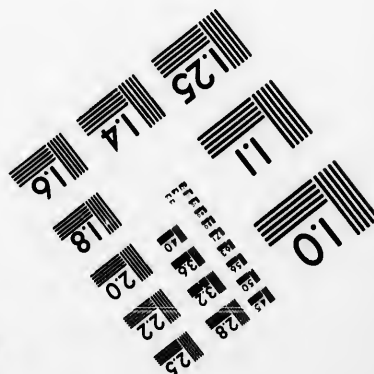
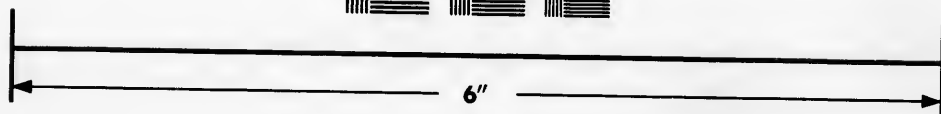
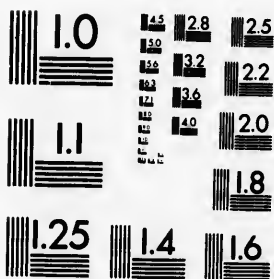


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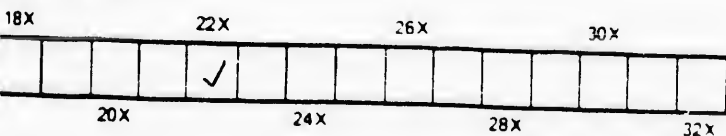
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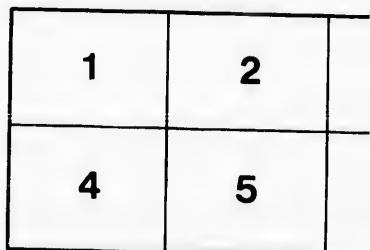
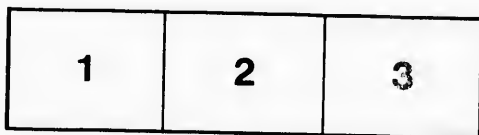
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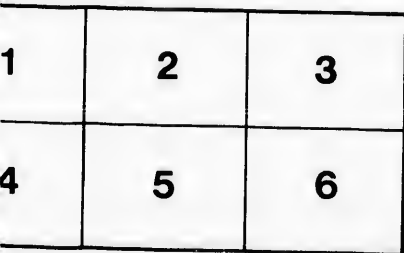
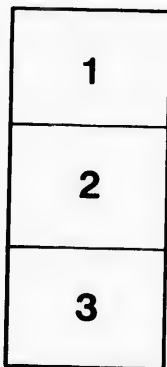
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THE HEAD KEEPER

A TALE

BY

MRS. ROSA PORTLOCK

(WOODSTOCK, ONT.)

PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR BY

WILLIAM BRIGGS

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TORONTO

1898

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INTRODUCTION.

WHAT shall we do to commemorate the year of our Queen's Jubilee? This is the question we hear on all sides of us, and since I would like to do something in remembrance of that glorious event I determined to publish a book, not because we have need of more (the world is full of books, I am told), but because I would give my testimony to the fact that God is true.

A young girl once said to me, "Don't you think it is quite easy to serve God when you have everything that money can buy, and that it is very hard for poor people to do right?" This question set me thinking; yet I will not in these pages discuss it, but try to show that God does keep the poor as well as the rich.

In the beginning it may appear that I have written for children, but if my readers will follow on they shall find that woman's sufferings, woman's work and

woman's struggles for spiritual light, as well as literal victory, are clearly set forth.

I commend the work to God, and pray that it may help some to see and realize all that God is willing and able to be to those who trust Him. I would like to dedicate this little work to the poor amongst God's people, wherever they may be found.

ROSA PORTLOCK.

WOODSTOCK, July, 1897.

P.S.—I was greatly disappointed in not being able to carry out my plans with regard to bringing out this little work last year, but circumstances over which I had no control prevented. I now, therefore, trusting in the old proverb, "better late than never," send it forth.

R. P.

WOODSTOCK, July, 1898.

WRITTEN ON THE DAY OF THE QUEEN'S
DIAMOND JUBILEE.

A NOBLE woman sits enthroned
O'er Britain's wide domain;
A godly woman o'er us set
In righteousness to reign.

A mother, too, we find our Queen,
Of children far and near;
In sympathy and love she shows
That they to her are dear.

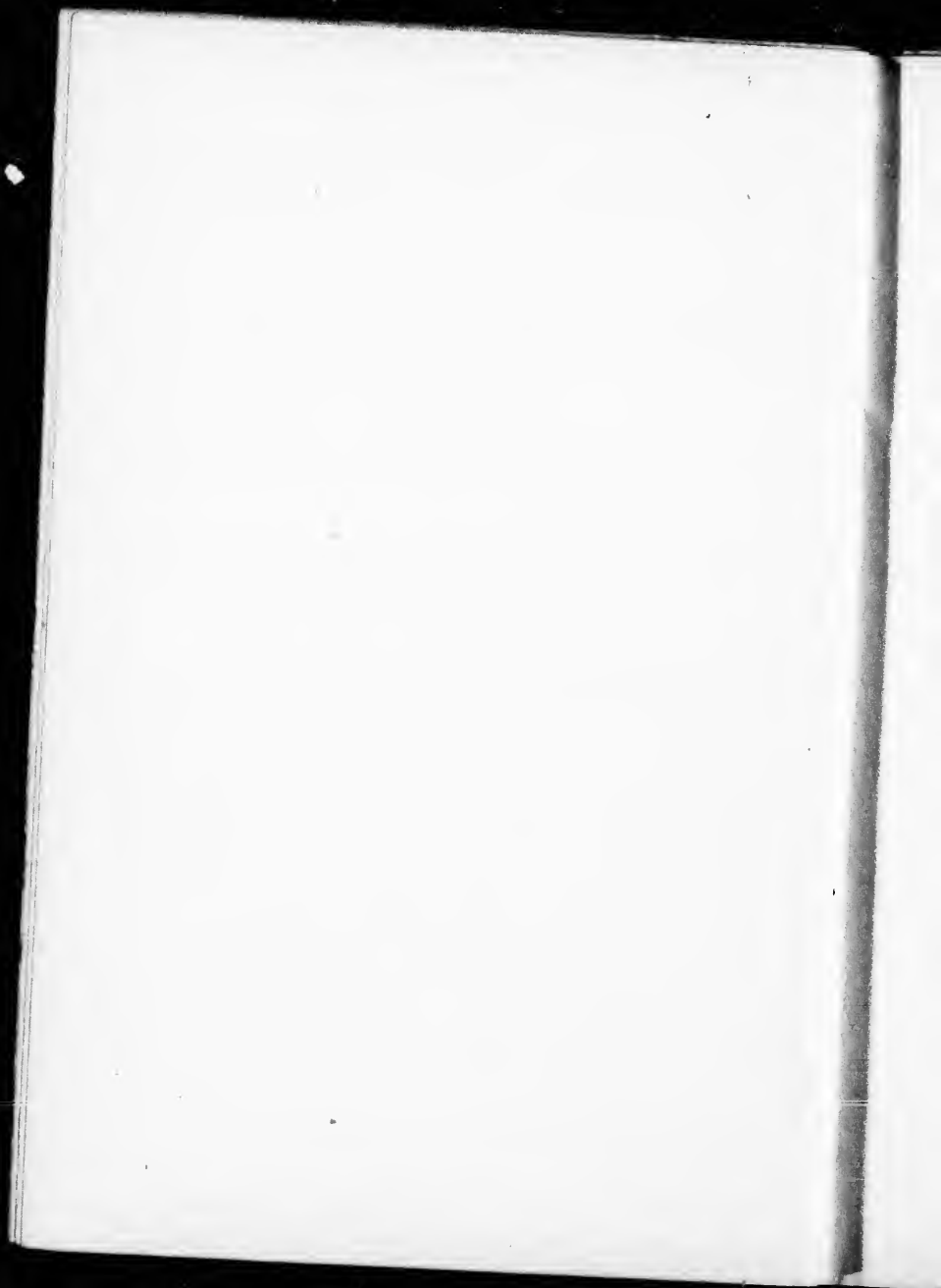
As suffering woman, too, she claimed
Our sympathy and love;
When those she held so dear were called
To join the hosts above.

To-day we find an aged Queen
Cheered by a countless host;
For sixty years her life has been
So pure, her rule so just.

And now from o'er the seas goes forth
A message pure and sweet,
To daughter nations, far and near,
With loving words to greet:

"From my heart I thank my beloved people.
May God bless them."

And now, God bless the little one,
Her grandson by her side;
Who may some day be England's king,
Our God with Him abide.



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THE HEAD KEEPER.

CHAPTER I.

CHILDHOOD'S DAYS.

"Watchman, what of the night?"

"Speak gently to the little ones,
They have enough to bear."

"ONE o'clock, and a rainy morning," rang out clearly the voice of the watchman, some forty years ago, as he passed through the streets of the city of Oxford. I was startled out of a sound sleep, and as I sat up in bed, I heard voices in the next room and groans as of some one in pain. After listening for a few minutes, I crept softly out of bed and went to the door of the room whence those sounds proceeded. It was my

mother's bedroom, and, peeping through the partially closed door, I saw my father seated on a chair with a blanket thrown around him. A man in a great coat was in the act of extracting a tooth. As he did so, my father uttered a deep groan, causing me to give a sharp scream.

My mother, who was in bed, turned suddenly on hearing my voice. "You poor child," she said, "Did the noise waken you up? I am afraid you will take cold."

But the doctor—shall I ever forget the fright he gave me as he turned quickly—the instrument of torture still in his hand—the ghastly tooth plainly to be seen—as, taking one step toward me, he said:

"If you are not off to bed in a jiffy, I will put you into my big pocket."

Now, I may tell you that a doctor's pocket was something to be afraid of in those days. Not very long before this time a little baby sister had come to our house, and we were told that the doctor had brought her in his pocket. I expect I had some confused ideas as to being put into this man's pocket and being taken to some other house where they wanted a baby. Be that as it may; I obeyed him and was back to my bed in a jiffy, which I took to mean, less than no time.

I was very frightened, and lay shivering for some time. Then I heard him leaving mother's room. I also heard mother say to Bessie (who, by the way, was holding the candle when I looked in upon them):

"Show Dr. Churchill to the children's room, and he will see that Mary is comfortable, and not too much frightened at his threat."

Now, that I was frightened there is no doubt. But I controlled myself sufficiently to close my eyes and pretend to be asleep. He stood for a few seconds at my bedside, placed a cool hand on my forehead, then left me, saying to my mother, as he passed her door, "All right, Mrs. Elliott; she is fast asleep." Then I heard the front door closed, the key turned in the lock and the bolt drawn; after which I felt I could breathe more freely. Soon I heard Bessie go to her room.

Then the watchman's voice again rang out, "Two o'clock, and a cloudy morning," and that is the last I remember until the sun was shining through the window next day, and it was time to get up.

In those days it was customary for the watchman of the city to walk through his beat, calling out the time each hour, and describing the weather as above: Windy, rainy, cloudy, or moonlight, as the case might be.

At the time of which I am writing, I was about six

years old; yet everything is as clear to my memory as if it were but yesterday.

My father was third master of the old Grammar School of that city—indulgent, kind and fond of his children when they were good; but otherwise stern.

My mother was frail and delicate. I think I may call her beautiful. She was extremely fair, and her hair, which was abundant, was of that rich auburn shade, over which novelists rave and call a golden brown. But, whatever others may call her, to me she was always lovely. As I grew older I became nurse and companion to her, and I loved her very dearly.

I had one sister older than I was—Julia. One baby boy had been buried. Then came Lizzie, a chubby little darling, two years and a-half old, and the wee baby who had so lately come. Julia was dark and pretty, with brown ringlets reaching nearly to her shoulders. I was fair, and shall I say of myself, pretty? I think I may venture so to do. My curls were light and longer than my sisters'. I remember being very proud of them at that time, as well as later. Lizzie was a lovely child, and was always called the flower of the flock. But Annie, the wee pet, was plain and delicate; backward in every way. But, let me here say, that as she grew up, she of all of us was the most amiable—and still is, though like the rest of us, she is getting into years.

I must now tell you, as I afterwards heard it explained, how it came about that a doctor was drawing a tooth at midnight.

