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THE UNITED CHURCH
ARCHIVES

Church Miscellany.

APRIL, 1880.

First Congregational Church,

KINGSTON, ONT.

MEETINGS :

- Sunday Public Services.....11 A.M. AND 7 P.M.
- Sunday School.....2:30 P.M.
- Church Prayer Meeting, Wednesday.....7:30 P.M.
- Bible Class, Monday.....7:30 P.M.
- District Prayer Meeting, Fortnightly, as Announced.
- Young People's Association, Fortnightly, as Announced.
- Ladies' Aid Society, Monthly, as Announced.

The Church is the House of God and the services are free to all.
The entire revenue is derived from voluntary offerings.

"One is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren."
"Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen."

Church Officers and Committee.

PASTOR :
DR. SAMUEL N. JACKSON.

DEACONS :
G S. FENWICK, GEORGE ROBERTSON.
J. F. McEWAL.

SECRETARY : JOHN DRIVER. **TREASURER :** GEORGE S. FENWICK.

GENERAL COMMITTEE :
The Pastor and Deacons, together with—
J. H. McFARLANE, HUGH JACK,
THOMAS HENDRY, THOS. SAVAGE, Jr.
WILLIAM D. HENDRY, JOHN DRIVER,
JOHN BOYD.

COLLECTORS :
J. H. McFARLANE..... *Weekly Offering.*
W. D. HENDRY..... *Open Collection.*
T. SAVAGE, Jr..... *Open Collection.*
D. SPENCE..... *Sunday Collection.*
E. MORHAM..... *Sunday Collection.*
W. D. HENDRY..... *Sunday Collection.*
W. RICHARDSON..... *Sunday Collection.*

CHURCH STEWARD :
GEORGE ROBERTSON.

ORGANIST : JAMES SMITH. **CHORISTER :** THOMAS HENDRY.

USHERS : ROBERT HENDRY, WILLIAM NEISH,
H. MILLER, L. B. SPENCER.

AUDITORS : ROBERT HENDRY, DAVID DOWNS.

SEXTON :
E. SANFORD, No. 67 Sydenham Street.

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MISCELLANY.

A church dignitary in this city who, by office at least, assumes a sort of churchly pre-eminence, recently asked a member of our congregation where it was he attended church. A frank reply elicited something like the following from the enquirer: "The Congregationalists are a very good people, but they have no creed; you should not belong to a church which has no creed." Now if it was meant that we have no man made creed which we compel persons to repeat as a shibboleth of faith, it was true, for we have none. Was it meant, however, that we have no agreement as to faith and doctrine, a great mistake was made. As *Protestants* of Protestants we claim that the Bible is our creed, and as true Catholics we will have no other. And what are the results? That none hold the cardinal doctrines of the Scriptures with greater unity and tenacity than do Congregationalists; that over and over again for the past three hundred years have these doctrines been boldly announced by mutual agreement; that deflection from the faith of Apostolic Christianity to Romanism is unknown among us; that there is with us greater unity in the faith than in any of the creed-clad churches; and, finally, that we are not forced to subscribe to strong Calvinistic articles of faith and adopt Armenian sentiments, or to a Protestant formula while in heart and practice many are Romanists—and we are saved from that subterfuge of Jesuitism of maintaining a mental reservation, while an iron-clad oath is taken which it is not intended to keep. It was at a great price our fathers purchased back this freedom for us, first purchased by our Lord, and we intend to hold it most sacredly.

Owing, no doubt, to the various and sudden climatic changes during the past winter, much sickness has pre-

vailed throughout the city this spring with unusual fatality. For several Sundays our congregation has been much below the average number owing to the absence of some on account of sickness, and of more who were giving their attention to the sick. So far none of our number have been called to go through the "valley," and a large portion of the sick ones have been restored to health, for which we all have occasion to be devoutly grateful. Still sorrow's sighs and tears are with us, for several who were mothers or other relations of those who are in our congregation have been called away to return no more.

Mr. William Reid, one of our congregation, has just completed his course as a medical student, and will on the 28th inst. receive the degree of "Doctor of Medicine." If Mr. Reid continues in his chosen and honourable profession as he has begun, he deserves to succeed and succeed he will.

We have lost this spring several families and individual members of our congregation, through removals from the city, and, according to present intentions, more will follow. The loss of these is felt, for we had not so many that we could afford to lose any, and we had none of which we wished "to be rid." We must console ourselves with the thought that our loss is some one's gain, and all the more earnestly labour, knowing that "the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong," but to those who "run" and "fight," "looking to Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith."

The Ladies Asssocation held a "spring sale" of useful and fancy articles in the Lecture Room on Thursday the 22nd inst. with a fair measure of success. The meetings during the past season have been well attended and much work has been done.

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The annual collection for the Canada Congregational Missionary Society made by this Church last month amounted to \$314,04. This was immediately followed by a general appeal made to our Churches in Ontario and Quebec in behalf of the Congregational Church in Winnipeg, Manitoba, and which is now in process. Though both claims are of a kindred nature, and well grounded, it is unfortunate that they unavoidably came so close the one to the other.

It is said that our Druid ancestors when they met for worship, had the uncomfortable habit of offering as human sacrifice upon their altar the one who came last to the assembly. Doubtless this amazingly aided in punctuality and all sought to be in their places before "the bell ceased to ring," or "the organ voluntary was played." Things are sadly reversed now, for those who are "on time" have to suffer the sacrifice through distraction caused by "late arrivals."

"Come away, For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land: the fig tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vine with the tender grape giveth a good smell."

During the past few weeks a Father of one and four Mothers of other members of our Congregation have passed away, namely, the father of Mrs. W. D. Hendry, in Ottawa, and the mothers of Mr. J. H. McFarlane, in Glasgow, of Mrs. A. McMillan, of Mrs. W. A. Kelly, and of Mrs. William Meek, all in this city. All those whose hearts have been thus bowed with sorrow, deserve and have our sincerest sympathy. We do earnestly commend them to the consolations of the Divine Comforter.

The Canadian Independent is the organ of the Congregational Churches in Canada, and is published weekly in Toronto, under the able editorial management of H. J. Clarke, Esq., giving all the denominational news, speaking boldly on leading religious subjects and faithfully declaring the reason of the faith that is in us. The subscription is only one dollar per year, but in order to thus make it available to all, the editors and contributors give free service. Twenty-seven copies are taken by this Congregation and there might be more. It is a good investment and if you do not take it please send your name to Mr. A. Christie, P. O. Box 2648 Toronto.

