land, his heart begins to burn, delighted with the blessed prospect, and amazed at the rich and free salvation. But a mere professor, though a decent one, looks on the Bible as a dull book, and peruseth it with such indifference as you would read the title deeds belonging to another man's estate.



THE NEGLECTED SON.

In this world it is needful not only to put things right, but to keep them right. Anything left to itself soon goes to ruin. Very often to do nothing is to do mischief. The sluggard's garden was overgrown with thorns and nettles, not because he had sown them there but because he had neglected to root them out. "The stone wall thereof was broken down," not because he had thrown it down, but because he had allowed it to fall. It is astonishing how soon a house gets out of repair and becomes a ruin if it be shut up and neglected. The tiles drop off one by one, the timbers give way, the windows fall in, the floors decay, and in the course of a few years a house left quite to itself is in a state of dilapidation.

It is just so, too, with human beings. The seeds of evil are already sown in the child's heart as the weeds were in the sluggard's garden. They will spring up of themselves, and it is for us to root them up, or they will cover all the soil. The mother who lets them grow unchecked in the heart of her little one will bring the child to ruin and herself to shame.

A few months ago there was a sad case of this kind before one of the London police-courts. A poor woman applied to the magistrate for protection against her own son. Her husband, a small tradesman, had died some years before, leaving her with one child. She loved the little one with all the love of a widow for her first-born—her only child. She could not bear

to check or thwart him in anything he wished. He grew up an obstinate, self-willed boy. His poor mother would not believe the complaints the neighbours all made of him. Love blinded her to his faults, and she would willingly have worked herself to death if she could thereby have given him pleasure. His evil habits grew upon him, and bad companions led him further astray.

The poor woman now perceived the mistake she had made. But she could not find in her heart to punish him, and she continued to supply him with money from her own hard earnings, which he spent in sin and folly. She wept over him and entreated him to alter his course. But she wanted firmness to use the needful severity.

His course was still downward. When the unhappy woman was unable to provide him with the means for self-indulgence he began to plunder the little shop which she kept. She was at last reduced to actual poverty, and her son became not only the companion of thieves, but was himself imprisoned for theft. Her poor lodging was, little by little, stripped of its few articles of furniture, which he pawned or sold to raise money.

As he grew more hardened and reckless she suffered such violence and cruelty at his hands that she was compelled to seek protection from him. And the bitterest grief of all was to

know that her own mistaken fondness had been the cause of his ruin and of her own. Too late she learned the truth of the Scripture warning: "The rod and reproof give wisdom; but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame."

WORTH REMEMBERING.

WE must be always so in God's fear as never to be out of it.

Those that truly fear God need not fear man; and those that are afraid of the least sin, need not be afraid of the greatest trouble.

If thou fear God and walk in His ways, whatever befalls thee, good shall be brought out of it; it shall be well with thee while thou livest, better when thou diest, and best of all in eternity.

The best evidence of our fearing God is our being willing to serve and honour Him with that which is dearest to us, and to part with all to Him, or for Him.

In vain do we pretend to fear God if we do not make conscience of our duty to Him.