Father had been suffering for some time from this same tooth; but being a back one, he had put off as long as possible the losing of it. The March winds and April showers, however, had been too much for him. He had suffered so intensely this evening that he went to have it drawn.

Doctor Symonds, our family physician, and his assistant, Doctor Churchill, were both away and not expected home until late.

Father did not like to trust the young man in the surgery, so left word for Mr. Churchill to go to the house, if he reached home in time. He sat up until eleven o'clock waiting for him. Then, as he had not come, went to bed in great pain, only to be roused later to admit him. Dr. Churchill was a great friend of father's, and, though very tired, came off at once to relieve him when he heard that he was suffering so much.

Shall we pass on, now, to the month of July? Father had built us a lovely summer-house in the garden. And such a garden. I must try to describe it.

We will imagine you are going through it. As

you walk on Observatory Street, you pass its lower end. Look over the green hedge; you will see a border of flowers, then a wide pathway. Now turn the corner of the street and walk to your right hand. The hedge is still beside you. Follow it and you will come to a small gate. Enter, and look back the way you have come. You will see flower borders, pathways and oddly-shaped flower beds, and in the centre of the garden a large pear tree. Now turn and look to your left hand. You will see the front of the house—not very large, but, as I think of it, very dear to me. At the side of the house, near to the gate you have entered by, you will see a grass plot and the summer house. Go a little further; at the back of the house there is a plantation, which forms one side of a street, some twenty feet below where you are standing.

This street or lane was called at that time, Horse and Jockey Lane, because a tavern stood at the corner, called the Horse and Jockey Inn. I remember the sign swinging in the wind, with its horse and rider plainly to be seen.

It was in this lovely garden, then, one fine July morning, that we were playing at being grown up people—Julia and I and a young friend, Eliza Lock. We had a large doll for our baby and paid visits one to another.

After a while we took a walk in the garden, pretending it was a park. When we got back to Carnation Villa (as we called our playhouse), I was the first to see that someone had taken possession—no less than James Hill, who, although he was quite grown up, was one of our chief playmates. He was studying for Holy Orders at St. John's College and made his home with us during the College terms, generally spending his vacation with an uncle in Manchester. We were delighted to see him, invited him to stay to our little feast (which he did); then, with great glee, we took him to our mother. She was pleased to see him, though somewhat surprised, as he had gone away to spend his vacation, purposing to stay until the middle of August.

"What brought you back so soon?" she said, as she shook hands with him.

"Oh! I don't know, Mrs. Elliot. I just wanted to come. I hope I shall not put you to any inconvenience. I want to have a few romps with the young ones before I go back to College."

"You certainly will not put us about at all, my dear boy. I think you know that we are glad to have you with us. Only be careful in your romping that you do not turn the house quite upside down."

"Thank you very much, my dear Mrs. Elliott, for your kind welcome," he said.

"I suppose you can find your room," said my mother. "Luncheon will be ready in a few minutes."

"Oh! yes, thank you, I can find my room all right," he said, and catching up the baby of the garden, he bounded up the stairs, well knowing that I should run after my darling, and that it would be the signal for a bit of fun.

After luncheon Julia was taken ill. She slipped off her chair and would have fallen heavily to the ground, had not James caught her dress and so saved her from striking her face. She was unconscious for so long that mother sent for the doctor. He said the heat and excitement had been too much for her and that she must be kept very quiet for a few days, so our play ended in rather a sad manner.

Bear with me, dear reader, if I linger too long over these childish scenes. My life has been full of changes, and I love to dwell upon the happy days of childhood.

They were happy days, indeed. James Hill gave up so much of his time for our amusement and recreation. He took us fishing, boating, driving and walking. I often wonder how he came to find so much pleasure in being with us. I think he was very fond of my mother, which was, perhaps, the reason. I once heard her say that she did not need a nurse

when he was with us, as she always felt that we were perfectly safe with him.

Now, lest you should form too good an opinion of me, I must tell you that I could be very naughty. One morning, Bessie, the house-maid, gave me a penny with which to buy her some cap-wire, from a little corner shop, kept by John Stokes. I saw some nice nuts on the counter and I bought a halfpenny worth and a halfpenny worth of cap-wire, which I took home. The nuts I took to school! I had no sooner left the shop than I was sorry, though I did not at that time realize that it was a sin. I knew only that I had done wrong, and that I should be punished if I were found out. I did not eat any of the nuts myself, but gave them away to my schoolfellows. At noon I could see that mother knew all about it. Young as I was I could read it in her face.

At the school to which we went at this time, we had a half holiday every Wednesday and Saturday. The day I am speaking of was Wednesday, and we were to go with James Hill to his aunt's garden to have fruit; then to go down the canal on a barge and walk back through the town. Eliza Lock was to go with us. After luncheon, James told us to be quick and get ready. -

Had I a foreboding that I could not go? I think I

had. Conscience must have told me that I did not deserve to go. I looked at my mother just as she was about to speak. "Can't I go, mother?" I cried, "Oh! don't say I can't go."

She looked steadily at me as she said: "Mary! Mr. Stokes was here this morning." I was convicted at once. The others went without me.

Now, this punishment was pretty heavy, yet I never thought it unjust, and I am sure I did not love my mother less for it; neither did I blame Mr. Stokes for telling her. It seemed quite natural that I should be found out and punished. But what puzzled me so much then, and what I am sure now was unjust, was the fact that when my father came home that evening he whipped me severely.

I felt that I had been punished once, and why should he whip me. I could have taken it all right, if I might have had it first and then have gone with the others. I am afraid I was very angry with my father in my childish way.

I will not linger over the next two years. They were a mixture of joy and sorrow, such as must come to all children more or less. Mother was not at all strong during those two years, and at times had some very severe attacks of illness. My sister Julia had gone to live with grandma, and I was left a good deal

to myself, choosing my own companions, which, I daresay, were not always of the best.

On one occasion—my mother being very ill—I was sent into the town to buy something, and told to take care of the change. Coming home I had to pass an old woman who was selling oranges. Without stopping to think, I bought one and I do believe I enjoyed the eating of it; but as soon as that was over, I wondered what I should do to account for the missing penny. One sin led to another, as it always does, and I said I had lost it; but my mouth was dirty, and I had to say that I had been eating orange peeling. Of course I was not believed, and father was very angry. He told me to get ready to go with him into the town at five o'clock and he would see about it.

You will readily believe that I was unhappy. My mother was too to be even spoken to. No one else in the house but servants, and they were too busy to be troubling themselves on my account. It was vacation time, so even James Hill was denied me.

At last it was five o'clock—but it poured with rain. Father said: "I won't take you out in this rain, so you may get your Bible and learn ten verses of the 12th chapter of the Book of Proverbs, beginning at the 19th verse."

I soon learnt them; but how little I understood

them, and learning them as a punishment was not likely to make me love them.

One more naughty trick of mine comes before me as I write—yet with such a different result that I feel I must tell you of it.

The October term had come and gone. Christmas was over, and my tenth birthday was drawing near. On the 22nd of March, I should be ten years old, after which I was to go to a school for young ladies. I remember how delighted I was to tell James Hill all about it when he came to us for the spring term, and I believe he was just as much delighted to hear it; for anything that pleased us gave pleasure to him.

At last the great day arrived. James took us for a ramble through the fields. Eliza Lock and some of our cousins went with us. We had tea at a farm house and came back by the road. My mother's cousin brought his violin and played for us in the evening. We had a carpet dance, played games, and had a very enjoyable time. The next day I went to school. I also went to a Sunday School at this time. Something about which I will tell you by and by.

I want now to tell you of the naughty trick I did. There was a small store, not very far from where we lived (kept by Mrs. Clark) to which I was sometimes sent. On one occasion, the article for

which I was sent being kept in the cellar, and only Mrs. Clark there at the time, I was left alone for a few minutes. Seeing a small piece of chalk lying on a shelf, I took it. We played a game at that time called hopscotch; chalk was used to make lines on the pavement, and it was for this I took it. But this was not all. On the shelf was a number of figures. People sometimes got goods without money, and they were marked here to be remembered—no books being kept. Those figures I rubbed out. I had no real object in doing this. I simply acted on the impulse of the moment. I had no sooner done it than I was sorry, and on receiving what I had been sent for I got away as quickly as possible.

The next day I was very miserable. I was terribly afraid lest father should get to know of it, as well as being really sorry for having done so mean a thing. During the afternoon some time I heard mother say she had asked Mr. Clark to bring her some flowerpots for the garden, and I asked that I might be allowed to fetch them from the store. Then, I thought to myself, I can say I am sorry, and perhaps they will not tell father anything about it. Alas, for good resolutions; how easily they are broken! In the meantime I went to have a game at hopscotch, with two or three other girls, and was the only one who had a piece of chalk.

Now, I had made up my mind not to use it. Yet, when it was asked, "Who's got a piece of chalk?" I at once took it out of my pocket and began to make the lines. Just then, Charlotte Ann, the granddaughter of Mrs. Clark, came up and passing by me drew her dress away as if afraid of touching mine, and with a toss of her head called the girls to one side, saying in a loud whisper, "she stole that piece of chalk from my grandma, and rubbed out her figures, so that she will be likely to lose a lot of money."

I tried not to look confused, and kept on with what I was doing. But as I saw the girls moving slowly away I called out to one of them, Are you not going to play, Bessie? She answered quite rudely, "Who wants to play with a thief!"

This roused my anger, and stepping up to them quite fiercely, I asked, "Who calls me a thief? Who said I was a thief? If it was you Charlotte Ann, I'll let you know that I am not a thief. So now, prove it.

"You have proved it yourself by guessing who said it," answered Charlotte Ann, scornfully.

They all walked away, leaving me angry and defiant, quite determined not to acknowledge my fault at all. When I went to the store that evening

Mrs. Clark asked me what I did with the bit of chalk I took away, I, looking as much surprised as I could, said I had not touched it, and persevered in my denial, telling many untruths.

At last, out of all patience with me, she said, "You are a good-for-nothing girl. Go right home. You did take it, and you did rub out the figures. I shall send Mr. Clark to-morrow to tell your father all about it."

I was very much frightened at this threat, and went to bed so miserable that I was not at all well the next morning, and asked to stay home from school and did not go out at all that day. Every knock at the door made me tremble for fear of Mr. Clark. But he did not come until the next morning, which was Saturday. Then I heard my father's voice, saying, "Good morning, Mr. Clark."

My heart seemed to sink within me as I ran away to the top room in the house, wondering what would be my punishment. Very soon I heard father calling to me; but when I reached the landing imagine my surprise. There was father smiling up at me as he said, "Put on your sunbonnet, Mr. Clark has called for you to go to the garden with him, and your mother says you can go."

I knew that the girls who had been taken to this

garden had considered it a great treat, and I had often wished to go, but now, after my bad behaviour, I could not in the least understand it, and when he met me with such a smiling welcome I felt sure that Mrs. Clark had forgotten to tell him. For myself I was thoroughly ashamed. We reached the garden after a pleasant walk, then we spent a happy, busy morning. When, suddenly looking at his watch, Mr. Clark said, "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy," let us go into the summer house and see what we can find in the lunch basket.

There was a bottle of milk, two little glasses, some mince pies and ham sandwiches. When we had eaten our lunch I repacked the basket while Mr. Clark smoked a pipe for a few minutes.

He then called me to his side, placed his arm around me and said he would tell me a story. He told me all about a little girl who had taken away a piece of chalk and rubbed out certain figures. This he said, had caused a certain amount of perplexity to those by whom the figures had been placed there, and that the little girl had been led into much sin by telling untruths. "Do you know who that little girl was?" he said. By this time I was crying bitterly.

I told him I was the little girl he meant and that I was sorry. I also told him that I should have

confessed it had not the girls behaved so unkindly to me.

I think I see the kindly old face now as it looked at me, speaking such gentle words; telling me of One who could see at all times, and who knew every thought of our hearts, who was so grieved when His children did wrong, and yet so ready to forgive them when they were sorry, and would tell him so. Then in that quiet summer house, he, the old man, and I, a little girl, knelt down together. He asked God to forgive me my sin, to teach me what was right, and to help me to do it for Christ's sake.