The Young People's Association in connection with this Church, closed its meetings for the season by a conversazione in the Lecture Room, on the evening of the 22nd inst. The meetings held during the past winter have been more than usually interesting and although all the work anticipated has not been accomplished, important portions of it have been well done. The District Prayer Meetings were closed last month to be resumed in the winter. The closing entertainment and reunion passed off very pleasantly and the president, Mr. W. D. Hendry, together with his associates have reason to congratulate themselves on their measure of success.

The Rev. J. F. Stevenson, LL.B., will lecture in this Church on Tuesday evening the 27th inst., on "The Pilgrim Fathers." There will be no charge for admission, but in place thereof a collection will be taken up to defray expenses, etc., &c.

The days of "house cleaning" have come and every vestige of the leprosy of dust, etc., is doomed. Cleanliness is not "next to godliness" but a part of it. These are the days when Christian grace is tested. May it stand.



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Two Little Waifs, and the Way they Drifted.

CHAPTER I.

HOLLO there! What do you want? Why do you run away?"

The boy thus addressed continued to run, and was soon lost to sight by a turn in the garden path; whether he leaped the gate or the wall was not apparent.

"Come to steal my gooseberries, I suppose," muttered the owner thereof; "only let me catch you, that's all!" but he made no effort towards that end, and quietly walked along, looking complacently at the rows of well-laden bushes on either side.

Suddenly he stopped, attracted by a bundle of something, not quite hidden by the foliage of a large currant bush. "Hey-day! So, so! *Two* little thieves! Come out and show yourself instantly."

"No, no, no. Watty's not a thief; he isn't; it's *me*," cried a passionate sobbing voice, as a small rough head came reluctantly into view, and then a triumphant twinkle shone through the tears as it added: "If he's run you can't catch him, I know."

"And who is *me*?" asked the gentleman, rather amused. "Come and tell the truth, if you ever heard of such a thing."

"It was *me* as opened the gate; it was *me* made him come in. Watty's not a thief, sir," whimpered the child.

"Ah, I see," said the gentleman; "true to your origin, leading the way in mischief. But, now, couldn't you turn about, and get Watty to be good, instead of making him naughty?"

"Watty ain't so very good," said the child, in a low hesitating voice, and trying to rub from her frock the consequences of her recent hiding-place, "only he ain't a thief this time."

"Well, come with me, and if there's anything of a man about him, he won't leave you alone in the scrape, will he?"

"Oh, let me go, please—please let me go!" screamed the child, in an agony of terror, as a firm hand was laid upon her shoulder to hinder the attempt to run away.

"Oh, Watty, come back! Oh dear, oh dear!"

In a moment a shock head appeared above the garden wall, with a look half frightened, half defiant on the not very clean face.

"Oh, go away; he'll catch you. Go away; never mind me," gasped the child, with sudden fright at the speedy answer to her call.

But with a leap that brought him into the middle of a strawberry bed, to the great disgust of the owner, the boy stood before him.

"Please, sir, let her go; take me. I'll go to prison if you like; only let Maggie off please, sir," he humbly pleaded.

"Well done for a brave knight; so suppose I let you both go, what then?"

"We won't ever come here again, sir; we won't indeed; will we, Maggie?"

"No, never," cried Maggie.

"Are you hungry?" asked the gentleman, kindly.

"Yes, indeed, sir; we meant to go up to the back door and ask for a crust, and then we saw the—the trees—with gooseberries, sir, and——"

"There, I don't ask any more about that; it's plain you thought them good for food, as other sinners did by other fruit before you. I want my breakfast, too, so we'll all go and get some; come with me."

Maggie looked dolefully at her knight to inquire his opinion on the subject.

"I don't think he wants to trap us, Mag," whispered he; "he don't mean no harm by the look of him, and if he does we'll run."

"But if he locks us up?" suggested Mag.

"Then we'll get out at the window; I don't care if I break the glass—but let's try him this once."

And reassured by the amused smile of the individual thus generously put upon his trial, they followed him up to the house, where he desired them to sit down on a bench in the yard, and ordered two large basins of bread and milk to be prepared for them.

"Now, little ones," said he, kindly, "you will stay quietly here until I come to you again; you won't run away? You're not afraid, are you?"

"No, not a bit," said the boy, boldly.

"Nor you, lady rag-bag?"

"You ain't afraid of nothink with me, are you, Maggie?" put in the boy, patronisingly.

"If mother was here she'd teach me to sew, and then I shouldn't wear rags," muttered the child, looking down her dirty torn pinafore and frock.

"No, nor when I can earn things Maggie shan't wear rags," said the boy, with a stamp of his small half-shod foot, while Maggie sidled up to him with a look of infinite content and confidence.

"Lilly, my dear," said Mr. Bower to the young lady who presided at his breakfast-table, "don't ask me to go to any more of your meetings; I can't stand such revelations of the misery of young things in this world of ours. What was a paltry guinea in the plate to do for hundreds and thousands of destitute creatures like those we heard of last night?"

"But a great many guineas in a great many plates may do a great deal to help some of them, dear father," said his daughter; "and every child saved from ruin is not only made good and useful for himself, but is a gain to the moral interests of the country; there's political economy for you, papa."

"Very fine, I dare say; but what do you think? All night long I had dreams full of children, starving children, ragged children, forsaken children, wicked children, staring at me through the curtains, knocking at the doors, scrambling up to the windows like Bishop Hatto's rats, and then slipping down again with screams of despair. I'll never listen to such tales any more, so don't expect it. But that's not all. I got up early and went to cool my head among the cabbages, when what should appear before me but two of the very urchins that had tormented my dreams—representatives, of course, a deputation from Puddle Dock, an incarnation of the destitution described."

"What became of them, dear father?" asked Lilly, in surprise and anxiety for their fate.

"Getting their breakfast in the yard, my dear, I suppose," he replied; "we'll go and look after them presently, for deputations are to be treated civilly you know."