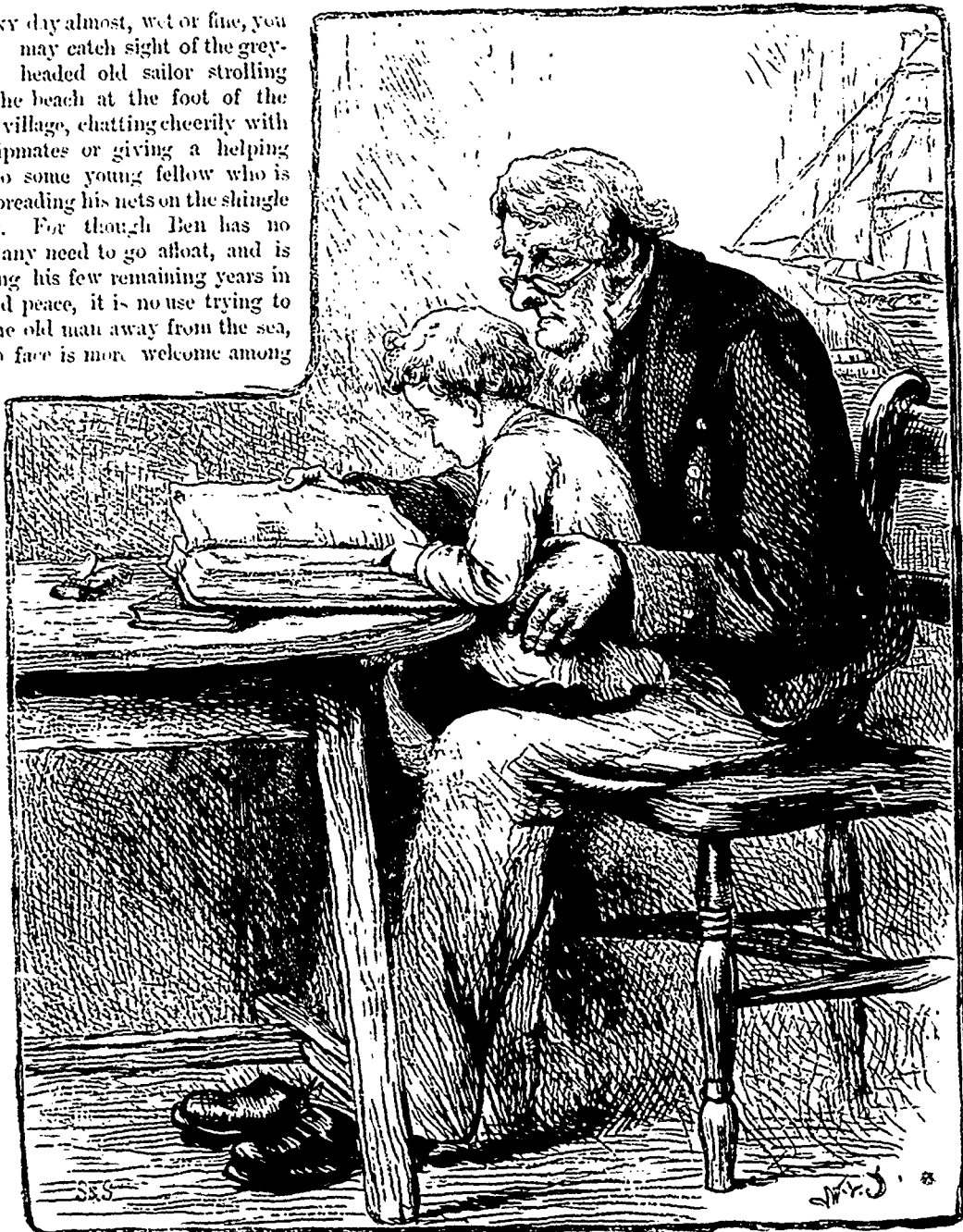
It is better to sow the young heart with good thoughts than a field with corn, since the heart's harvest is perpetual.

Persevere in every thing that an enlightened conscience tells you is honest and right, and you need not fear the result.

OLD BEN AND HIS SAFE ANCHORAGE,

AND OTHER SKETCHES.

Any day almost, wet or fine, you may catch sight of the grey-headed old sailor strolling along the beach at the foot of the fishing village, chatting cheerily with his shipmates or giving a helping hand to some young fellow who is busy spreading his nets on the shingle to dry. For though Ben has no longer any need to go afloat, and is spending his few remaining years in rest and peace, it is no use trying to keep the old man away from the sea, and no face is more welcome among



The old sailor loves to sit with his grandson on his knee.

the boats than his. Not that Ben is afraid to speak his mind.

One day that graceless young sailor Crooks was giving way to his bad habit of swearing just as Ben passed by.

"My lad," said he, solemnly, "d'ye know who heard ye say them words?"

"What d'ye mean, old man?"

"Why, this is what I mean, that God was listening to ye, and He has said in His Word that He will not

hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain. That tongue of yours was given to praise Him with, and instead of talking after that fashion you had best get to your knees and say 'remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions: according to Thy mercy remember Thou me for Thy goodness sake, O Lord.'

Crooks hung his head, quite ashamed, for he respected old Ben, and this was not the first time he had received his advice.

There was a good deal of talk at one time among the fishermen of the place about the rough weather all along that coast, and how in those gales the anchors dragged, and many a fine vessel drifted on to the rocks. They, of course, took their old friend into their counsels, and listened with much attention while he pointed out the dangerous parts of the shore, and where they ought in safety to take shelter from the waves.

But having said this, Ben had a word or two more for the men who stood around him that afternoon. Lifting up his sou'wester just to put aside the grey locks which had strayed across his brow, he looked round upon his friends, with a smile. "I've been thinking, lads," he went on, "a good deal lately about some words which are written in God's Book about an anchor, and therefore just as such seafaring men as us can understand. Wishing to give us 'strong consolation,' He has given us a hope, 'which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil.'