I can assure you, dear reader, that he took home a much happier girl than he had taken out. I never have, nor ever can forget that summer morning so long ago. Was not God beginning the good work in my heart which He has been carrying on ever since? I believe He took my hand then and has never let go. The prayers of that good man were answered. I knew that I was accountable for my actions to One who was above all. I was convinced of the fact that wrong doing was sin, and that it grieved the Saviour. This was as far as I had got, but I was soon to learn more, both of my own sinful nature and God's gracious love, for though He never let go my hand I have many times let go His; but He has always drawn me back, and each time drawn me nearer.



CHAPTER II.

PRIDE LEADS TO HUMILIATION.

“When pride cometh, then cometh shame.”—Prov. xi. 2.

“I was a wayward child,
I once preferred to roam ;
But now I love my Father's voice,
I love, I love His home.”

ANOTHER year has passed away—a happy careless year, to a certain extent, yet in God's good providence leading up to the time when He decidedly spoke to my soul, making me ready and willing to listen.

It is June, and a baby boy who had been sent to us was very ill. It was Sunday, the doctor had prescribed a warm bath for him at five o'clock in the afternoon. Mother said I could go to Sunday School and still be back in time to help her with the bath.

I did not care so much for play now, and had begun to take upon myself the nursing of my mother, who, though not confined to her bed, was in a very delicate state of health, and child, though I was, I was never tired of waiting on her. I had missed two Sundays going to school, so was glad to be able to go on this occasion. I dearly loved my teacher, Miss Page. She was very beautiful, which was, of itself, enough to make me love her. I had then and have now so much veneration for all that is beautiful. But dear Miss Page was more than beautiful, she was good. She loved God with all her heart, and her neighbor as herself.

Of her teaching and love to her scholars I will tell you after. I want now to tell you of the trouble awaiting me when I reached home. Just as I opened the front door I heard the parlor bell ring hastily, and father and Bessie, coming into the hall from different directions, entered the room with me. I ran forward, crying, "Oh! mother, mother. What is it?"

At the sound of my voice baby turned his head, gave me one sweet smile; then, looking back at his mother, drew a long gentle breath and was gone.

How sudden it was! We all thought him much better. There had been no perceptible change, mother said, until she rang the bell as he gave a little gasp for breath, and in a few moments all was over.



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-Prov. xi. 2.

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Annie had to be the baby again, and indeed, though she was five years old she was not able to walk alone, neither could she speak plainly; so that she could hardly be called anything else but a baby. You will remember, dear reader, that when I was ten years old I went to a new school. A school for young ladies, it was called. You may also have noticed that as a rule I like to be well thought of, whatever I may think of myself. I am going to tell you, now, of a little downfall of mine.

When I first went to this school, I made up my mind to do my very best, and I soon found that I could quite easily do the work that was done by the first class of girls, and why should I not be in the first class? They had to learn the Collect for the day on Monday morning; a chapter of Pinock's Catechism for Wednesday, and Scripture history for Friday. I knew I could do this. But notice the way I set about it. I said to my governess one morning: "If you please, Miss Bell, mamma thinks I am quite old enough to learn the Collect."

"I shall be glad for you to learn it," she said, "if you can keep up with the other lessons, as you will have to go into the first class."

"I think I can do so," I said, and I was promoted. Monday morning came. My Collect was perfectly

learned, and I was held up as an example to the others. On Wednesday I did not miss a word of the chapter, and again I was commended for being the youngest in the class and having done the best.

Dear me, how proud I was; but we shall see. "Pride always goes before a fall."

After a while I noticed the girls were very rude to me, when not observed by the teachers. They made no secret of their dislike for me. One day, after leaving school, they surrounded me, and one being appointed spokesman, told me that I was only to learn my own questions and answers in the chapter for the following Wednesday, threatening me with all the most absurd things, if I refused to do as they told me. "You know how we stand in the class," she said. "You just learn your own. We'll teach you to set yourself up above your elders."

Now, their plan was as follows: The girl next but one above me in class was to miss her answer. It would pass on to the next girl and she would give it and pass up. The girl, who to spite me had agreed to be dunce for the time being, would miss next question, throwing me out of mine, and of course I should not know the next one. But, as I think of it, I am reminded of the proverb, "There's many a slip 'twixt the cup and the lip," for on Wednesday morning all

the girls were in their places at school—but one. The top girl in the class was absent, and when a note was brought to excuse her, as she was needed at home, there was consternation in each face. What were they to do? Every question and answer would be wrong. The thought of this made them stupid over their other lessons; and our governess, before the chapter came on, was well nigh spent with us. Of course, at the first question we all looked at each other, and could not say one word as it passed down the class. At the second question we went through all right. The next turn of class was same as first, and so on through the chapter.

Miss Bell soon understood the trick, as it appeared to her; but not as it was planned by them to have been my disgrace alone. She told us that we could not go home until we could each repeat the whole chapter. The rest of the scholars were dismissed at the usual hour, and the key of the schoolroom door was turned upon us.

This was a great punishment to me, knowing how well I had stood with Miss Bell; also knowing that I hated the thing I had been forced to do, as learning was really no trouble to me. But worse was to come.

As soon as the door was closed upon us, I sat down and began to learn in good earnest; but two or three

of the girls, being quite reckless, took my book from me, placed me in a corner and amused themselves by pretending to cry, telling me it was all my fault, and as I thought myself so clever they would make me suffer for it.

Miss Bell looked in several times to see if we were ready for her. As soon as she was heard at the door, my book was given back to me and we all appeared to be quietly learning our lessons.

Four of the quieter girls soon mastered their task, and as they were leaving, kindly advised the other two to let the poor chicken alone now; they had teased it long enough.

It was near six o'clock before they would say their lesson, though they knew it; they were so determined to pay me off, as they said. To this day I fail to see what I had done to annoy them, except it was the going into their class so much younger than they were, and so soon after entering the school. I think, now, that it was unwise of Miss Bell to hold me up as an example. It touched their pride and made them dislike me.

As the two last girls went out, Miss Bell was about to close the door when I burst into tears. She crossed the room, sat down beside me, putting her arm around my waist. "Can you not learn it, my child?" she said.

"I never noticed that you were so troubled. Let me help you."

She stayed with me until I was able to say it—not very perfectly, I fear. Then she told me I had better go back to my old class for a while longer, and, reader, this was the greatest punishment she could have given me. I know now, and I knew then, that I was quite capable of keeping up with the girls of that class; yet I did not dare to explain to Miss Bell. I could give no reason for not learning the lesson sooner, on account of the threats of those dreadful girls, which to me at that time were very real. I could not complain to my mother, because on one occasion I heard her remark that she thought Miss Bell was bringing me on a little too fast. Thus I had to submit to that which my own folly had brought on me, and, strange to say, as soon as I was back in my old class, the girls of the first class were quite good to me, and all went well.

I pass on, now, to my twelfth birthday. As I look back, I remember my life was very bright at that time. Mother was enjoying better health than usual. I was fairly happy with my day-school companions, and particularly happy in my Sunday School.

As I went into the dining-room that morning, I saw several parcels on or beside my plate, each containing

some token of remembrance from a loving friend. That which first caught my attention, however, was a letter directed to me, the contents of which pleased me so much that I will give them to the reader just as they were.

“ March 22nd.

MY DEAR MARY,—

You are twelve years old, and I wish you many happy returns of your birthday. I send you, as a token of love, a Church service, which I would like you to make your daily study. You will see more and more of its beauty as you grow older, and things which now you hardly understand, will in time be to you grand pointers as you walk on the heavenly road. It is nearly twelve years since I held you in my arms at the dear old Church in which you were baptized. You were thereby made a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the Kingdom of Heaven. What do you now think, dear child, of being a member of Christ? A very part of Him; and a child of God—adopted by so loving a Father, and thus an inheritor of so glorious a home. And that you may be a loyal member, an obedient child, and always faithful, is the earnest prayer of your affectionate cousin and loving godmother,

EMILY MORTON.”

“ Oh! mother,” I exclaimed, “ is this not a beautiful letter ? ” “ It is, indeed, Mary,” said my mother, “ and

I hope you will, try to be what your cousin there wishes you to be—to be loving and obedient.”

“May I take this letter and show it to my teacher on Sunday, mamma?” I asked. “Certainly you may,” said my mother, “if you wish.”

On the following Sunday, after reading the above letter aloud, as I asked her to do, Miss Page spoke very earnestly to us, entreating us to follow God's Word more closely than we had ever done before. And she said, one very good way in which to show our love to God, was to try and win others to the Saviour. “Can you not each try to bring one?” We all said we would do what we could.

During the next week I went to grandma's house and asked my sister Julia if she would like to go to Sunday School with me. I told her what a nice teacher I had and how many nice lessons I had learned from her.

She said she would go if grandma would let her. Grandma said, “Yes,” and we were happy. The next Sunday saw us both at School the subject being “prayer.”

Miss Page, after speaking very solemnly as to the nature and efficacy of prayer, desired us to go home and quietly, on our knees, to ask God to make us His children, and keep us His forever. She tried to

impress upon our minds one great truth, namely: that whatsoever we asked of God—believing—He would do it for us. Julia went home to tea with me that afternoon, and I remember asking her if we should do as the teacher had told us. She agreed to do so, and we went up stairs to my room, shut the door and knelt down. "Will you pray?" I said, "as you are the oldest?" "I think you had better," she said, "because you have been to Sunday School more than I have." I think I remember the exact words of that prayer:

"O Lord, our Heavenly Father, we have not been good children, but we want to be better. Will you please make us thine, and keep us thine, for ever and ever, for Jesus Christ's sake, Amen?"

After which together we repeated the Lord's prayer. Then rising from our knees, we kissed each other and went about our daily duties, the same, yet not the same. I do not think that anyone but ourselves and God knew about that prayer until years afterwards. But I believe it was registered in Heaven, and both my sister and I are living witnesses to-day that God is a hearer and an answerer of prayer. Though we have both been led in a circuitous route, as it were, through the wilderness of this world, we have been, nay, are being brought day by day nearer to God.

Passing on a little, we come to a bright Sunday in June, and sad to say, the last Sunday Miss Page taught us. The lesson was on returning good for evil. The Golden Text was, "Love your Enemies." She read to us a little story called, "A Kiss for a Blow." A small boy got angry with his sister and struck her with a stick, then ran away. The father, who had been watching, caught the little fellow and drew him back to where he had left his sister, crying. "Now, Susie," he said, "I have got the naughty boy, what will you do to him?" Susie, with a little sob, after a glance around, said "I will throw my arms around his neck and kiss him." and so she did; the father walking away with something very like a tear in his eye.

After reading this, Miss Page said "Girls, it is very likely as you go through life you will have many an opportunity to do likewise and I hope that you will always be ready to meet unkindness in that spirit whenever and however it may come."

As I walked home I remembered that I could act on this lesson at once, "for surely," I said to myself, "I have got an enemy."

Sometimes, when mamma sent me on an errand to grandma's, and wanted me to go quickly, she would say, "Go through the alley and you will soon be

back." This was a narrow pass, called by the funny name of "Bullock's Alley," and saved a distance of about half a mile.

At the entrance to this alley there were five steps, and at the other end a slope which took us on to a common, not very large, but where a great many boys went to play ball, etc. At the foot of this hill, or slope, were a few cottages, occupied chiefly by quarry men and their families. From the first one of these cottages, a very rough girl would run with a stick every time she saw me, and by brandishing it above her head, frighten me very much. If I asked her timidly to please let me pass, she would stand aside and tell me to go, immediately running after me. Very often rough boys would join in the run, never really hurting, but alarming me exceedingly, so much so that grandma nearly always sent the servant to see me past those cottages.

Thinking of this after the Sunday teaching as above, I thought to myself, if God hears prayers and knows how much this girl frightens me, He will help me to be kind to her. So I once more in obedience to that dear teacher, went to God and told Him of my trouble.

The first time I went to grandma's, after this, I asked if I might spend one of my pennies. I bought

some candy and set off, full of the pleasure that anticipated good actions will always bring, and full of confidence in God—childlike it was, for I was a child. But Jesus "will not break the bruised reed nor quench the smoking flax." Thus, full of faith and love I got to the cottage.

Out came the girl more violent than usual at first. But I stood still, and as soon as she would let me speak, I said: "Will you, please, listen to me?" She looked surprised, and coming up close, holding the stick with her hands behind her, she said, still roughly, "Now, then, speak out, young 'un—what is it?"

I took the candies out of my pocket and handing them to her, said: "If you please, would you like these? I bought them with my own money."