On the bench still sat the two children, their porringers being licked by the dog; sundry hens walked uneasily about, pecking occasionally at bits of bread that had been thrown to them; neighbourly sparrows, always on the alert to profit by opportunities, quarrelled over crumbs and ruffled their plumes in greedy battle, while upon all this dumb show gazed their young patrons with immense satisfaction.

As Mr. Bower and his daughter appeared on the scene, with cook behind them, the bright faces changed instantly, and the quickest escape from observation seemed the mutual intention.

"I say, Maggie," whispered Walter, "get up and curtsy, else they'll think we've no manners."

"What are they staring at?" pouted Maggie; "mother never liked me to stare at anybody."

"Ah, but if we hadn't stared at their nasty gooseberries, we'd have been away long ago. They've given us breakfast you know; who'll give us any dinner I wonder?"

A few kind gentle words from the young lady of the house soon elicited their story.

Maggie's parents had died some time before, and she was sent to an aunt in this neighbourhood, who was poor and not too kind, and her young son took the little orphan under his own special protection. But his mother, having ruined her health by continual intemperance, died suddenly, leaving the two children to the parish, a fate so deeply disgusting to their feelings that they decided to abscond without delay.

They accordingly quitted their temporary village home in the evening, unnoticed and unmissed, slept under a hay-stack beneath the moon, and feeling very hungry in the morning intended to beg their breakfast on the way, when the sight of fruit in Mr. Bower's beautiful garden tempted them to refresh themselves and enjoy it without leave; for their morals

had not improved latterly, and poor Maggie was forgetting her mother's instructions concerning many important things.

"What is to be done with them, Lilly?" said Mr. Bower, drawing his daughter aside; "ought we not to get them sent back to their parish?"

"Father," said Lilly, after a few moments' reflection, "you remember what we heard last night about those homes for destitute children, and what it costs to provide for them; I have a little money, saved for something else, but if you will make up the amount required, it shall go to provide for at least one of these little creatures, and we will make friends for the boy, too, saucy as he looks. I fancy something might be made of him if he had but an opportunity. Think of it, dear father, before sending them to the workhouse."

Softly as Lilly spoke, the last few words reached the quick ears of the children.

"Sir! Miss!" cried Walter, seizing Maggie's arm; "please we're a-goin'. Thank ye for the breakfast, and good mornin'; we ain't a-goin' to stop in these parts, you see, and don't want to trouble nobody."

"Why not, sir?" asked the gentleman.

"'Cause we ain't, that's all; ain't it, Maggie?" and an audacious look, expressive of intention to be his own master, daring anybody to meddle with him, settled on the face, not unpleasant if it could be "cleaned up" a little.

"Would you not like to get an honest living, and learn to be good and industrious?" said Lilian, in her soft sweet voice.

"Yes, mus," said the little girl. "Mother said I was to be honest and good; she prayed to God about it, too, but——" and she stopped short.

"But you have not always remembered dear mother's words," suggested Lilly, in a whisper; "and perhaps her prayer would be answered by staying to be taught about the Lord Jesus Christ, and——"

"What! is that mother's Saviour? Does He care for me?" interrupted the child with sudden interest. "Is it Him that mother asked to take care of me when she was gone to heaven?"

"Dear little girl, be sure that He will do it. If your mother were His dear child and servant, He will love and care for her poor little orphan, and you must let Him do it in His own way."

"But will He love Watty, too? His mother didn't ask Him I don't think, and Watty says nobody never prayed for him, nor nobody don't love him but me."

"You can learn to pray for him yourself, Maggie," said Lilian, gravely, "if you will."

"Oh, can I? Then I will indeed; but who'll teach me?"

"You can't stay to be taught now," put in Walter; "we must go, Maggie; we ain't fur enough off yet, you know."

"Oh, Watty, I'd like to pray for you," said Maggie, sorrowfully, "'cause then that good Lord Jesus would love you, too, p'raps. I do wish mother 'd prayed for you as well as me."

"Perhaps she did," said Lilly, softly; "I think she did."

"Oh, no, she never saw him," said Maggie.

"But when she prayed for you, and knew she was going to leave you, perhaps she prayed for any who might be kind to you and love you."

"Oh yes, that she did; I remember her just saying those very words."

"Then as Walter has been kind to you, and loves you, he was one for whom she prayed; don't you think so?"

"There now!" cried Maggie, with a delighted look at the boy; "you see some one did pray for you, Watty; so never mind—if your own mother didn't, mine did; and Watty," lowering her voice to a whisper. "p'raps it was God sent us the breakfast this morning instead of letting the plesmen catch us."

"But we can't stay here, Mag, or we shall be caught. S'pose you tell her why," sticking out his thumb towards

Lilly. "I like her 'cause she found out that about your mother; she won't tell."

Thus instructed, Maggie dropped a curtsey to the young lady, and said, "Please let me whisper you, only you mustn't let anybody do nothing at us;" and the daughter of wealth and ease bent her fair head low to the child of poverty and rags, whose dying mother had known how to pray.

"Please this is why we can't stay here; we did break that branch off Mr. Mally's tree with getting apples, only they wasn't ripe, and we did drink ever so much milk that old Jack was carrying somewhere when he set it down to run after the dogs. And when Mrs. Baker beat Watty for running at the hens, he smashed the eggs all to nothing, and I screamed awful; and I broke her bottle of beer that we'd fetched for her, 'cause I hated her; and so you see nobody likes us very much, and we want to get away 'fore anybody comes after us."

The whisper had been loud enough to reach Mr. Bower's attentive ear, and fearing to burst into a fit of laughter in the presence of the young delinquents, he turned into the house, and sitting down in his easy-chair, yielded heartily to his merriment. His daughter followed him, deeply interested and not less perplexed.

"No wonder they want to go away, Lilly," said he; "why, they must be the pests of their neighbourhood; the boy's wretched mother has ruined them."

"But the girl's praying mother may be, under God's mercy, their salvation from the ruin," said Lilian; "her prayers have to be answered yet."

"Please, miss," interrupted the cook, putting her head in at the door, "what's going to be done with them little riff-raff? 'cause I can't do with them about."

"Could you make anything of the little girl, do you think, cook?" asked her young mistress, timidly.

"Make anything, miss! she's a ready-made nuisance. I wouldn't have such a mischievous brat on the premises

for anything you could give me. I'd send 'em both to the workus, or the deformitory straight away."

"They have no one to care for them; how can they be better?" said Lilly, sadly.