"It seems to me, lads, that the best anchors are no good if they don't get firm hold, and many a man just trusting in himself and his own goodness or cleverness is only like a ship dragging along the sand. But, bless the Lord, my hope is 'sure and steadfast,' it is made secure enough out of sight yonder, and whatever storms knock this poor life of mine about, the anchor-age holds."

But if you would see Ben at his best, you must climb that rocky pathway to the cottage on the cliffs, where he lives with his married daughter, "as good a lass," says he, "and with as good a husband as any in the county." It is a quiet little spot, with a flagstaff in the garden among the hollyhocks; and in the room on the right, overlooking the sea, the old sailor loves to sit and read his Bible, with his little grandson Charlie on his knee. This boy is a great favourite, and to please him, Ben makes most wonderful models of ships, fully rigged; and on fine days when Charlie can go out with safety, for the boy is not strong, they spend happy hours on the shore together. That old Bible of Ben's has travelled many miles over the sea, and often when the ship has been sailing far away out of sight of land he has gone into the cabin and read a few words out of the treasured Book to the blessing of his soul. Now his eyes are getting just a little dim, and, he loves to put the dear boy upon his knee, and, turning to the Book of Revelation, hear him spell out the words "and there shall be no more sea."

"Ah, my little man," he would say, "that's good news for an old tar like me—no more tossing about on troubled waters, no more separation from loved ones, but safe, safe, for evermore."

Although his eyes are dim, old Ben has not lost his voice, and he loves to sing the praises of his Lord. With a verse or two of his favourite hymn we will close our sketch—

"I sing of Thy grace from my earliest days,
Ever near to allure and defend;
Hitherto Thou hast been my preserver from sin,
And I trust Thou wilt save to the end.

Oh the infinite cares, and temptations, and snares,
Thy hand hath conducted me through!
Oh the blessings bestowed by a bountiful God,
And the mercies eternally new!"

Jesse Page.

THE LAIRD OF DUDDINGSTON'S DINNER.

THE following curious anecdote of General Dalzell, so generally known in connection with his persecutions of the Covenanters, is extracted from a work entitled "Family Romance; or, Episodes in the Domestic Annals of the Aristocracy."

Thomas Dalzell was the son of the laird of Binns, an estate which had not been long in his family. He was early imbued with the most devoted sentiments of loyalty to the king, and all his influence as a country gentleman was exerted in behalf of Charles the First. After the execution of that monarch he allowed his beard to grow, in token of mourning; and until the close of his life he never suffered it to be shaved or trimmed, but used a large comb, which is still preserved as a relic in the family.

Disgusted with the Commonwealth, Dalzell sought military service abroad. He entered into the Russian army, and soon obtained high rank. He was lieutenant-general to the Czar Ivan, and distinguished himself in the wars which that monarch waged against the Tartars.

After a long period of foreign service, Dalzell returned with great wealth and honour to Scotland, where, during the remainder of his life he united the functions of a country gentleman and improver of his paternal estate with those of a stern and severe military commander. King Charles the Second appointed him commander-in-chief in Scotland.

One of the nearest neighbours of General Dalzell was the laird of Duddingston, George Dundas, a gentleman of very ancient family, being a cadet of the old and distinguished line of Dundas. He was proprietor of an extensive estate, and dwelt in an ancient manor-house standing on the outskirts of a beautiful wood, about two miles above the Firth of Forth, and four miles and a half from Binns House.

George Dundas and Katherine Moneypenny, his wife, were most exact in the punctual performance of their devotional duties; and the exercise, as it was called, of prayer, praise, and reading of God's Word was regularly engaged in three times every day. On these occasions every member of the family, without exception, was expected to attend. And a goodly sight it was to see the numerous children of the laird and lady, their large body of domestic servants, and

the guests who were in the habit of surrounding their hospitable board, kneeling before the throne of grace, and lifting up their voices with one accord in the praise of their heavenly Father.

Though Dundas was a strict religionist, he was anxious to perform the dutiful offices of a country gentleman; and one of them he considered the keeping up a friendly and neighbourly intercourse. Much, therefore, as he disapproved of General Dalzell's severity in the exercise of his office of commander-in-chief, and sincerely as he deplored the working of the measures of government, he was anxious to be, as much as possible, on a footing of kindness and civility with him, as one of his nearest neighbours, and one with whom his family had always kept up a friendly intimacy.