I wish, dear reader, I could make you understand the change that came over that girl's face, but description cannot do it. Yet once more she spoke roughly, saying: "What do you want to give me them for, young 'un?"

"Because I want you to love me," I said.

"Love you," said she, with wide-open eyes, "Haven't you got nobody to love you?"

"Oh, yes!" I said, "Everybody I know loves me but you, and you frighten me."

"Well," she said, "don't the boys frighten you down the hill, sometimes?"

"Yes!" I told her, but never until she did.

Suddenly, she said, screwing up her mouth, "Just you put them candies into your pocket and come with me. I'll never go for to frighten you again, nor let anybody else, if I know it."

And from that time I seldom went past the cottage but that strange girl came out and protected me from the boys until beyond their reach.

One day she turned me sharply round so as to look into my face, and twining round her fingers one of my long curls, she said: "Do I love ye now, little 'un?" I said, "I hope you do, for I love you very dearly."

There came a day, however, when I went that way to grandma's (which I often did now), that there was no girl to meet me. The house was empty. I never saw her again; but who shall say what that simple act of faith may have accomplished. I have never forgotten her, and I do not think she has forgotten me. I pray God we shall meet in the sweet By and By.

The following Sunday we were very much grieved to hear that our beloved teacher was too ill to leave her bed. How little we thought that she would never again enter that school-room; yet so it was. About a fortnight after, I remember, she sent for us to go to see her. There were six in her class, not counting

Julia, who had only been twice, and who was at this time at Wallingford on a visit to Aunt Davis.

Mrs. Page wanted to take us one by one into her daughter's room; but Miss Page wished that we might all go at once. She was too weak to talk much, but she said: "My dear girls, I am going home to God. Will you all try to follow me there?" We each one went close to her as she beckoned us, and placing her hand on our heads, one by one, she closed her eyes and prayed.

As we were about to leave her, she clasped her hands together saying, "Good-bye, dear girls; may God in heaven bless and keep you always!"

I must tell you about her funeral. It was a very large one. She had taken part in teaching at the public night school, where she had a class of poor, rough boys (though never rough to her). At her own request those boys carried her to the grave, and we, her scholars, followed.

Mr. Page gave to each boy a new pair of boots. (And I may here say, that for his daughter's sake he never lost sight of those boys, but took special charge, providing them with situations suitable.) We girls wore white dresses, with black silk scarfs, tied on the shoulder with white ribbon. Cloaks were provided for the boys, as was the custom at that time. Each

girl carried a bouquet of flowers to be placed on the coffin before it was lowered into the grave.

Now I must tell you there was one girl in the class, Kate Cox by name, who was not as attentive or steady as Miss Page would have liked her to be. She often went out walking in the fields instead of going to school; yet when our teacher would be more than usually earnest, or during the sermon, she would burst into tears, sometimes saying, "Oh! teacher; I wish I could be good and love God."

Dear Miss Page asked her upon one occasion if she ever asked God to make her good. She said: "Yes, I do; but I forget so soon." In spite of all her teacher's love and special care, however, up to the time of her death, it had seemed to be in vain.

As the coffin was being lowered, Kate began to sob quietly, yet violently, and Mrs. Page noticing her extreme grief, went over to speak to her. Poor Kate, looking up and sobbing, said: "I never can be good, now; never."

The next morning Mrs. Page could not forget the look of utter helplessness which she had noticed in Katie's face, and on looking through her daughter's class book, soon found her address and went to call upon her.

She was surprised to find her ill in bed; so ill that her mother had sent for a doctor.

Mrs. Page waited until he came; and on hearing that the attack was serious, offered to help as much as possible in the nursing of her.

But, dear little thing, she did not trouble anyone for long. Just one week from the day on which Miss Page was buried, Kate died.

Mr. Cameron, our clergyman, said to her during one of his visits: "Do you know that Doctor Harvey says you will not get better?"

She said: "Yes, sir."

"And are you not sorry to die?" he said.

She clasped her hands together, exclaiming, "Oh! no! no! no! I am glad."

Mr. Cameron, and indeed all present, were very much surprised, and he said, "Why are you so glad, my child?"

"Because I shall never do wrong any more." Then turning directly to Mrs. Page, with a shy look and heightened color, she said, "I think I love Jesus now, and God has forgiven me all my sins. He knows I could not be good, however much I tried, so he is going to take me home."

This was shortly before her death; and very soon after carrying their beloved teacher to the grave, those same six boys carried Katie.

I think it is a very blessed thought that God does

not always take away the branch that bears no fruit in order that he may destroy it; but sometimes "He taketh it away," why? It is bearing no fruit; yet it is "in Him." He knows the soil surrounding it is not good for it and He takes it away to fairer regions. (I think to bear fruit there.)

Dear readers, have we not got a Head Keeper, indeed. "Behold, He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber, nor sleep."

It is nearly forty years since I followed this dear teacher to the grave, yet I claim that though she is dead she yet speaketh, for it is to her teaching I owe my first conscious knowledge of God and His wonderful love, and how full of love He is.

Nothing very important took place during the next five years of my life. I will run over them in general terms and ask you to remember, as you read further, how God was still leading me; teaching me such things as I needed to know in the work I was to do for Him later.

They were happy, busy years. Two little brothers were sent to us during that time. Harry, a black-eyed, handsome boy, and Jen, the most beautiful boy I ever saw—blue eyes and golden hair, like his mother's; a skin pink and white as a girl's.

For two years I went to a Saturday afternoon

Bible class, taught by Miss Taylor, a lady who afterwards married a missionary and went with him to India. Then came my confirmation and first Communion, after which I was promoted to the upper Bible class (as it was called), led by Mrs. S——. She was the wife of the Warden of Wadham College, a thorough teacher and, I believe, a good Christian woman, yet she lacked that spiritual life which I feel that both Miss Taylor and Miss Page possessed. Or, perhaps, I should rather say that she lacked the power to express it in the same way.

I remember one day the Warden called at the school-room for her and, as the class was not quite over, he sat down to wait. When we had reached the end of the lesson, and were getting our question papers for the following week, he said to her: "My dear, you ask these young ladies questions which I would hardly ask to a similar class of young men."

She turned upon him in her sharp, bright way, saying, "Why don't you ask them? You see that I get answers."

"You do, indeed," he said, "and I congratulate you. I certainly was surprised at some of them."

Dear reader, have you ever noticed how people get to be like their surroundings in a measure. I scarcely know how to express in writing just what I mean,

but, as an instance when I was a child, under the influence of Miss Page, everything I did was with a thought of Jesus—would He like it, and so on? Angry thoughts were, in a measure, subdued by thoughts of Him. Kindly actions were performed, many times in a childish way, but none the less surely they were for Him. Under the influence of Miss Taylor's teaching, the desire to work for Him was implanted. We worked for the poor and we worked for missions. We worked for bazaars, and with the money gained we helped to build the John Williams—one of the first, if not the first, ship built expressly for mission work, and it was all done for the Master and in His name. With Mrs. Symonds the teaching had its place. But it was different under her teaching. We grew fond of learning; we searched the Scriptures; we dived into history, and she made it so pleasant that we loved the study. She taught us concerning the rites and ceremonies of the Old Testament. She made us understand the Jewish history, from the going down into Egypt, to the coming of Christ. But it was a literal teaching, not calculated to reach the heart as that of Miss Page had been. With her it was always the loving Father, and Jesus the dear Saviour. With Miss Taylor it was our God and the Master. With Mrs. Symonds it was God Almighty and Jesus Christ.

Nevertheless, we were very fond of her. She took an immense interest in us, and no doubt spent a great deal of time in preparing the lessons. We frequently spent an afternoon with her. On one occasion I remember the College gardens were thrown open to us, and a foreign queen, who was visiting in England, was introduced to us. She could not speak English, but was very gracious, smiling and bowing in a most graceful manner. She was about medium size, and I thought her pretty. Her skin was dark, but clear. She had a large quantity of hair which was done up in a gorgeous style, with a comb standing fully nine inches high and literally covered with jewels. She wore bangles on both wrists and ankles; her shoes had very high heels, and the toes were covered with jewels. She wore a short dress of brocaded silk; a magnificent Paisley shawl, with sky-blue centre and rich dark border, was fastened on one shoulder with a costly brooch,

Later, I read a book, giving the history of a visit to England paid by a Queen Emma, from one of the Honolulu Islands. She went to plead for a bishop to be sent out there. As I read the book, and compared dates, I thought it was almost sure to be the same royal personage.

Another pleasant event which took place during

those five years was the marriage of James Hill to Jeannie Crane. He obtained a curacy in Spofforth, a beautiful little place in Yorkshire. We sometimes heard from him, but still to a certain extent he had passed out of our lives. James Morton, a cousin of my mother's, almost unconsciously slipped into his place. He was also at St. John's College, but an entirely different character; he was always to us cousin Jem, both at that time, when he was full of mischief, and later, when he became the full true servant of God. At the time of which I am writing, I think he was ringleader in all the mischief he was constantly telling us about. I will tell you of one of his escapades, which might have ended disastrously, but for the good nature of the Professor on whom the trick was played.

It seems this Professor was very strict, very stout and rather fussy. So this cousin of ours and a few kindred spirits, thought they would serve him out, as they termed it. The old gentleman never walked, if by any means he could ride, and they were determined that for one day he should walk or stay at home. He kept a close carriage for his own use, of which he was very careful. He had it covered every night with a linen cover, made purposely for it. About three miles from Oxford there is a place called

Bagley Wood, famous for its nutting parties (people go there nutting much as they go berry picking here). Now these young men decided to take his carriage away to this wood and leave it there until the next night. How they got the key I do not know, but they did get into the coachhouse, found the carriage all covered up neatly, and started off.

I must leave you to imagine, when they had left the town, what their fun would be like. How they talked of the old gentleman's wonder when he missed his carriage; how he would like his walk next day, and so on.

My cousin said they were in such a wild mood that a stranger meeting them would certainly have thought them to be in a certain state of madness.

At last they got to the woods, and after some difficulty, found a sheltered spot in which to leave the carriage safely. Then taking off their hats and bowing low before it, they mockingly bade it stay quietly there until they returned. But, horrors! What is the matter? The door swings open, and behold the Professor himself.

There is perfect silence for a moment. This is broken, however, by the Professor, who says "Well, gentlemen, you have brought me here for your own pleasure—I must ask you to take me back for mine."

With that he closed the door, and my cousin said, "We just took him back, without a word, the whole three miles."

They fully expected severe punishment of some kind, and the next day waited somewhat impatiently for a summons to his presence, which in due time came. I will give you the result as near as I can remember in my cousin's own words :

"You ought to have seen our faces; some as long as a tiddle; some quite pale; some saying 'I don't care' as plainly as words could have spoken. But we managed to get up to the line, and, by George! if the old fellow didn't burst out laughing. Of course, when he laughed, we all laughed. But it was a bit shaky, I can tell you. We couldn't tell what to make of it until he said, 'Now, my young friends, did you really enjoy your trip last night?' There was silence in the camp.

"'I would like an answer,' he said; so, as nobody seemed inclined to speak, I mustered courage to say, 'We enjoyed the trip there, sir, all right.'

"He burst into another hearty laugh, and says he, 'Then, gentlemen, I enjoyed it back, so we are quits. I bid you good morning; but don't run away with my carriage again until you have looked inside of it.'

"My! Just as soon as we could collect our scat-

tered senses we gave three times three with a heartiness not to be beaten, I can tell you."

We were all very fond of this bright, gay cousin of ours, and I look back with much pleasure to the time he was with us. After his ordination, I do not know why, instead of acting in his capacity as a clergyman he took a position as tutor to a gentleman's son, who was in delicate health, travelling with him for five years. When he returned he brought home a wife who was born and brought up in Prussia, though of English parents. I never saw her, as we had left Oxford and he was presented with a living in Devonshire.

After they had been two years married his wife became a great invalid, and, I was told, suffered intensely, but patiently until the time of her death, which took place after eleven years, leaving him with two daughters. Later, I shall give to my readers two letters written by him to an aunt, who was a Baptist. These will show, without comment, his religious sentiments—at two different periods of his life—which will again bring out that which I so much want to show on these pages, namely, that our great Head Keeper is the same yesterday, to-day and for ever, leading, guiding, guarding and keeping those who are His.



CHAPTER III.