"Stop while I just give a look, miss," said cook; "may be they're in some mischief already while my back's turned," and hastening out, she returned as quickly.

"You can save yourself and master any more trouble about them; they're gone," said cook, immensely relieved; "they've had a good breakfast, and now we've done with 'em."

Lilian's impulse was to run after them instantly, but her father stopped her.

"Let sir knight and his lady rag-bag take their own course, my dear; I expect we shall hear of them again when they get tired of wandering. They know where to find a friend now, and are quite saucy enough to try you again."

Lilian watched often at the gates, walked about the roads, inquired amongst neighbours, and as night drew on wondered whether the little wanderers had found a shelter. "But," thought she, "He who had not where to lay His own head knows all about them, and will answer the mother's prayers."

The Worsted Sampler.



HE truth, is, Priscilla, you are living in disobedience to God!"

This startling announcement fairly roused poor old Priscilla; and, meek-tempered as she generally was, she looked up to the speaker as though she would resent his speech if she dare; but he was her minister, so she did not like to show her displeasure; she therefore contented herself with saying earnestly, "Forbid it!" then, with less energy, she asked, "How so, sir? Why am I disobedient?"

"You are keeping that which God bids you to throw away!"

"Forbid it!" again burst from her lips.

"But you are, Priscilla," persisted the minister.

"How so, sir?" she tremblingly murmured; then laying down her knitting, she folded her aged hands upon her lap and settled herself into an attitude of attention.

"Listen to me, and I will tell you from God's own Word; that will strike right home to the mark more than any word of mine." And opening his Bible at the fiftieth of Isaiah, he read the tenth verse: "Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of His servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God."

Old Priscilla's eyes glistened, and giving her hands a little secret hug of pleasure, she exclaimed with renewed energy:

"Beautiful! beautiful! 'Let him trust in the name of the Lord'—and as if that wasn't enough to encourage any poor body—'let him stay upon his God'—*his* God, to make it all his very own—beautiful!"

"And yet such a poor body is disobedient, and keeping something that God bids her throw away!" said the minister quietly.

"Oh, sir, do 'e for pity's sake, speak out plain to a poor body; for it's me in no mistake you mean," implored old Priscilla, as the tears dimmed the glisten in her eyes.

"With all my heart, my friend, I will strive to be faithful to you; but you must ask the Holy Spirit to make you also faithful to yourself. Now answer me a few questions without any reserve."

"Surely, sir, just as a child would."

"You have been in trouble of mind lately, doubting your safety on the Rock of Salvation, Jesus Christ our Saviour; doubting whether your sins are forgiven, and whether you are accepted by God in His 'beloved Son.' Is it not so, Priscilla?"

A slight movement of her head signified "Yes."

“Then it is clear that in you this text finds a fulfilment; you are walking in darkness and have no light—that is your present case, and abundantly accounts for your having no joy in the Lord,¹ which is one of the true believer’s most precious privileges. Now, next comes the reason for your being in such a miserable state of mind, when it is quite contrary to God’s will that you should be so.

“ ‘ Rejoice, believer in the Lord,
Who makes your cause His own ;
The hope that rests upon His Word
Can ne’er be overthrown.’

So said John Newton, and so says every child of God who is walking in the light of His countenance and fatherly love. Come, let us look for the reason of your present state, my friend.”

“Ah sir, you have not far to look; I see it all now, and so would you too, if you could peep into my heart and see how faithless it is, and how full of the maunders, instead of trust and the peace that comes out of believing in the Lord’s work for poor sinners. Ah sir, you wouldn’t wonder then that I’ve just been walking in darkness, without a spark of light to light up my road and show me my Saviour’s blessed face.” As though relieved of a great burden, old Priscilla gave a deep sigh of satisfaction, and looked up brightly at her minister, adding: “Sir, when the Holy Spirit takes of the things of Jesus,² and shows them unto us, it is wonderful how doubts vanish, just like black-beetles when the lamp is turned on ’em !”

The minister could not but smile at this homely simile; it seemed to him so exactly like what our dark thoughts do when a ray of love shines in and scares them all away; but not noticing it further, he said:

“You perceive I was not far wrong, Priscilla, when I said the reason of your spiritual unhappiness was because you

¹ Neh. viii. 10; Isa. xxix. 19; Phil. iv. 4; Psa. v. 11; 1 Thess. v. 16.

² John xvi. 15.

were living in disobedience to God, and keeping that which He bade you throw away."

Priscilla did not again say "Forbid it!" but, not quite understanding, she again asked him, "How so, sir?"

"The Lord says, 'Cast thy burden on Me;'¹ and you are keeping it till your poor weary, heavy-laden soul is nigh to sinking in the Slough of Despond; and in keeping this burden of sinful doubt you are casting away a very precious jewel. Confidence, or trust in the all-atoning blood and perfect merits of the Lord Jesus Christ, and through these, peace and forgiveness from God, sent to you by His Holy Spirit, the ever-ready messenger of God's love to our souls; this too is an act of disobedience, for God, through the Apostle Paul, says: 'Cast not away your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward.'² Great reward indeed! how great they only can tell who have grasped the 'precious promises' and made them their own. As obedient children we have no more right to cast away this confidence than we have to keep our burden when God says, 'Cast it on Me.' Do you think you understand now, Priscilla, when you are disobedient?"

"Thank the Lord I do, sir. Here have I been hugging a great huge burdensome question, 'Can all these precious promises be made to me?' when what I ought to have done was to take it and roll it—it was too heavy to lift—right away on my blessed burden-bearer, the Lord Jesus Christ! No wonder that I was walking in darkness with my cruel load weighing me down!"

"If we walk in the light, as He is in the light,' then is it that we know by sweet experience that the 'blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.'³ You see God has a word to meet you on every point. He so knoweth our frames and so remembereth that we are dust.⁴ I will tell you a little story, Priscilla, of a dear Christian friend of mine who has lately gone to be for ever with the Lord. She was a dear devoted servant of Christ, but, something like

¹ Psa. lv. 22.

² Heb. x. 35.

³ 1 John i. 7.

⁴ Psa. ciii. 14.