No sooner, therefore, was Dalzell returned from Moscow, than Dundas sought to renew his friendship with him, and the general gladly met him half way; so that the Puritan laird surprised many of his Covenanting friends by the familiar intercourse which subsisted between him and the king's lieutenant. But when persecution broke out this intercourse slackened, although it did not cease.

It happened one day, during a visit which the commander-in-chief paid to Binns House to enjoy a little relaxation from the fatigues of duty among his groves and gardens, that he sent to say to Dundas that he would go to Duddingston to dine with him.

With a heavy heart the Lady Duddingston heard her lord return a favourable answer to this proposal. She had learnt to look upon her old neighbour as a wicked persecutor and enemy of God's people, and on that account alone she would have shunned his society. But she was moved with immediate fears for the safety of her husband and family. She knew that the daily mid-day prayers would not be omitted before the commander-in-chief; and she was well aware that many expressions occurred in them which might offend Dalzell, and perhaps bring his vengeance upon her husband and children.

She, therefore, secretly gave orders to her old grey-headed butler to cause dinner to be served up in the hall without the usual preliminary exercise of prayer and praise. Dalzell and the other guests were assembled; Duddingston, his lady and family, had done the honour of reception with due courtesy to their distinguished guest.

The great bell was rung; Dundas's countenance wore for the moment an expression of stern solemnity. He had a duty to his God to perform, which he knew might involve him in trouble, for he would not omit one iota of his usual services before the king's lieutenant.

Dundas, being thus prepared to brave the lion in the pride of his power, was much displeased when his train of servants appeared in the hall, not bearing his usual cushions for prayer, Bibles, and psalm books, but the smoking trenches, capacious vessels, and portly flagons for the noontide meal. He immediately ordered all these preparations to be delayed, and the cushions, psalm books, and Bibles to be brought in in their place.

The Lady Duddingston's heart sank within her when she saw the firm purpose of the laird. She thought of the fate of many of the heroes of the Covenant, and expected to see her husband, as soon as prayers were over, ordered down to his own hall door and borne away by the dragoons who had waited on the general, and who were at that moment being regaled with the best that the larder and cellars afforded. But there was no help for the laird's constancy to his cause and his custom, and all that she could do was to pray God to soften the persecutor's heart.

The religious services were accordingly performed as usual. The prayers were said, the psalms were sung, God's mercy was invoked for His suffering servants, the king's cruel purposes were deprecated, and especial allusion was made to the general himself, whose hard and stony heart the Lord was entreated to soften.

Dalzell quietly took his part in all the exercises, knelt, listened, and stood up with the rest; and when all was over he went up to Dundas, embraced him, and congratulated him upon being an honest, high-principled, and courageous man, who did before his face exactly that which he would have done behind his back. He said that he honoured his sincerity, and would scorn to take advantage of the opportunity which his hospitality had afforded of letting his real sentiments be known. He then sat down to dinner with much cordiality.

Next morning he sent a score of pikes and halberts to Duddingston, with which the laird might arm his servants to defend him or his house in case of any sudden attack during those times of trouble.

IN GREAT STRAITS.



It is sin only that makes trouble to deserve the name of trouble; for when we suffer for God's sake or a good conscience, these troubles are so sweetened by the consolations of heaven that they are no troubles at all: therefore, in Queen Mary's days the martyrs wrote to their friends out of prison, "If you knew the comforts we have in prison, you would wish to be with us, saith Mr. Sanders."

Famous is the story of the three children: they were in a great strait when cast into the fiery furnace; bind them hand and foot, and cast them into the furnace; but when they were there, they were unbound. Saith Nebuchadnezzar, "Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? and lo, I see four men loose walking in the midst of the fire, and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God."

When three are cast into the fire for a good conscience, God will make the fourth; therefore, I say, straits and sufferings for God are not worth the name of straits.

David was often driven into straits, he was sore distressed when his town was burnt, and his wives and children taken captives by the Amalekites; yes, but that was a distress of danger, not of sin; therefore he encourageth himself in the Lord his God.

best; he was willing to adjourn his going to heaven for the good of the people of God. Nay, Christ was in a strait; I have a baptism to be baptized withal, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished? I am to shed My blood for My elect: that is the baptism He speaks of.