TROUBLE AND SORROW.

“Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.”—Matt. xi. 28.

To-day all joy and happiness,
But all is changed to-morrow ;
The gay, bright happy smile is chased
By sad swift clouds of sorrow.

ALL things have an end. So those five bright years of happiness passed away to give place to so much sorrow.

My father made certain speculations and failed. I do not understand their nature, but in consequence we had to leave our home, the dear old home we loved so much. My father took a position as book-keeper in a house of business at B—, a small market town about twenty miles distant, and thither

we went early in February. It was on a Tuesday, I remember. We arrived there about noon. On Friday, our little Annie was taken ill. On Saturday, the two little boys were ill. The doctor was called in and pronounced it typhoid fever. Then began a time of trouble never to be forgotten. In a few days our one servant was taken down. Then my father and I on the same day. He in the morning, and I in the afternoon.

Oh! how I fought against it. The burden on my mind being, What will my mother do? When Dr. Grimble came I went forward to meet him saying, as I crossed the room, What will my mother do? That was my last conscious thought for a long time.

It was most difficult to get nurses. Most people were afraid to come near the house. After some trouble, however, Dr. Grimble got two women to agree to take turns in being with us twenty-four hours each.

We were all down but the poor delicate mother. Then shone out the unselfishness of a mother's love. She stood her ground, until my father was once more on his feet. Then she was taken to her bed, which she was not to leave again until carried to her grave.

On the 22nd of March, my seventeenth birthday, father was able to walk from his room to mine. The

two little boys were better ; Susan, the maid, was just able to stand ; I was very ill ; Annie low and weak, and thus another week passed away.

Shall I ever forget the last time I saw my mother before taking to her bed ? I was hoping soon to be allowed to sit up, but I took a relapse and on the 2nd of April was still very weak. It was on this morning she came to me for the last time. She called on her way down, as was her custom. As she kissed me she said, " Darling, will you let Susan wait on you to-day a little more ? It tires me so to get up and down stairs."

She did not mean to reproach me. Yet, looking back, I see how selfish I had been, sending for her every time I thought I would like to see her ; and she, poor dear, never refusing to come.

When the docteur came that day he told my mother she had better go to bed. But she begged of him not to insist on it, as she was sure if she gave way and went to bed she would never leave it alive. The next day she fainted and had to be carried to it, where, on the 15th of April, she passed away, like a tired child.

Her death was so great a shock to me as to cause a second relapse, and for twenty-one days my life was despaired of, during which time I knew very

little of what was going on. To Annie, also, it was a great shock. Thus it and fretting kept her weak and low. There was, therefore, no one to follow the dear mother to her grave, but father and one of the nurses—the one who was off duty for the time.

Dear reader, are you wondering where Julia was, and Lizzie? I should have told you that Lizzie went to pay a visit to a cousin who lived in Cornwall, and was to have joined us in B—— after we were settled, but when we knew that our illness was fever, it was decided that she should not come home, and grandpa thought it better not to let Julia come either. Of course, they both wanted to come when they heard that mother was ill, but they were overruled and kept away. If dear grandma had been living, she would certainly have been with us, but she died the year before.

Oh! the suffering of that year. On my eighteenth birthday I was not able to walk upstairs, nor on any uneven ground. I was like a shadow of my former self. My hair had been cut off close to my head, and it did seem to me that it would never grow again. It was in April, just a year after my mother's death that I had a serious attack of measles. When they left me I gradually became stronger; I was very rebellious at this time. I thought God was dealing

hardly with me. But I know now that it was not so. He was only leading me up to the work He had for me to do.

Oh! why did He take away my mother? was my selfish cry. But many times since I have thanked Him for sparing her the suffering and putting it on to me instead. But I must not anticipate.

I must go back a little and tell you that father had taken as a housekeeper one of the nurses who waited on us. She had (as she then said) two children. They, of course, had to come with her.

I did not approve of this plan, and tried very hard to prevail on Susan to stay with us, but her mother insisted that she should go back to Oxford, and the housekeeper was duly installed. For some reason, I did not like Mrs. Jones. Yet, she was kindness itself to me, waiting on me with the greatest care.

Shortly after this Dr. Grimbly said that a change of air would be most beneficial to me, and I had almost made up my mind to go to Oxford to stay, when one morning father brought in a letter, appearing to be quite pleased about something. After a little teasing he told me it was an invitation to spend a month in Bristol with the Wagners. I did not want to go; it seemed so far away, but he insisted that I had no good reason for refusing, so behold me

one bright morning on my way to Oxford, where I was to stay a day or two to break my journey, then on to Bristol.

Isabella Wagner had been my close companion at Oxford, and Mrs. Wagner and my mother were great friends. I received a warm welcome from each member of the family, and great kindness was shown to me during my visit, and in spite of my anxiety about home, I spent a very pleasant month with them. Bella was a beautiful girl, full of fun and mischief, gay and sprightly. I could never bear to be sad while she was near me. It did not seem right, somehow, to bring a grave look on to her sweet face.

One morning while there we set off to pay a visit to the famous wishing well.

"Do you believe in the wish coming true, Mary?" said Bella.

"Yes! dear. If we can do as you say."

"Now! You are laughing at me, I believe."

"Why? What makes you think so? I replied.

"Because; I don't see, myself, how it can."

"My dear! Be careful of your grammar," I said, "and tell me again what we have to do."

"How many more times am I to tell you?" she said, laughing, "That you are to shut your eyes, look into the well and wish, and you will be sure to have what you wish for."

"What are you going to wish for?" I said.

"That you may stay another month with us. At least I would wish it, if I thought it would come true."

"Well, dear, if you can comply with the requirements it will come true."

"And would you stay?" eagerly.

"Dear Bell," I said, "you are so excitable that you cannot hear your own words. Now listen, while I repeat them: '*Shut* your eyes and *look* into the well.' How can you do that?"

She burst into a hearty laugh saying, "I never noticed it before."

We then went on to pay our visit to this pretty spot, and were resting on one of the rustic seats placed there for the benefit and comfort of visitors, when we noticed a gentleman looking very earnestly at us, and we were more than surprised when he crossed over to us and, raising his hat, said: "Pray excuse my apparent rudeness, but (looking at Bell) are you not Miss Wagner?"

She said, "Yes! But I do not think I know you."

"What! Not remember Charlie Innis?"

"Charlie Innis? Impossible!"

"Not at all," he said. "I'm Charlie Innis all the same."

Then, pointing to me, Bell said: "Don't you know who this is?"

Bowing as he raised his hat, he said: "No; I cannot say I do."

Tears sprang to my eyes as I thought how I must be changed. I shook hands with him saying, "I am Mary Elliott, or at least her shadow."

"I am pleased to meet you," he said; "but sorry to see you looking so ill. Of course, I heard of your trouble and bereavement from Dick."

Dick was my cousin. He and Charlie sang in the same choir and were chums. In the early days, which seemed then so long ago, Dick had been my sweetheart and Charlie had been Bella's. But now it seemed that we had all grown up. We took Charlie home to luncheon, and spent the afternoon in talking over old times. I will not trouble you with all our small talk; but I may tell you something of which I was reminded by it that I think will interest you.

At the time we attended Miss Taylor's Bible class on Saturday afternoons, one of our companions was remarkably pretty, very clever, very proud and very popular. Now, a clever reader will at once perceive that these characteristics were not likely to make her popular; and she was not popular. She seemed to stand alone. Miss Taylor treated her just as she treated us all, yet this girl kept her, as she did us, at a distance. We were never invited to her house and she never

visited any of us—always saying, when asked, that she was too busy. She attended the Bible class on Sunday afternoons, of which the Rector's wife was teacher, and here the ice was broken. I really think she worshipped Mrs. Cameron, who also took an immense interest in her.

Mr. Cameron kept a Curate and at the time of which I am writing he had just made a change, and for awhile the new Curate, as is usual, was the chief topic of conversation. He was a small man, dark, good-looking, without being really very handsome. He did not work because he needed to do so, for he was wealthy.

One Saturday he addressed our Bible class and it was plain to all of us that he wanted to be a missionary. Indeed, his words were so eager that he made us all think we ought to go forth to tell to all around what a dear Saviour we had found.

Mrs. Cameron, not being well, gave her class to him for awhile, so as to rest and recruit. One Sunday afternoon the subject was the Love of God. He told the girls they should love God first and best; then, he said, "Naturally you next love your parents." He had a great way of asking direct questions, and it came to pass that he asked the young girl I am telling you about (whose name was Lucy Bell), if she

loved God best. She answered, unhesitatingly, "Yes, sir." Then he went on to say, "You, of course, love your parents next?" She did not answer, and being surprised, he pressed a little closely, saying, "Who do you love next to God, if not your parents?" and she said, "Mrs. Cameron and you, sir."

After class was over, the girls tried to rally Lucy and make fun of what she had said; but with a quiet dignity which silenced them, she replied, "I could not tell a lie, and they are the two I love best, because they have both helped me to love God more."

The Bells had seen better days, and Lucy was an only child. Both her father and mother were drunkards. This explained her character.

Mr. Wells, the Curate, had overheard what she said to her companions on leaving the class-room, and I learned afterwards that he went to her house, and after some conversation with her, he asked her if she would like to be a missionary; and, on finding that it was the one hope of her life, he sent her to school for two years, and when she came back she was taken to the rectory and married, from there, to our Curate, and they went out to New Zealand, taking with them two little orphan girls, one six years old and the other ten, as companions, so that she might not be lonely. We heard several times from them indirectly, but Charlie

who was a cousin of the orphan children, had heard from one of them shortly before meeting us in Bristol. He said they were all perfectly happy, and that Lucy had a little son and daughter. Surely, sometimes we find truth stranger than fiction.

Plans had been made for us to go to Clifton, and Mrs. Wagner asked Charlie to go with us; but when the day appointed arrived, I was not able to go. I would not allow anyone to stay home with me, but insisted that they should all go and enjoy themselves, promising that I would be a good listener when they returned.

I had received a letter from Eliza Lock, a friend of childhood, introduced to the reader in the early pages of this book. I took this day on which I was alone to answer it. I will place here a copy of it, so that you may be able to judge of the state of mind I was in at that time.

"Bristol, July 12th, '56.

"MY DEAR ELIZA,—

"I received your kind letter and hasten to answer it. I cannot say I feel much stronger. Mrs. Wagner and Bell are extremely kind to me. We were to have gone to Clifton to-day, but I was not equal to it, though I insisted that they should go without me. The cottage we live in is built on a hill and, as I look from the window, I can see into the far distance on all

sides of me. In one direction is the city, in another green fields and distant hills, and behind me a forest, all obscure and dark. I have been feeling as though my life was something like this. You know I have had severe illness and trouble and am not yet strong. There is, moreover, a presentiment of evil upon my mind, which makes me dreadfully in earnest to get home again. Mrs. Wagner very much wants me to stay until I am better, but I cannot; the yearning desire to get home is so strong within me that I must go. It is now the 12th of July, and I left home on the 5th of June. Three months ago my mother was taken from me. The last words she said to me were: 'Take care of my dear boys.' Those words are ringing in my ears constantly, and I want to be at home. You know, dear Eliza, I do not like the woman father has taken as housekeeper, though she would give me gold to eat if she had it and thought it would do me good. She waits upon me hand and foot; yet through it all there is a something I do not understand. She does not behave to father as a servant would; but as one who aspired at least to become an equal, and I do not trust her. But enough of this. I ought not to judge her; I may be wrong; I hope I am. I purpose leaving Bristol on Monday, and shall stay at Oxford until Wednesday, so hope to see you if you will call at grandpapa's. I shall not be able to go out much, as I cannot walk far, and I am not able to get up and down stairs without assistance. Please, give my love

to Clara and George; also to your father and mother,
and believe me to be,

“Yours sincerely,

“MARY ELLIOTT.”

After writing my letter I went out for a short walk,
then rested until our travellers returned. They had
spent a very pleasant day, and I greatly enjoyed their
description of it.

On the following Monday I left for Oxford, and on
Wednesday for home. How I found things there, and
how they appeared to me then, you will best see by
another letter I sent to Eliza Lock, which I will give
you in my next chapter.



CHAPTER IV.

WE GO TO LIVE IN LONDON.

“O thou of little faith, wherefore did'st thou doubt?”

—Matt. xiv. 31.