THE WORSTED SAMPLER.

yourself, walked in darkness ; sometimes, because she did not fully realise her privilege as a child of light. She could give all God's precious promises to others, but she failed to realise them herself. Some folks call this humility, but I call it want of faith. The consequence was that when lying on her death-bed, she could not look up with perfect confidence and say, 'I know in whom I have believed and am persuaded.'¹ She could only say 'I hope indeed I am safe—I trust I am.' Sad uncertainty for a dying bed. Her sister, also a godly woman, prayed God on her behalf that He would send His Spirit of strength and consolation into her soul ; and having done this, she waited to 'see the end of the Lord ; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.'²

"It so happened that one day whilst the sick sister was sleeping, the other occupied herself with turning out a rummage drawer, when finding an old worsted sampler of their girlish days, she tossed it on one side, up towards the invalid's pillow, thinking she might like to see a relic of that happy time ; and presently, forgetting all about it, she turned towards the window to finish a book until her service should be again required by the invalid.

"She was soon deep in a most interesting part of the volume, when she was startled by a clear voice from her sister's bed.

"'I have—done it—Mary!'

"And turning, she beheld the old worsted sampler in Anna's hands, whilst, with a smile of satisfaction, she seemed to be reading something that years ago had been stitched into it with coloured wool. On catching Mary's look of inquiry, she repeated :

"'I have—done it!'

"'What have you done, dear?'

"'What it tells me.'

"In explanation she tried to pass the sampler to her sister, but being too weak, her hand dropped on the quilt,

¹ 2 Tim. i. 12.

² James v. 11.

but near enough to enable Mary to read the words, 'Cast thy burden on the Lord, and He shall sustain thee.'

" 'Is this what you have done at last, dear?' she anxiously inquired.

" 'Yes, I have cast it on the Lord!'

"So the valley was lighted, and Anna passed away in perfect peace, because she trusted in Him, and cast herself on Jesus only.

"There, Priscilla, that is just what you and we all must do if we wish to be happy believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. We must cast away the burden, but prayerfully seek to keep the confidence. God's word is full of encouragements to those who trust in Him to carry on the good work He has through the Holy Spirit begun in their soul. 'Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform (or finish) it until the day of Jesus Christ.'" ¹

But Priscilla wanted no more to assure her that in herself alone, and not in the willingness of the Lord to receive her, lay the cloud which had darkened her path and made her "a woman of a sorrowful spirit," when she should have been letting her light "so shine before men" ² as to bring glory to God who had called her out of darkness into the glorious sunshine of His presence. ³

Reader, will you lay this thought to heart? First make sure that by casting away all deeds of darkness you have a right to walk in the light; then, by the grace of God, strive to keep in the light; by simple faith looking unto Jesus who would never have been the author, if He had not meant to be "the finisher of our faith." ⁴

Cast away all your sins, doubts, and fears, but keep all God's blessed promises, made to you for Jesus' sake, if you would have joy and peace in believing that your guilt is all removed, and even its stains washed out in the precious blood of Christ.

¹ Phil. i. 6.

² Matt. v. 16.

³ 1 Peter ii. 9.

⁴ Heb. xii. 2.

“ Let not conscience make you linger,
Nor of fitness fondly dream ;
All the fitness He requireth
Is to feel your need of Him :
This He gives you ;
'Tis the Spirit's rising beam.”

And when we have thus cast our burden on Him what does the Lord do with it? His own Word shall answer :
“ Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.”¹

The Fireproof Dress ; or, Safe in the Flames.

“ Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving.”—*Col. iv. 2.*
“ Pray without ceasing.”—*1 Thess. v. 17.*

WE once witnessed a strange exhibition of the protection afforded by a certain fire-proof dress from the ravages of fire. A man clothed in it entered into a wooden structure filled with combustible materials, saturated with oils, which, when ignited, produces a fire of more than ordinary severity ; he wandered about in it, picking up red-hot and flaming beams, which he folded in his arms, whilst pretending to look for something in a corner or examining a chest. He held his head down in the midst of the flames, which were powerless against the protective dress he wore, and from which he could see and breathe as freely as in the open air. Then heaping a mass of burning timbers together, he folded his arms and threw himself upon the flaming pile, resting there with apparently as much ease as if reclining upon a couch.

On emerging from the building he exhibited not the least signs of exhaustion, and his temperature was no more than that experienced by a person in moderately warm weather ; whilst his dress was icy cold as soon as he had divested himself of it. The dress he wore consisted of a double covering enveloping the whole body, but made in two

¹ Micah vii. 19.

THE FIREPROOF DRESS; OR, SAFE IN THE FLAMES.

parts; one for the trunk, arms, and lower limbs, and the other for the head—both air-tight and joined together at the shoulders. The inner dress is of india-rubber, and the outer part of moleskin, lined with stout cotton cloth, or some other non-conductor of heat. The head of the dress is roofed in by a helmet of double canvas, and channelled for the exit of water. When the dress is adjusted, air is supplied by means of a spiral india-rubber tube placed within a hose conveying water, and this inner tube is fed by a pair of bellows; the air circulating between the inner dress and the body, and escaping finally through the holes in the face of the dress. By this arrangement the whole of the time the man is in the flames he is in dripping water, but the air-feeding apparatus prevents the generation of steam. One important point is the facility with which the dress is put on, less than five minutes being taken in preparing the wearer for his dive into the flames.

This fire-proof dress suggested to us many moral lessons. On account of sin we are exposed to many dangers. There is the fire of God's wrath revealed against all unrighteousness, and we need a dress which will protect and preserve us from this, and God has mercifully provided it through the person and work of His dear Son—a righteousness which is to all and upon all who believe, so that the soul clothed in it may sing:

“Jesus, Thy blood and righteousness
My beauty are, my glorious dress;
Midst flaming worlds in these arrayed,
With joy shall I lift up my head.”