This was a strait of dear affection to the elect of God—all these were blessed straits—but now straits caused by sin, these are embittered and envenomed by the guilt of sin and the just wrath of God's wrath. It is sin that maketh straits deserve the name of straits, therefore you are spiritually mad that commit sin to avoid straits.

Dr. Calamy.



He missed his footing and fell.

A HUNTER'S PERIL.

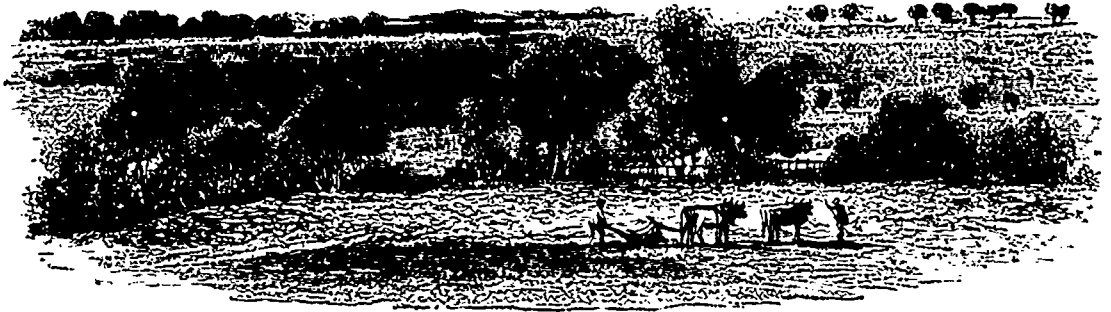
A CHAMOIS-HUNTER of Chamouni, crossing the Mer de Glace, endeavoured to leap across one of the crevasses or fissures by which the ice-ocean is in many places rent. He missed his footing and fell in, but was able to moderate the speed of his descent, and thus reached the bottom, a hundred yards below, without a fracture of limb.

But his situation seemed hopeless. He could not scale the slippery walls of his crystal prison, and in a few hours at most he must be frozen to death. A stream of water was rushing below the ice, downward toward the valley. He followed this, the only possible path. Sometimes he had to bend low in the narrow tunnel; sometimes he waded, sometimes he floated down. At length he reached a vaulted chamber, from which there was no visible outlet. The water which filled it darkly heaved. Retreat was impossible; delay was death. So commending himself to the help of God, he plunged down into the centre of the gurgling pool. Then followed a moment or two of darkness, tumult, and terror; then he was thrown up in safety and in view of the flowers, and the hay-fields, and the merry songs of the vale of Chamouni.

This very striking narrative will illustrate the fact that our path may be often dark and dangerous. Escape may seem impossible. Death may put on its

most appalling form. But uttering our watchword, "Jehovah Jireh," let us still advance. Even if we see no light beyond, let us plunge into the darkness. It will be darkness for a moment only. We shall be ushered into that world of light and bliss where we shall prove, in the fullest sense, that eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God has provided for them who love Him.

Jehoshaphat was in a great strait, "We know not what to do," saith he: this was a strait of danger, not caused by his sin; and God quickly delivered him; but the strait that David was in was caused by his sin, and that made it so bitter. I am loathe to enlarge here. Saint Paul was in a great strait, but this was a blessed strait, an evangelical strait; saith Saint Chrysostom, "He know not whether to die for his own sake or to live for the church's sake were



A STORY OF PROVIDENCE.

THE year 1798 will always be memorable in the history of Ireland. The spirit of insurrection had overspread the country. The "rebellion" was at length suppressed by the strong arm of military force, but not without great bloodshed, and much social and domestic misery.

Among the fugitives was a man named Dalton. His youth had been marked by profligacy. He had induced Elizabeth Hardy, the subject of our present sketch, to consent to be his wife. Their union was alike brief and unhappy. Joining in the rebellion, when the authorities triumphed, he became a marked man, and with difficulty escaped to America.

Dalton's wife, virtually a widow, and destined never to see his face again, returned to her native district in Tyrone. Here she resumed her maiden name, lived for a time with a widowed sister, but ultimately she rented a farm of two or three acres, with a small cabin, where she went to live.

The crisis of her spiritual history was now at hand. Up to this period she had been living in carelessness and unbelief. But her new residence lay near to that of a Christian farmer. To his house, as well as to other families in the district, the Presbyterian minister was wont to come once a year. Elizabeth Hardy, hearing that Mr. M. was about to visit at the farmer's house, asked leave to be present, and her request was readily granted.