“Hide me, oh ! my Saviour, hide,
Till the storm of life be past ;
Safe into the Haven guide,
O, receive my soul at last.”

“July 24th, 1856.

“MY DEAR ELIZA,—

“Once more I am at home and will keep my promise of writing to you. It was noon on Wednesday when I reached B——. Father was at the station to meet me. I could see at once that he was disappointed, I still looked so ill, though I tried to be as cheerful as possible. The journey had tried me greatly, and when I got to the house I received a shock that I cannot forget. I feel I must tell you all about it. The door was opened by Mrs. Jones, the housekeeper. But, oh !

dear; what will you think? when I tell you that she had on one of my dear mother's dresses and the last cap she had worn before going to bed. Her hair was curled in the one single curl, in imitation of my mother's, and fastened back with the tortoise-shell side-combs I had given to mamma at Christmas in her stocking. (You will remember what fun we used to have filling each other's stockings at that happy time. Many a secret we have shared with each other as to our presents.) I cannot tell you what I felt. She came out smiling with outstretched hand; but I could not take it. Each article I have mentioned met my eye at a glance and I burst into tears. My feelings were mixed. I was angry with my father for letting her wear them, and angry with her for presuming to touch them. Imagine, if you can, the difference. When we went first to B——, she took in washing, and went out to wash by the day. She can neither read nor write; speaks very broad; has a coarse voice and is plain-looking. Of course these are none of them faults; but, certainly, I think there are very strong objections to her wearing my dear mother's clothes and imitating the style of her hair. (You, dear Eliza, will remember those auburn curls, how daintily she arranged them under her pretty caps.)

"But this was not all. When I went to dinner there was another vexation. The table was set for not our family only, but for hers. She herself took my place. A strange, rough boy was there, which, after I was seated, she told me was her son. He had



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been hired in the country as plough-boy, but was out of a place now, and had come home (mind you, *home*) until he could get another. I can write no more; my heart feels ready to break. I do not know what will be next. Aunt Sarah said she would be here on Saturday to stay over Sunday; so I shall tell her all about it, and I hope she will be able to advise me. I can assure you Mrs. Jones has not allowed me the chance of speaking to my father once, without her presence, since I came home. Please, give my love to all, and believe me to be,

“Yours ever,

“MARY ELLIOTT.”

The reader will see by this letter that I could be very bitter and get very angry; and though as I look back I see I might have acted differently, yet I feel that I had some cause for grievance, and I had greater cause later.

I asked her to give me back my mother's clothes, and I bought material for others, so that she may not be a loser. She was surprised, but did as I asked her.

She was exceedingly familiar in her manner towards father, as also to the children, being careful to place her's and my mother's on equal terms. Altogether it was trying, and I had not any help. My heart and faith at that time was in deep slumber.

When I thought of God, it was to wonder why he had taken away my mother, and why I could not get strong and well, yet I did not go to Him or ask Him why. Of course I said my prayers, but I simply said them.

One day Mrs. Grimbly called to see me and we spoke of Mrs. Jones. She advised me to ask father to get a good, strong girl, we were expecting Lizzie home, and she thought between us we ought to be able to manage nicely. I thought so, too, and took the first opportunity of speaking to him on the subject. He said, "Wait until you are a little stronger, then we will see about it." Thus things went on until near Christmas.

Lizzie came home, and I felt better for having her with me. Dear Mrs. Grimbly called on us frequently and often took me home with her, but in spite of all I continued to be an invalid.

One day Mrs. Jones came, saying she had something to tell me, "But I am afraid you will not like it," she said. I felt sure that I knew what was coming and at once became quite calm, so long had I made up my mind what course I should pursue. "You had better tell me," I said.

"Your father has asked me to marry him, but I thought I would like to have your consent, too, and we have decided that it should be soon."

"It still would be, then, whether you had my consent or not?" "Well, yes. Only I thought I'd tell you, because he told me to ask you for Mrs. Elliott's light Paisley shawl, and the drab silk dress, and a bonnet, as it would save buying new ones; then you could keep the rest of her clothes for yourself and the children,"

"I was stunned for a moment, then I found voice to say, "Mrs. Jones, you have been very kind to me, waiting on me and paying me every possible attention, for which I thank you very much. But to ever look up to you as a second mother you must know is impossible, and certainly, if my father marries you (which I cannot prevent) I shall leave home and as soon as possible take my brothers and sisters away, too; for I would sooner beg from door to door, leading them by the hand, than have you for a mother.

At this she turned very pale and simply said "Why?"

I answered, "Because there is too much of a difference between you and my own mother.

"But," she said, "I would be always kind and treat them just as I do my own."

This made me so angry that I lost my calmness, and turning fiercely upon her I said, "No, indeed,

you should not. Do you suppose my mother ever called one of us a villian, or slapped us so hard as to knock us down, as I saw and heard you do last week? Or did she ever teach us to tell lies and to deceive, as I heard you teaching your little girl last week to deceive my father."

"What did you hear?" she said. "Have you been listening on me?"

"You were not careful enough, that was all. Do you remember sending her to pay a bill for you and telling her that when you asked her how much the bread was, she was to say three shillings and six pence, instead of two and three pence, so that you could account to father? I did not need to listen. I was in the front room and both window and door was open, for, as you may remember, you had been sweeping and I was dusting. You ask me why I do not wish you for a mother, and I tell you. This, with many a like reason, is why; for if you deceive my father now, what would you do when you were married?"

I cannot tell you all that passed, but gradually she began to see that I should never give my consent, so she put aside her gentle manner and told me with a toss of her head that it did not really matter what I said, as she should take her own way.

"If you are determined," she said, "to give me trouble before hand, I shall not be so careful to give you pleasure afterwards." At this I left the room without answering her.

When father came in from business he made some remark about my looks and asked if I was taking my medicine regularly. I told him I was, but that I was troubled about something, and if he would take me for a walk after tea I would tell him all about it. This made Mrs. Jones look furious at me, and I did not forget to return the look with interest. Father took me for a walk, as I asked him, and we talked the whole matter over. He said he had promised to marry Mrs. Jones, but that he was sorry he had done so, and wished that he could find a way out of the difficulty, for she had deceived him very much and in many ways. But he said, 'Don't worry about it, for it certainly will not be soon, and if you don't want her to have your mother's clothes, why just tell her so, that's all.'

So in this uncertain way things went on until after Christmas. As I look back I wonder at myself. I just dragged through those days, taking very little interest in anything.

To mend and make for the children was all that I had strength to do, and I cared very little whether I

went to church or not. I did not like the clergyman, and I could not understand the sermons he preached. He was a gentleman, no doubt, and a scholar; but I do not hesitate to say (even now) that he had missed his vocation.

My dear mother had been buried two months, when one day I went to walk up and down in front of the house, so that I could rest every few minutes, as I was not able to walk any distance. As I walked, I saw him coming towards me with his two little girls. I noticed that he spoke to them and they ran back the way they had come and he came forward. "Are you Miss Elliott?" he said.

I told him I was. He did not attempt to shake hands, but appeared to be nervous and anxious to pass me, as he said, "You have had a great deal of trouble. I am very sorry for you."

I remember looking steadily at him and saying, "Are you sorry? My mother died and you never saw her."

He said, "No. You see I have a family of little children, and I was told that your mother was very deaf. I did call once at the door."

That was all. It was the first and last time I spoke to him during the time we lived there. But this is a digression. As I said, Christmas was passed. I was

careworn and anxious. Mrs. Jones was irritable and cross with the children.

One morning when I got down stairs, I found Mrs. Jones packing up her things, preparatory to moving away. She was crying; and when I asked her what was wrong, she said, "I am going away. We are not going to be married yet, as your father thinks it will look better to wait awhile."

Father told me when he came home to dinner that he did not intend to marry her at all, for she had deceived him so much, and misinformed him on so many points.

We were getting on very nicely. The children were quite well, and Lizzie was a good little house-keeper. Father was cheerful and happy when he got a letter from Aunt Sarah (the widow of my mother's only brother) asking him to go to Oxford and help her to pack for New Zealand. Her brother, who was a builder, was going, and as she had five boys she decided that it would be wise to go, too.

We had very kind neighbors, so father obtained leave of absence and went. One week afterwards he wrote to me saying that he was going on to London, and I was not to tell anybody until I heard from him again. How good God was to me even then when I was so forgetful of Him. He knew there was

more trouble ahead of me, and provided for my comfort and help.

An old school friend who had some time ago promised to pay me a visit wrote me at this time, saying she could come to me if convenient. I was more than pleased to welcome her, not only because in my loneliness she would be a comfort to me, but because she was so good and true. We were confirmed together, and it did me good to recall old times. We were both very fond of Mr. Cameron, the clergyman, who had prepared us for confirmation. He was one of God's faithful few. I compared him with our present rector, and spoke bitterly about him, but my friend Nelly was so full of love that she tried to soothe and help me. She reminded me of our dear teacher, Miss Page, calling my attention to one of our lessons on the text, "When thy father and mother forsake thee, the Lord taketh thee up."

We called to remembrance lessons we had enjoyed together, and I was greatly comforted. I wept tears such as I had not shed since my mother's death. All before had been bitter and hardening. These made me feel less bitter and more like looking to God for help.

But why had our great Head Keeper sent this friend to me just at this particular time? Because

he knew I needed her. She had only been with us two days when I fell ill. It was only an attack of measles, but for three days Dr. Grimby did not know whether I should live or die. We could not send for father as we did not know his address. So, but for this dear friend, should I not have been lonely?

Well, as soon as I did begin to get better, it was wonderful the rapid progress I made. I gained strength very fast. It seemed as though this attack had cleared my blood of something which had kept me in the past from getting strong. I was nearly well when I heard from father; he had got a situation, he said, and would be likely to lose it if he took time to fetch us, so thought we could manage to sell the furniture and pay the bills that were owing and go to him.

What could I have done without Nellie? She and Lizzie attended to everything, and when all was ready we travelled together as far as Oxford. We stayed one night at grandpa's, then went on to London, having written to tell father what train to meet at Paddington.

We got into Paddington station, London, about four o'clock in the afternoon. Father was to meet us at the station; but when we got there we looked for him in vain. Our luggage was there on the platform

and we stood around it, myself a little over eighteen years of age, Lizzie not quite fourteen, Annie between ten and eleven, and the two little boys, Harry five and Jim three years old. Jim suddenly began to cry, and this seemed to start the others, for on looking around, I found them all crying, and feeling near it myself I could not at first speak.

Presently a man came up to us and began to question me. I told him where we had come from, and that I expected father to meet us, but he had not come. I also told him that I could not remember my aunt's address. I could just remember there was something like Goswell in it. He then fetched a cab driver who asked me "Was it Goswell Road?" "No." "Was it Goswell street?" "No." "Was it Goswell terrace?" "No." "Was it Goswell Mews?" Then I recollected it was a corner house which stood opposite Goswell Mews.

The cabman said he knew the place. It was six miles and he would take us there. The luggage was quickly packed and soon we were driving along the busy streets of London.

The man who had first spoken to us called me on one side and told me how much to pay the cabman, which was very kind of him, as I should certainly have been imposed upon but for that.

We had not proceeded far on our road when the driver stopped and came to the door of the cab and said to me, "Have you money to pay the fare, or will the people at the other end pay it?" I said I had money with me though not very much. He then said how much it would be, naming a larger sum than I had been told to pay him. I told him that was a great deal, but if it was right of course he would have it. This seemed to satisfy him.

We soon got to the corner house. He went to inquire for Mrs. Smart and was directed to her residence (for she had lately moved) which we reached in a few minutes. Of this I was very glad as Lizzie and little Jim were extremely sick with the motion of the cars and cab.

As soon as we got the children and luggage into the house, the man touched his hat for his pay. I called to my aunt and said to her, "Aunt, I am not accustomed to travelling. A man who was very kind to us at the station told me to pay so much for the cab (I forget now the exact sum) and this man asks for so much more. Do you know what it should be?"

"I do not," said my aunt, "but can get to know in one minute." She was running away to inquire, when he said, "O never mind, gimme what the man told ye to; but if I'd a known I would not a brought ye a foot o' the road."

I then paid him the fare and gave him one shilling extra for his trouble of finding the house and getting off the luggage.

My aunt, who was my father's sister, soon had us a cup of tea ready, of which we were very glad. She was much surprised to see us. I found the letter telling my father what train to meet lying in his room, as he was employed in the city and did not go home every night.