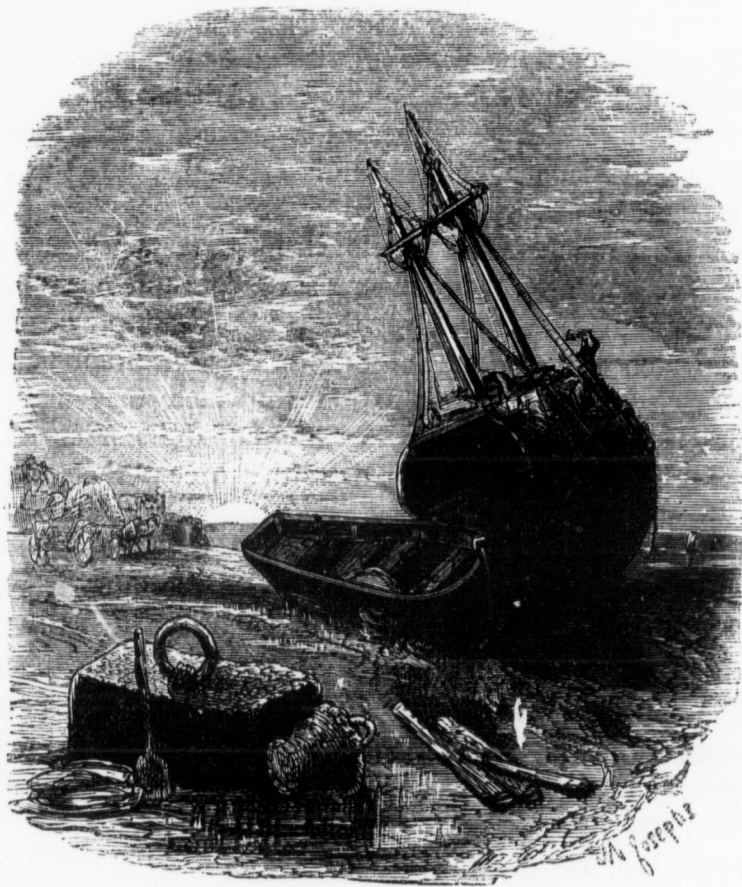
But we are exposed also to the fire of temptation, the flames of which, in various forms, constantly surround our path. There is the subtle and penetrating flame of infidelity, consuming and burning up all faith in God or judgment to come. Oh how brightly is this burning around the path of many, throwing forth ever and anon the brilliant sparks of learning, intellect, and genius, thus attracting many like moths to a dazzling and bewitching destruction.

Then there is the flame of strong drink, burning and eating out the physical and moral life of thousands.

Then there are the flames of a grovelling and sensual appetite, the language of which is as of old, "Let us eat, drink, and be merry, for to-morrow we die."

Oh what numbers are enveloped in these flames, and are being consumed by them under the influence of misery and horror unutterable. And yet there is a dress provided by God which will save men from even these dreadful flames, and each and every temptation to which they may be exposed. We may term it the fire-proof dress of constant, all-prevailing prayer. By this dress the three workers of old, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, though cast into a fiery furnace by the order of a heathen king, were preserved in the midst of its flames, and one like unto the Son of God was seen walking with them in the midst of the fire, for their faith and earnest prayer brought Him forth to their help; and the man who by faith constantly realises the presence of Christ, and lives and walks surrounded by the atmosphere of prayer, will be secure in the midst of the fire of temptation, however severe. And this fire-proof dress of prayer, too, is, like the one we have literally described, accessible to all every moment, and at all times, under all circumstances, and in all places, and can be thrown over the soul, as we see illustrated by the experience of the poor publican, who only exclaimed, "God be merciful to me, a sinner," and of whom it is said, "that immediately he went down to his house justified." Wouldst thou then, dear reader, be preserved amid the fire of temptation which surrounds the path of all below? Oh, seek to realise by faith the presence of Christ, and seek to live in the habit, and to be clothed with the fire-proof dress, of constant prayer. "Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving."

"Prayer makes the darkened cloud withdraw;
Prayer climbs the ladder Jacob saw;
Gives exercise to faith and love;
Brings every blessing from above.



The Wrecks.

IT was a rough and stormy night; the wind which had been blowing hard all day had now increased in violence, and it was impossible to hear unmoved the fearful gusts which swept with tornado-like violence across the masts and spars of the vessels which had taken refuge in the harbour of one of our seaport towns.

Although there was some cause for alarm lest damage should be done to the town and to the shipping in the harbour, yet, as may be imagined, the most anxious thoughts were turned seaward, where in the Roads lay at the time many scores of vessels, all with their sails tightly furled and anchors cast. The strain upon their anchor-chains must

THE WRECKS.

have been immense, and in some cases was so severe that they parted, and the vessels drifted before the wind, with peril both to themselves and other craft which swarmed around.

The harbour tugs had hard work that night, and rendered great assistance to many a vessel that required help.

As yet no wreck had been reported, but just as I was about to retire to rest I was told that a vessel was drifting rapidly on to the sands, and looking in the direction indicated by my informant, I saw the bright light of the "flare" which was being burned by the men on board to indicate that the vessel was in distress.

Although I had been for some hours in the wind and rain and felt somewhat tired, I did not like to go indoors while there was a vessel likely to be wrecked; not that I thought I could be of any use, as there were numbers of beachmen and others, whose business it was to succour ships in distress and to do all that could be done if one was wrecked, and who knew their work and were able to perform it without the assistance of strangers; but a feeling of curiosity seized me, and I determined to hurry to the spot where I thought the vessel was likely to strike.

It was hard work walking over the sands and struggling through the wind and drenching rain, but at length I reached the place where the vessel had already run aground, after having been left by the crew, who had saved themselves in their boat.

No attempt was made to rescue the vessel from her perilous situation, for when a ship is once fixed upon the sands it is difficult even in fair weather to get her off again, but in such a night as this it would have been impossible to do so. I was somewhat disappointed that I had not arrived on the scene a little sooner, and was just thinking of returning home when a brig was seen drifting rapidly in the same direction. She had broken from her moorings and was quite unmanageable, and soon came ashore near to the spot where the other had already grounded. This time I had the

satisfaction of seeing all the crew saved by means of ropes thrown to the vessel and secured by the beachmen on shore.

It was now nearly midnight ; the storm had in no degree abated, but seemed to rage with even greater fury than it had done before, when another vessel was seen in a dangerous position, being driven rapidly towards the coast.

Everything that could be done to prevent her running on shore was tried, but without success ; she had lost her anchors, and the wind drove her onward to share the same fate as the others.

The crew of the vessel—which was a fine schooner nearly new—was at one time in great peril, as she struck farther seaward, and was so placed that it was impossible to save the men on board in the same way that the crew of the brig had been saved, and it was equally impossible for her boat to be launched, as the sea was breaking over her every minute, and no boat could have lived in such a tempest.