The minister came—a grave and godly man; his conversation rich with the savour of Divine things, his counsels weighty, his appeals to the conscience faithful, and the prayers with which he crowned and closed his visit full of unction and fervour.

What Betty Hardy (her familiar name among her peasant friends) that day heard, appeared to be specially a message from God, and produced most important and lasting results. Without delay, she formed the resolution of leaving the place of her residence, casting herself on the care of God to provide for her, in order that she might enjoy Gospel ordinances.

Elizabeth Hardy, having been afflicted with lameness from childhood, had, by reason of distance, been deprived hitherto of the opportunity of repairing to the house of God on the Lord's day. She had indeed been taught to read, and possessed a Bible; but up to the day of the minister's visit at the farmer's house,

she had never heard from the lips of one of God's messengers of the way of life.

Becoming, for the reasons just stated, a resident in the market town, she took a small house in a back lane, and occupied it for three years. Here she managed what is called in Ireland a little "huckstery," a shop requiring no licence, in which she supplied travellers coming to market with oaten cake, butter, eggs, and tea. All this while she was a constant attendant at the sanctuary, and was early received into church fellowship, on the most satisfactory evidence of her genuine piety.

While residing in her solitary apartment, she was on one occasion robbed and almost murdered. Three men called one winter night and asked for refreshment. When asked to pay for the provisions supplied them, one of the villains grasped her throat with such violence that she fell on the floor to all appearance dead. The party thereupon put more eggs on the fire, to eat before their departure.

While sitting around the embers, they heard from the adjacent room, where the poor woman lay upon the floor, a "fetch," or long-drawn sigh. One of them rose, with a candle in his hand, and stooped over her. Opening her eyes, and seeing the wretch, she gave an involuntary shriek; and alarmed, but not without carrying off a considerable amount of plunder, they fled.

Providence thus protected the "lone woman." But her perils were not over. She took a niece to live with her for greater security. A rumour, however, spread abroad that she knew the robbers; and they, fearing prosecution, came back to complete their dark and cruel designs.

One of them first drove in the back window, a leaden one, with his shoulder; and the next moment two outside thrust him in upon the bed. It was three o'clock in the morning, and Elizabeth Hardy, with her niece at her side, was buried in profound slumber.

The robber instantly grasped her throat, in order to strangle her. Finding there were two persons to be dealt with, he applied a hand to the neck of each. They were, however, enabled to prevent the accomplishment of his fell purpose, and raised a cry of "Murder!"

Instantly a shout of aid and rescue was heard from without; the robbers decamped, and were never more heard of.

A debtor alike to providence and grace, brought unto "the bonds of the covenant," and animated by ardent gratitude, she lived a life of unselfishness, glorifying God her Saviour, and abounding in alms-deeds and gifts for the benefit of the bodies and souls of men. Here was indeed one of those "righteous ones" whom the Psalmist describes as "planted in the house of the Lord, and growing up in the courts of our God." And as a tree of righteousness she brought forth fruit unto old age, and was spiritually flourishing to the last, to the honour of a covenant-keeping God.

THE CONSOLATIONS OF GOD.

MANY persons live in a state of unhappiness. They are sad. They grieve sorely. Tears are their meat day and night. Waters of a full cup are wrung out to them.

If your consolations are small, the cause is not found in any want of words of comfort from God. The Bible is full of sayings which are sweeter than honey and the honey-comb. The promises are exceedingly great and precious.

Nor is there any want of assurance that God will make good all He has promised. His truth and faithfulness stand pledged before heaven and earth. Yea, "God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath: that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us."

Nor is there wanting a Spirit of consolation. The Holy Ghost is by office the Comforter. He is promised to all who believe and obey. Christ said, "I will not leave you comfortless;" "I will come unto you;" "I will send you the Comforter." That blessed Spirit can fill any soul with joy. He is a fountain of living waters, a most plentiful well-spring of Divine supports and consolations.

Nor are all the saints left with feeble comforts. In some joy unspeakable abounds. Their cup runneth over. They obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing flee away. They lift up their voice, and shout aloud for joy. Their heads are anointed with the oil of gladness.

But a low state of consolation probably proceeds from a low state of piety. We are often straitened in ourselves. Faith is weak. Love loses its ardour. Penitence is not deep. Zeal is languid. Self-denial is avoided. In this case it is a mercy to make us know our misery, and to show us that it is an evil and a bitter thing to depart from the living God.