As soon as tea was over aunt and I had to go on another search, as she did not know my father's business address. We took the omnibus and found him without much trouble. He was greatly astonished and left business at once to go back with us.

Then came a search for lodgings, and it was eleven o'clock at night before we got settled down and the children in bed.

Father would not let me tell him anything in the way of news that night, but insisted on my going to bed and leaving all until morning, which I did, and soon after lying down was fast asleep. I did not awake until late the next morning when we went over to my aunt's to breakfast. Thus ended our journey to the great city.

The next morning my father, my aunt and I, set off to find apartments furnished, father saying he had not

time to take just now to buy furniture, so it would be useless to take an empty house.

We found a very nice suite of rooms on Goswell Terrace, City Road. They were nicely furnished and I took a great deal of pride, I remember, in keeping them nice.

For a while we were very happy. Father seemed glad to have us around him, and came home from his place of business every evening in time to see the children before going to their bed. The people of the house did our cooking and sweeping of the rooms every morning, yet my time was fully occupied, first to get father comfortably off to work (he had to leave home at seven o'clock), then to get the children ready for school.

One fine morning we all went together to market, leaving them at the school doors as we came home, (that is the two little boys); Annie was not at all strong and did not go to school. Lizzie had not gone since mother's death, as at that time she was visiting a cousin and stayed there until just before we left B—. On our return from market, she and I employed our time in teaching Annie and in mending and making for the family. Sometimes we all went to meet father on his return in the evening.

Thus things went on for about nine months, during

which time we had never been to church. (Reader, can you credit this? I blush as I write it.) At breakfast on a Sunday morning father would say: "Now, children, we are going for a nice ride to-day," or "a nice walk," or "we will go for a trip on the water," and we went.

At other times friends were invited to spend the Sunday with us. Dinner was provided, and after that a walk in the park, or to some of the tea gardens—the gentlemen taking their pipes or cigars, while the ladies and children regaled themselves on nuts, biscuits, etc.—then home and to bed. Thus our Sundays were spent; and when you compare this with the story of my younger days, how will you reconcile the two?

For my father, I may say that sometime before we left Oxford he had taken offence at something that had happened and left off going to church altogether. But it is with shame I think of myself.

When we went to B—, it is true that we had a great time of sorrow and sickness. We were strangers in a strange place. The clergyman did not visit us, and my mother was taken away. All this, as you have seen, had a hardening influence on me. I was for so long a time excessively weak, I had no energy, did not care for anything in particular, hardly ever read a book, and with shame I confess that my Bible lay unopened on the shelf.

Once during that time the still, small, holy voice made itself heard; and I will tell you how.

My father's employer I hardly ever spoke to, but his wife was one of the sweetest creatures I ever knew. She was nice looking and she was good. From February until May, she did not miss an opportunity of in some way ministering to our comfort, visiting us each day through all that time of trouble. The fever had no terrors for her. She was, indeed, a true friend. I do not remember that in all that time she ever read the Bible to any of us, or ever spoke of religion. She may have done so to my mother, I cannot say.

The first time I was able to walk out, it was on her arm I leaned. She took me to their own garden, in which was an arbor. After I had rested on a pillow which she had carried there, and had partaken of biscuit and wine, she said: "Now, I am going to leave you for a few minutes, as this is the first time you have been out since your illness, and God has given you the strength to come."

She said this with such a pleasant smile that I could not but understand her meaning, and yet after she left me I sat still. I did not thank God, I only thought a little on the past, and said to myself, "I will begin to go to church as soon as I can get about again."

For a long time that pleasant smile haunted me, and bade me thank God, but I could not, for in my heart of hearts I do not think I wanted to get strong and well. I rather wanted to die, for everything seemed to be going wrong with me.

Then came the memorable visit dear Nellie paid me when she stayed a month and nursed me through the measles. Then, indeed, we talked of old times; old memories were stirred. The Bible was looked into. New resolutions were formed, though not kept—why? Because they were made in my own strength, and of necessity failed. The lively faith of my childhood was gone, or at least deadened. Then came the novelty of living in a large city, and not being allowed to go far from home during the week, I fell easily into temptation and, indeed, it soon ceased to be a temptation, for I got to enjoy it quite as much as the children did, and for the time church and childhood were forgotten in pleasure trips and broken Sabbaths.

Thus things went on until we had been about nine months in London, when my father frequently stayed out very late at night—sometimes later than others, and I became uneasy about it, and more so when I found that he was often short of money. Our landlady told me that he was owing her for three months'

rent, and I undertook to speak to him about it, asking how it was and — but I will not tell you all that passed—suffice it to say that for two or three weeks, things got worse and worse. He had less money to do with each week, and still the rent was not paid. I begged of him to let me look out for a small house; but he said he had not money to buy furniture. After some perseverance, however, I persuaded him that it would be better. The extra money the furnished rooms cost, I told him, would soon get a few things into the house. At last he said I could do as I liked; he was tired of managing, anyway. I could not at times understand him, he acted so strangely.

One day I went out to call on my aunt, telling her that I did not think we could afford to stay any longer in such expensive lodgings, but would have to get a small house.

It so happened, the one next to her was to rent. She went with me to see the owner, who said that I could go into it at any time. So that settled I went back to my landlady and told her. She said she was very sorry to part with me and the children, but, of course, she wanted to rent her rooms to some one who could pay for them, I told her she should be paid, for I would get some sewing and pay her myself, if my father did not.

And now came a year of deep trouble and perplexity. When I told my father we had got a house, and asked him could he let me have as much money as would get a few chairs and a table and some bedding, he said he had none, I must borrow a few things from aunt until he could get them. I ventured to ask him if his employers owed him anything (for he had gone regularly to work, and yet for a long time he had seemed to have so little). He said, "No. All the money he had earned had been used." He seemed so put out when I spoke to him about it, that I was almost afraid to speak a second time.

I told aunt what he said, and she told me, with a strange kind of smile, which I did not at all understand, that she was afraid there was trouble ahead. She lent me a bedstead and two mattresses, a chair and a table. Then we went down to a second-hand furniture store and bought a short school form, with a shilling I had saved for a long time. I could not bear the children to stand at the table to eat their meals, so I spent it for that. Fortunately I had kept bed and table linen and blankets, also knives and forks.

Now with aunt's help I made up the bed on the bedstead for father and the two little boys, and one on the floor for myself and the two girls. We cur-

tained the windows nicely with a muslin dress of my own. I hung a towel on the kitchen door, and stood a tin bowl (borrowed from my aunt) upon the floor. Then looking around for a few minutes I burst into tears.

Oh! my dear reader, call me "cry baby" if you will, but I could not help it, for the thought that would come uppermost in my mind was that there was something wrong, and I did not know what. My father, for anything I knew, was working and receiving the same salary as when we arrived in London, out of which, he had said to my aunt and me, that he could well afford to pay the rent charged for our furnished rooms. Now he was greatly in debt, and he would not talk to me or tell me why it was so.

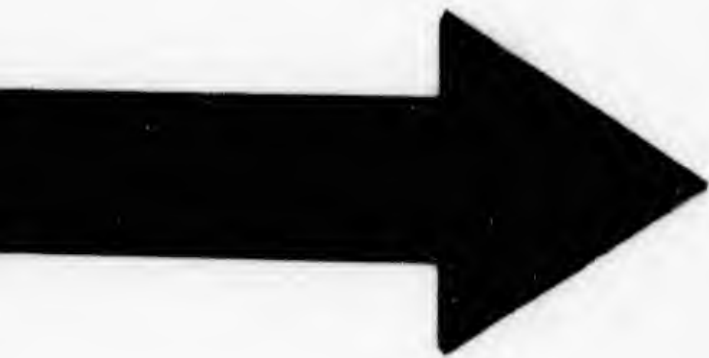
However, I had not time to indulge long in the luxury of tears. It was near time for his return; so getting one of my fine damask tablecloths, I spread it on the table, putting on our own knives, forks and spoons (all the rest borrowed). I placed the one chair for him, and myself sat on the form with the children. Thus we took our first meal in that little house. After tea was over, I said, "Now, father, won't you let me try to be housekeeper, and see how I can manage. If you give me a certain sum of money every week, auntie says she will give me some sewing to

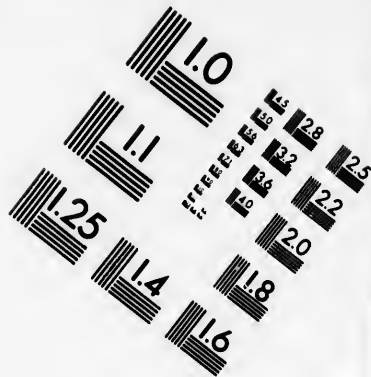
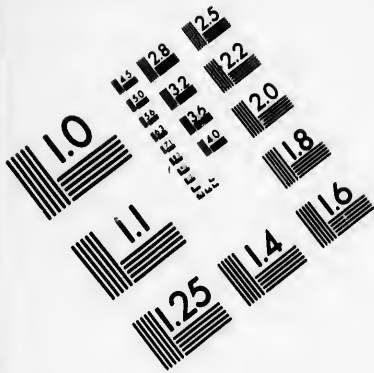
do, and I shall have so much time on my hands that I can do a great deal, and we shall soon be able to get some nice things in the house."

After thinking some time, he said he must pay up the amounts he was owing, and the rest, but he would be able to give me twenty shillings per week. So on Saturday I took the children to meet him and we went to market together. He gave me the money which I put into a little purse, which dear Nellie had given me on my fourteenth birthday. But to tell you all I bought, and how many times I had to get help from father would tire you, I am afraid. We got home at last, however, happier in spite of our poor abode than we had been for some time, and I think we all slept soundly, even though our surroundings were so different to those we had been accustomed to.

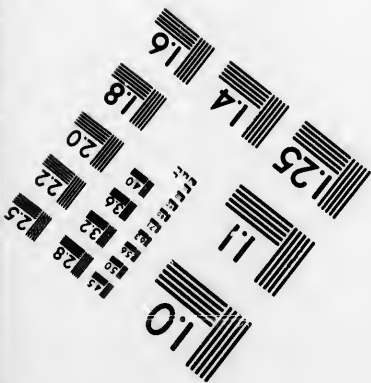
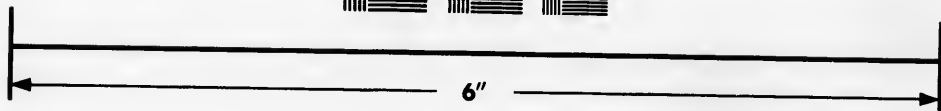
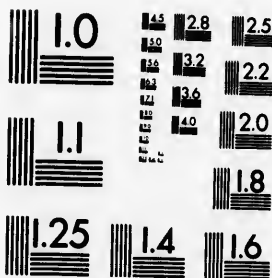
The next day, Sunday, father, as usual began to talk of where we should go to spend the day. Some of the children wanted to drive, some to go on the water. I did not want to go anywhere. As I looked around our bare room, I felt ashamed to go out of such a place, dressed in such clothes as we then possessed, besides I could not divest myself of the thought that there was some shame attached to our poverty. I could see no need for it, nor could I







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understand it. I was over-ruled, however, and we went to Lambeth and back, taking our dinner there.

On Monday morning, as soon as I had sent the children to school, I went to my aunt who, as you remember, lived next door to us, and asked her for the work she had promised to give me. It was a little dress to make for one of the children. After explaining how it was to be made, she bade me sit down, as she wished to talk to me a little.

I sat down at her request, and she said to me: "Mary, I want to forget that you are little more than a child, and I must speak to you as though you were older; indeed, you must put away childhood's days and try to realize that you have a woman's duties to perform."

She questioned me about our home in B—— and told me that my father had always been very extravagant, and but for my mother's patience and love would not have been able to raise his children as well as he had done. He was so fond of company that he could never without help live within his income. "I tell you," she continued, "because I know you will have to meet it, and I feel that you should be prepared."

I thanked her very much, and asked her if she would help me with her advice at any time if I was

in difficulty. She promised to do so, and said, "I will begin by telling you one of your Uncle John's rules which he made when we were married, and always continues. It is this: Out of what he earns he puts a third by. So if he but earned one shilling he would put four-pence of it by for a rainy day, and I can tell you it has come in very useful, that rainy day bag, more than once. And some day, soon, I shall have the pleasure of introducing you to Miss Smart, your Uncle John's eldest sister, who adopted that rule when she was only nine years old, and she is quite wealthy now. I will tell you a little of her early history, I think it will interest you, and at all events will show what perseverance can accomplish.