The rocket apparatus was now brought into use ; and I could not but wonder at the business-like way in which it was prepared ; so quickly and quietly, there was no fuss, no shouting, no confusion ; each man seemed to know and perform his own particular work with machine-like accuracy.

The stand was soon fixed, the rocket placed in it and a light applied. There was a short pause, then a shrill whizzing sound, and the projectile flew through the air like a fiery arrow, carrying with it the cord which was to form a communication from the vessel to the shore. It was a successful shot—the line was carried right across the vessel, and in a few minutes was safely fixed, then the basket was drawn from the shore to the schooner and, one after another, the crew were brought in it safe to land. Poor fellows, it was a rough journey for them though not a long one. Sometimes they were swinging high in the air and the next moment were being drawn through the waves, but eventually they all reached the beach, where strong arms were ready to receive them and help them out of their uncomfortable seat.

THE WRECKS.

The weather continued tempestuous for the next two days, and many other vessels were lost or damaged and a great deal of valuable property destroyed. But everything must have an end, and at last this storm lost its strength and eventually died quite away, and was succeeded by a calm.

It was about a week after the incidents I have narrated took place that I found an opportunity of walking along the shore to look at the vessels I had seen wrecked. How different was the scene! It was a calm bright evening, hardly a breath of wind found its way across the ocean which lay tranquil and calm with scarcely a ripple on its surface.

There, upon the sand were the vessels, looking little the worse for the terrible fight they had had with the storm; but though apparently uninjured they were in reality quite ruined for seagoing purposes, so strained and shaken had their timbers been.

As I said before, the evening was fine, and being tempted by the beauty of the scene, I sat down on the beach and gave myself up to reflections.

I thought how much a ship at sea, meeting with calms and storms and raging tempests, resembles a Christian as he goes through life. Sometimes we experience a calm, when things are going on smoothly, and our affairs are prosperous; when so-called friends crowd around and flatter and fawn upon us, and everything seems peaceful. Friends, if ever such a calm comes over your life, it is a false, deceitful one; look to it that your vessel is in readiness for a great strain, for depend upon it if you are voyaging to the better country the Lord of that country will not let you enjoy that treacherous calm for long. He will see that you are making no progress towards your voyage end, and will send His winds to fill your sails and urge you on. Yes, if ever you are so becalmed, pray that gentle breezes may be sent to enable you to go forward, for unless you do so pray, the winds are likely to come rougher and stronger to drive you to your haven.

They may come in the form of affliction, loss of health,

or bereavement; these are often sent to urge the Christian mariner forward, and hard enough they are to be borne; they make the vessel creak and groan, and sometimes try his every timber; but they are sent in love, so do not complain; only keep your vessel trimmed, and your sails set to catch the slightest breath of them, and you will be hurried forward and may escape other and rougher winds that follow.

But there are winds harder to bear than these; such that, unless you are careful, will do more damage to your rigging and give more difficulty in keeping your proper course: I mean the bitter cutting winds that blow when your acquaintances desert you; when those that once flattered you turn their backs upon, and speak evil of you; when they who at one time were the first to urge you forward to the committal of some folly, some neglect of what was quite right, turn round and point to those very things that they induced you to do, and speak scornfully of you for doing them; when the poisoned fangs of lying malice and scandal are fastened upon you;—then indeed you have rough winds to encounter; and unless you have the right Captain to direct your course, and the right Pilot at the helm, they may drive you in a wrong direction, and much tacking will be required before you can get into it again.

And then there are times when all these winds seem to blow at once—affliction, loss of friends, scorn and contempt;—then there is such a sea raised that your vessel will require all your seamanship to weather it; but even then you may feel safe and confident if you have faith in your Pilot, and pray for help from your God; for—

“From every stormy wind that blows,
From every swelling tide that flows
There is a calm, a sure retreat,
'Tis found beneath the mercy seat.”

Yes; you may be confident if you are convinced that He into whose hands you have trusted all your concerns is able

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THE WRECKS.

to keep that which you have committed unto Him against that day.

But, oh! be careful when storms arise; keep your faith strong and your vessel in the right course; double your watch, lest you strike upon hidden rocks or are driven upon the sands, and become, like the vessels before me, stranded and wrecked.

And among all the storms of temptation or sorrow, or trouble of any kind, that you may meet with in your voyage, keep the eye of faith fixed firmly upon the haven for which you are steering; look forward to the end of your voyage, and think of the calm—the peaceful calm that awaits you there; when all storms shall be over, all rough winds shall have ceased; when every fear shall be cast aside, and all dangers forgotten; when God Himself shall wipe away all tears from your eyes, and when you shall join the song of “Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.”

Keeping this glorious end in view, with Jesus for the Captain of your salvation, with the word of God as your chart, and with obedience to God’s will at the helm, you will be enabled to weather all storms, to avoid all dangers, and at last to find a happy entrance into rest.

“Though the shore we hope to land on
Only by report is known,
Yet we freely all abandon,
Led by that report alone;
And with Jesus
Through the trackless deep move on.

“Oh, what pleasures there await us:
There the tempests cease to roar;
There it is that those who hate us
Shall molest our peace no more;
Trouble ceases
On that tranquil, happy shore.”

G. H. S.

The Faith that will Stand the Test.



YOUNG girl lay dying. Her father, an avowed atheist, stood by the bedside in speechless agony. It seemed hard (doubly hard for him) that that life so full of promise should be so early blighted; that that fair form, the covering of a fairer spirit, should be seen no more for ever—yea, that that spirit itself, so often manifested in loving kindly deeds, should be snuffed out like the flickering flame of a candle.

The girl's face seemed troubled. The brows were slightly contracted, as if with painful thought. Presently the large eyes opened, and fixing upon the father's pale tear-stained face in a look of mingled tenderness and grief, her tremulous voice gave utterance to the question: "Father, shall I trust my mother's faith, or thine?"

In a voice broken by sobs the father answered: "Oh, daughter, trust thy mother's faith now."

"And thou too, dear father," said the dying girl, and fell asleep.

Her mother, a humble follower of Christ, had been laughed at sometimes for what her husband called superstition. In good health and comfortable circumstances, he had professed to be able to do without a God; and, while the present life seemed bright and joyful, he could laugh to scorn the idle dream, as he would have called it, of a life hereafter. But change came. Death, the stern, inexorable teacher, stalked into his happy home and robbed it of its brighter ornament, changing life, as at the touch of a magician's wand, from a radiant landscape into a dry, parched desert.