Or, perhaps, spiritual comforts are withheld from us because we do not highly prize them and carefully seek after them. God does not commonly grant great spiritual mercies to those who lightly esteem them. "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled."

Or, having obtained some Divine consolations, we do not walk softly before the Lord, but allow ourselves to be unduly elated. Pride mars everything good. God never dwells with the lofty, but always with the lowly.

Then let every man search his heart and ways, and turn to the Lord. He is mighty to embolden and deliver. His mercy reaches to the heavens. We all err by not coming out of ourselves. We may look at our hearts till a horror of great darkness shall cover us. Let us look to Jesus. He is a sun, and has healing in His wings. His grace is amazing. He knows our frame. He pities like a God. If the consolations of God are small with us the fault is all our own.

And let them be no longer small. Cry after them. Lift up your voice for them. Plead with God for His name's sake. Never rest satisfied till Christ fills your soul with peace and joy.

THE SABBATH DAY.

MARK ii. 23-28; iii. 1-5.



THERE was no harm in walking through the cornfields on the Sabbath day, and no harm in plucking the ears of corn as they went, to satisfy their hunger. The Pharisees complained of the disciples; but our Lord defended them.

May we then work and take our pleasure on the Lord's day? No. The Christian Lord's day, like the Jewish Sabbath, is God's holy day, a day of rest. As such it is given, and as such it is to be kept. But food must be had; and some moving about there must be.

We cannot even go to the house of God without this. And a quiet walk, if the Lord of the day be uppermost in our thoughts, is not wrong. But how different is this from Sunday travelling, and excursions, and feastings! What is necessary may be done with a safe conscience, but not more.

The shewbread was by the law of Moses for the priests alone; yet when David was hard pressed, and in real need of food, he took of the bread and shared it with his followers; and he did no wrong. Both the shewbread and the Sabbath were of God's appointment; and the same rule applied to both.

Our Lord Himself settled this. And He had power to settle it; for He is Lord of the Sabbath. Man has no power to alter what God has appointed, or to say how God's own day is to be kept; but the Son of God has absolute power. He had then, and He has now. And it was in our nature, as "the Son of man,"

that He did thus settle about the keeping of the Sabbath day.

What He said is full of comfort: "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath." "The Son of man" said this, who could sympathise with men about the Sabbath and about everything else. It was meant, not for a burden, but for a blessing. It was made for man's good, and for his happiness. Man was not made for the Sabbath, as the Pharisees seemed to teach, but the Sabbath for man. When this holy day is used aright—not in needless work, not in worldly pleasure, but as a day of rest and of spiritual improvement, in a trusting and loving spirit—when it is used thus it is a blessing indeed, one of God's most precious gifts. Then we feel the force of our Saviour's words, "The Sabbath was made for man." No Sunday worker, or traveller, or pleasure-seeker, can understand those words.

It appears from St. Luke (vi. 6) that the healing of the man with the withered hand took place on *another* Sabbath day.

The Pharisees had not learnt the lesson which our Lord had taught before. They still thought of the letter only of the commandment, not of the spirit. But did they really care for the Sabbath day at all? Their minds were set on finding something for which they might accuse Jesus. In this state of mind—full of hatred and ill-will—they went to the synagogue! In this state of mind they professed all this zeal for God's holy day!

Our Lord, who knew their thoughts, was grieved and displeased at their hardness of heart. They hated Him, and they felt no pity for the man with the withered hand. Whether he were healed or not, they did not care; their only thought was to accuse Jesus. When He asked them the question, "Is it lawful to do good on the Sabbath day, or to do evil? to save life, or to kill?" they kept a sullen silence.

Our Lord *did* heal the man; and so He taught a further lesson about the Sabbath. He had taught before that works of *necessity* might be done; now He taught that works of *mercy* might be done. We need not, therefore, think we are doing wrong in doing something on the Lord's day to comfort a sufferer, or to help one in want. It may sometimes be right even to stay away from God's house to nurse a sick person or to relieve one in distress.

How striking was this cure itself! "Stretch forth thine hand!" the Lord said. But the hand was *withered*; how could he stretch it out? The man did not stop to think. He believed, and did as he was told; and at the very moment he received power. What if he had held back, and said, "I cannot"? How would this story have ended then? We should never then have read, "his hand was restored whole as the other."

This is what *we* are to do with regard to our souls—to believe and obey. We are told to repent, turn, and come. But we cannot of ourselves. We have no more power than this man had. Nevertheless, let us do as he did, believe and obey, and power will be given to us also.

F. B.

MAN AND HIS SAVIOUR.



VERY old German author discourses thus tenderly of Christ:—

"My soul is like a hungry and thirsty child, and I need His love and consolations for my refreshment; I am a wandering and lost sheep, and I need Him as a good and faithful Shepherd; my soul is like a frightened dove pursued by the hawk, and I need His wounds for a refuge; I am a feeble vine, and I need His cross to lay hold of and wind myself about; I am a sinner, and I need His righteousness; I am naked and bare, and need His holiness and innocence for a covering; I am in trouble and alarm, and I need His solace; I am ignorant, and I need His teaching; simple and foolish, and I need the guidance of His Holy Spirit.

"In no situation, and at no time, can I do without Him. Do I pray? He must prompt and intercede for me. Am I arraigned by Satan at the Divine tribunal? He must be my Advocate. Am I in affliction? He must be my helper. Am I persecuted by the world? He must defend me. When I am forsaken, He must be my support; when dying, my life; when mouldering in the grave, my resurrection. Well, then, I will rather part with all the world, and all that it contains, than with Thee, my Saviour; and, God be thanked, I know that Thou too art not willing to do without me. Thou art rich, and I am poor; Thou hast righteousness, and I sin; Thou hast oil and wine, and I wounds; Thou hast cordials and refreshments, and I hunger and thirst.

"Use me, then, my Saviour, for whatever purpose and in whatever way Thou mayest require. Here is my poor heart, an empty vessel; fill it with Thy grace. Here is my sinful and troubled soul; quicken and refresh it with Thy love. Take my heart for Thine abode; my mouth, to spread the glory of Thy name; my love, and all my powers, for the advancement of Thy honour, and the service of Thy believing people. And never suffer the steadfastness and confidence of my faith to abate, that so at all times I may be enabled from the heart to say, 'Jesus wants me, and I Him; and so we suit each other.'

PLEASURES OF CONTENTMENT.

I HAVE a rich neighbour that is always so busy that he has no leisure to laugh; the whole business of his life is to get money, and more money, that he may still get more and more money. He is still drudging, saying that Solomon says, "The diligent hand maketh rich." And it is true indeed; but he considers not that it is not in the power of riches to make a man happy; for it was wisely said by a man of great observation, "That there are as many miseries beyond riches as on this side of them." God grant that, having a competency, we may be content and thankful!

Izaak Walton.



LIVING OR DEAD?

“**W**E are all alike,” said a sear dead branch
 To his fellow-boughs on a leafless tree;
 “They say I am dead! Then what are
 you?
 You are brown and dry; you are just like me.”

Then another branch made quick reply,
 As he waved his bare arms to and fro;
 “Friend, which is living and which is dead
 We may not tell, but the spring will show.”

And the winter passed, and the spring breathed soft,
 Till the barren earth began to wake;
 And the green grass blades came peeping forth,
 And the flowers bloomed freshly for her sake.

And the swift life-sap in the naked trees
 Went thrilling up from the very root—
 Like blood from the heart to the finger tips—
 And tingling keen into every shoot;

Till the new-born strength that was in them hid
 Burst into emerald foliage new;
 And the sun gazed down on the dancing leaves,
 From his golden throne in the upper blue.

And all was happiness, all was life,
 Save only in that one poor dead bough,
 Whose bare brown limbs in the flush of spring
 Stood cold and brittle amid the glow.

No sap went thrilling beneath the bark,
 No buds came bursting in pink and green;
 But death in the midst of life was there,
 As sad a sight as ever was seen.

* * * * *

O worldly spirit, so dead to God!
 O human heart, with thy love grown cold!
 Sayest thou thus to thy poor shrunk self,
 “I am only what others have been of old;

“This is not death, it is winter sleep;
 Worse than my fellows I cannot be,
 I am but waiting for sun and shower
 To bring fresh beauty and life to me?”

O fool, and blind! No shower and sun
 Can quicken the sapless, or fill it up;
 O sinner, thou feedest on ashes grey,
 And drinkest out of an empty cup.

Cry out for help while yet there is time;
 And the Husbandman quickly will come to thee,
 And prune this cankered death away,
 Setting the life-sap running free.

Then, when the showers begin to fall,
 And the dews to rise, and the sun to glow,
 Thy life shall burst into leaves and flowers,
 And that thou livest God’s Spring shall show.

M. E. R.