He had made the too common mistake of leaving death "out of the reckoning." He had been hastening to the stream with close-shut eyes, and thinking, because he could not see it, that there was no river of death at all. How many are committing the same fatal error? Revelling in the gifts of his Creator, enjoying the world, man questions

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the very existence of his benefactor, but when affliction or death comes, he feels his dependence as he has never felt it before.

The philosophy which seemed so reasonable before is proved to be but a broken reed, and the yearning desire for some stronger support is felt by the crushed and humbled soul.

Then sometimes "the uses of adversity" are sweet indeed, for the heavy-laden soul comes up from the wilderness of trouble leaning upon the strong arm of its Beloved, even of the Lord Christ Jesus.

Reader! are you resting upon that arm? Is your soul full of loving trust in the once crucified, but now glorified Son of God? If not—if you have no arm to rest upon, no unchanging Friend to trust in—oh, I implore you stay and consider, for you are indeed in an evil case.

At any moment the fierce storm of adversity may beat upon your unsheltered spirit. At any moment you may be standing upon the borders of this brief life; and what of the infinite ocean of eternity beyond?

This question may not be a pleasant one. Some would call it a morbid one; but morbid or unpleasant, it is a question which comes to every man, and which every man must answer.

An Eastern prince, brought up in seclusion from all repulsive sights, is said when driving out for a pleasant excursion to have seen a dead body. Startled by the unusual sight he mournfully exclaimed, "Woe to life, when a man remains so short a time!"

Then abandoning for the day all thought of pleasure, he turned back to his palace, saying, "I must think how to accomplish deliverance."

Reader! that deliverance from the tyrant death has been accomplished once for all. Nearly nineteen centuries ago Paul could triumphantly exclaim, "Oh, death, where is thy sting? Oh, grave, where is thy victory?"¹ And a greater than Paul has said, "I am the resurrection, and the life: he

¹ I Cor. xv. 55.

that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live : and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me, shall never die." ¹

Reader ! this is the belief that will stand the test of that strange change which we call death. Flee, then, ye who have not done so, to the shelter of the riven Rock of Ages. Accept the invitation of Him who has said, " I am He that liveth, and was dead ; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen ; and have the keys of hell and of death." ²

Mary, the Mining Girl.

THE mercy of Jesus is free for all—for the king upon his throne, and the beggar upon the dunghill. The precious promise which fell from the lips of the Saviour so long ago is still as efficacious as ever : " Ask, and it shall be given you ; seek, and ye shall find ; knock, and it shall be opened unto you."

I first remember seeing Mary at a mine near the Cornish sea, where I frequently went to distribute tracts. She was then a little more than twenty, full of health and spirits. Time passed, the lead mine was abandoned, she went wrong, and joined herself to a house of ill-fame in one of the courts of the town. Here I occasionally saw her, and discovered that she had not forgotten me. Poor Mary ! Soon her health was ruined, and she had to go with her little child into the Union. Here I often had an opportunity of speaking to her of the Saviour, and giving her tracts. These she valued much, sewing them together until she had quite a large bundle, often showing them to me, and calling them my books.

Her bodily weakness increased, and with earnest sighs and tears she sought and found the Saviour. Her conversion was genuine and bright. From the time the Redeemer first spoke peace to her soul she had no doubts or fears. Entering the union ward about this time, and approaching her bedside, she stretched out her thin hand towards me,

¹ John xi. 25, 26.

² Rev. i. 18.

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MARY, THE MINING GIRL.

and exclaimed, with her face beaming with pleasure, "You cannot tell how glad I am to see you! I have been waiting for you all the day, and praying that the Lord would send you. I want to tell you what He has done for my soul. He has washed away all my sins in His precious blood, and filled me with His love. Earth and the things of earth are nothing to me now; I am leaving them all behind, and have Jesus in my view. Oh how kind you have been to me in speaking to me, giving me tracts, and praying with me! I often pray that the Lord may bless you and your family. I shall soon be in heaven, and will wait at the gate for you, and when you are coming up will fly to meet you. Bless, bless the Lord!" These, as well as I can recollect, were her own words. Soon after this the messenger came, and the poor pardoned Magdalene surely entered into rest.

Let this true narrative encourage the penitent to lay hold on Christ. Reader, whether old or young, in sickness or in health, the balm of Gilead is sufficient for thee. Humble thyself before thy Maker, believe His word, trust in His power, and thou shalt be saved. "This Man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them."

Old age with erring hoary,
And manhood's walk of sin,
The first forsaking footstep
May turn and enter in;
The door of hope is open,
And Mercy pleads the while;
This man receiveth sinners,
The vilest of the vile.

Thrice welcome, precious teaching!
To Christ's own arms I flee:
This Man receiveth *sinners*;
Then He receiveth me;
A wanderer in the desert,
An erring child of guile,
Who am the chief of sinners,
The vilest of the vile.

“God knows what is best for thee.”

WHEN thy heart is bowed with sorrow,
When fears undefined oppress,
And a dreading of the morrow
Fills with anxious care thy breast;
And in vain thy mind is seeking
Why, or whence these fears can be,
Listen to the Spirit speaking,
“God knows what is best for thee.”

Thou hast read, “tost on the billow
Weary watch disciples kept,”
Whilst as though on downy pillow
Midst the storm the Saviour slept.
Learn thou from the Saviour's chiding
On that Galilean sea,
To be in Him all-confiding;
God knows what is best for thee.

Though the tempest rages round thee,
O'er thy bark the waves prevail,
Though thy cry for help may drown'd be
In the howlings of the gale,
Let thy faith thy heart sustaining
In that hour exultant be,
Ever this grand truth maintaining,
God knows what is best for thee.

Be not cast down, be not fearful
In that hour of sharpest trial,
Look aëst serene and cheerful,
Give each doubt a firm denial.
For thy lamp of faith shall light thee
Though Egyptian darkness be,
And the thought a rich delight be,
God knows what is best for thee.

Overruled by love and wisdom,
By faith only understood,
Of His dealings this the outcome,
All is working for thy good.
Why then cast down, why so fearful?
Trusting fully constantly,
This grand truth should make thee cheerful,
God knows what is best for thee.

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