Her father was a game-keeper on a gentleman's estate, about three miles from C——, and when she was six years old he married the second time. She was not fond of her stepmother, and on one occasion, after some words with her, she was told to leave and not show herself there again till bed-time. She made a vow then and there that she would never sleep another night under that roof, and she never did. She was only nine years old, and walking to the next town, she went to the stores asking, "Please, do you want a girl," until the keeper of a green grocery store, who needed some one to look after the

children, told her she could stay if she could make herself useful. Now, to cut the story short, she stayed there three years, then went as under-nurse in a gentleman's family. When she was twenty she became head nurse, and, strange to say, she has lived with some member of that family all her life as maid or companion. She is now companion to a maiden lady of the same house, and to this day she puts away a third of her earnings."

"When dear little Freddie died we had plenty to bury him nicely," said my aunt, "although your uncle had been ill for more than two months." I told her I remembered her letter coming to tell us about Freddie's death the very day my little brother Johnnie was buried. She said "yes, that was the time, Johnnie was seventeen months old and Freddie was two years."

"Now, auntie," said I, "do you think there is anything that I can begin to alter? Are we extravagant in anything we buy?"

"I do not know yet how or what you buy," said my aunt, "but there is one thing you do which we cannot afford to do, and yet we have an income quite as large."

"What is that," I asked her. At the same time I felt that I knew to what she alluded.

She said, as I expected, "you go out every Sunday on expensive trips, or you go into company and then have to invite back, and that is very expensive. I do not think you used to do it in your mother's time."

"No!" I said. "Our Sundays were very differently spent then to what they are now. But do you think it costs very much to go those trips?"

"Certainly, it does; your father would have to pay one shilling each for himself, you and Lizzie, and sixpence each for the three little ones, then the same for your dinners; and if you stop at the tea-gardens to have biscuit and milk, or fruit, all this has to be paid for. And I maintain," said my aunt, "it is a piece of extravagance which your father cannot afford, and 'tis for you to meet and check it if you can. But we have talked enough for to-day," she said. "This won't get uncle John's dinner ready."

"No!" I said, "nor will it get the children theirs."

I then went home and was busy until after dinner. The children had gone back to school before I had time to think of all that my aunt had said to me.

Then things that had happened in my younger days passed before me. Memory carried me back to the time when my father would be leaving the house of an evening, and my mother would look wistfully at him as he passed her chair. Sometimes she would

say, "Will you be long to-night, dear?" "No, I will be back in half an hour. Have the supper ready," would be the answer. And a sigh would come from my mother's lips.

Now, as I sat thinking it all out, I remembered that this had happened, not once only, but many, many times. And it would be eleven or twelve o'clock when he would return. My mother never went to bed until he did come. And I often sat up with her. Sometimes she would scold him and he would always take her to him and kiss her, telling her he had meant to come home, but he had met with this friend or that friend, and had been persuaded to go into such a place, and they had teased him to read the paper to them, or some such excuse. But he would say in a coaxing tone, forgive me this time, I won't do it any more. My mother would smile and say, "not till to-morrow, then it will happen again."

At other times she would, as soon as he came in, look at him, then take her candle, and with a sigh pass up stairs, not even speaking to him.

When I thought of all this, I knew she must have suffered. And, oh, how very unselfish she was! Whenever there was pleasure to be taken, excursions or water parties, as was customary in the summer

time at Oxford, or assemblies in winter, her very delicate health would not permit her to go to them, but she always arranged for him to go, giving special invitations to lady friends to go with him, so that they might feel at ease in his company in her absence. And now, how could I ever take her place? I felt I could not, and my heart was heavy and sad in consequence.

But being of a naturally cheerful disposition I went to work at my little dress determined to do my best and try to be as loving and kind to him as I could.

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CHAPTER V.

"MARY, I AM GOING TO BE MARRIED."

"As thy days so shall thy strength be."—Deut. xxxiii. 25.

"Jesus calls us from the worship
Of the vain world's golden store ;
From each idol that would keep us,
Saying 'Christian love me more.'"

I MUST now pass over two or three months. My aunt had kept me in sewing, either for herself or her friends. Father had given me the twenty shillings every week, though sometimes he had got a little back from me. I always took seven shillings and put it away in a little bag, placing it at the bottom of my trunk. I did not tell even the children, and I kept the house going nicely on the thirteen shillings. All that I earned myself I did the same with, that is, I put a third of it away, spending the rest on things



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"MARY, I AM GOING TO BE MARRIED." 93

for the house. So with aunt's help we began to look a little more comfortable. But in the meantime my father was acting strangely. Often it was one or two in the morning before he returned from work, and I sat, as my mother had done of old, waiting for him.

When he first began to do this I would get so nervous and worked up that as soon as he came into the house I would burst into tears. Then he would tell me not to be frightened, he was all right, but something had happened; and at first I believed all he told me, but somehow I could not do so always, and at last I did not ask him one question, but quietly went up stairs as soon as he entered the door.

Our Sundays, too, were spent differently. I said to him could we not go for a walk on a Sunday, and not spend money on those trips, as it was so expensive? He was not pleased at this; said "he only went to give us pleasure, but for his part could do without it." So for a few Sundays we took a walk, and the rest of the day sat at home. Sometimes father and uncle John would go out together and the children would play on the street, I sitting in my aunt's room, or she in mine. Thus the Sabbaths and the two months went by leaving me greatly troubled.

Father was never cheerful, but seemed unhappy.

One night when he came home he looked pale and went straight to bed, but called down to tell me he should not go out next day, and the same thing happened several times after this. On a Saturday night I would get sometimes fifteen shillings, sometimes only ten; and when I would say, How can I manage? He would reply, "Get less, do without meat, sugar or something. I cannot make it any more than it is." Then he began to get cross to the children, and indeed he was not himself at all.

One Sunday uncle John came in and asked him if he would like to go to "rag fair." He said he would.

"What is that, uncle?" said I.

Oh, 'tis a place where only Jews have a kind of fair or market. And their great day is our Sunday. You can buy anything you want there, from a hat to a stocking, and cheap, too.

As they were going out, aunt from her doorway asked them, "Where are you going?"

"To 'Rag Fair,'" said uncle, and passed on.

A woman was just coming up the street, and hearing my uncle's answer, turned toward us (for I had joined my aunt at her doorway), saying, "Good morning, Mrs. Smart. You have not learnt to go to church yet, I see."

"No," said aunt, "I had so much of it in my young days that I got tired of it."

My dear readers, I cannot begin to tell you what those few words were to me. My aunt's hurt the most: "Had so much in my young days that I got tired of it." Was this the case with me? No, I could not say it was, nor could I analyse my feelings. Could I have gone back to childhood's days, or even girlhood's days, I thought how happy I should be. But, somehow I was changed; I could not think as I used to do, my brain seemed to be heavy, my head thick, and my heart cold. I went to my box to reach out my Bible, and as I did so I thought of my dear teacher—long dead—and will any of my readers understand the feeling that came over me and made me throw it into the box, closing the lid quickly, and run down stairs as if some one was behind me? To this day, I cannot explain it. How quick is thought? I felt I was too guilty to touch so sacred a thing, and tried my best after that not to think of it. Still, my aunt's words would come back to me again and again: "I had so much of it in my young days that I got tired of it."

During the next week a lady called on us to invite the children to Sunday School. She said she was a district visitor, and that we were in her district. She had been away for her summer holidays and had but now returned. Mrs. Benson had told her we were

strangers. I asked her to what Sunday School she wished to invite them. She replied, that our house properly belonged to St. Mathew's parish, and that was the one she would like them to go to. I told her that the little boys had never been to Sunday School, and that the girls had not been either since we had come to London, but that I would send them the following Sunday. I asked Lizzie if she would like to go, and she said, "Yes."

Miss Mansfield said, "There is a nice Bible class for adults, if you would like to go yourself."

I bowed, but did not trust myself to speak, for again that still, small, holy voice was reminding me of long neglected duties.

As soon as she had gone, Lizzie said to me, "Sis, why didn't you tell her you had been a Sunday School teacher, yourself?"

"Oh, Lizzie," I said, "don't! How dreadfully we have been neglecting our duty. How long is it since we entered a church? Through all the months we have been in London, every Sabbath day has been wasted. We must try to do differently; indeed, we must."

Just then, dear Annie came, putting her arms about me, and said, "Never mind, Sis, we'll make a fresh beginning. Suppose we go next Sunday to church

and Sunday School?" I made up my mind, as I stood there, that I would. Also, that I would begin to read my Bible every day, and try to do better.

Dear reader, let me advise any one of you, who may ever be in the same perplexity of mind, not to wait for any time in the future, but at once, as soon as the desire is formed; turn it into prayer just where you stand.

When Sunday came, the children went to school and came home quite pleased. But, dear reader, I did not go to church, and why? Because I was a coward. My aunt, and a young friend, who came in to sit awhile, prevented me, as I did not like to say I was going to church.

So another Sunday passed away. I did, however, take my Bible that night and tried to read it. But, oh! it was a changed book to me. I could see no beauty in it. I did not seem to understand it. I turned the leaves over and over; then closed it wearily and sobbed myself to sleep.

The next day (Monday) father went to business as usual, but came back in the afternoon about three o'clock, looking cross and put out, but not telling me why. He was very restless, and seemed to be in deep thought about something. He went to bed early, and the next morning did not get up at the usual hour, and refused his breakfast.

By the time the children were away to school, he came down stairs. I asked him why he did not want any breakfast, and he said, "Because I have lost my situation, and shall have to do with less."

He was despondent all day ; but the next morning he got up, saying he must go to seek employment somewhere.

"I suppose, with care, you can make your week's money last you two weeks, can't you?" he said.

I told him I would try. I was very glad then that I had taken my aunt's advice as to saving part of my income, for from this time, though my father sought early and late, he got no employment. I cannot tell why ; I only know that he got none. Still, he was out night after night, though not so late as before.

In time, my savings were all used up, and I still did what I could get to do in sewing, but I could not do enough to keep us, and gradually one by one my few little treasures of jewelry, and our best clothing, and, at last, anything that would fetch a shilling was pawned. To this day, I shiver when I think of it, or even hear mention of a pawn shop. I never went myself to pawn one article. Father did that, or got some one else to do it. I do not know which ; I only know he would take the things away and bring back

the money. A woman lived near by, who went out cleaning and washing. I think he got her to take them, as he always brought me a little less money than the ticket called for. I once called his attention to this, and he said, "Take what you get, and don't ask questions." I knew he was feeling miserable, so I said no more.

At last, we were very poor; we had scarcely anything left to wear. The winter had passed away, and spring was just commencing, when he came in one day, saying he had got some copying to do, and went off in good spirits. He worked steadily for a few weeks; came home early, and things were getting better in every way.

One evening, about two months later, he said to me, "Mary, I am going to be married."

I was so surprised that I dropped the cup I was wiping and broke it.

"Married!" I said. "To whom?"

He laughed and said, "You seem surprised. I think," he continued, "this work I have got now will be permanent. I make good wages at it. I have proposed, and have been accepted."

"Well; but," I said, "Where are you going to take a wife to? She must be a funny person if she would come to this miserable place and call it home. What sort of a home has she now?"

"Well," he said, "on Thursday I have promised to take her to the Crystal Palace, and I promised to take you to see her and go with us. You will like to see the Crystal Palace, won't you? Don't you remember how you wanted to go when I took Julia?"

"Yes," I said, "I remember perfectly, but everything was so different then. Mamma was alive and we had our home. Now we have neither."

"Never mind thinking of the past," he said, "if I marry this lady you may have both again, for she, or rather her father, has plenty of money."

After a short silence he said, "You will like to go with us, won't you?"

I said, "I would like to go, but I could not see my way. I have nothing to wear. You know we have not been able to redeem anything except your own clothes."

"Could you not get a dress from your aunt?" he said. "She is not much bigger than you."

"Oh, father," I said, "go out in borrowed clothes. How can I? How is it that you are so different from what you used to be?"

"I am not different," he said, "but circumstances alter cases, and I am so excited, and so anxious, that you should see this lady that I am going to see your aunt at once."

With that he went out, returning in a few minutes with my aunt, to whom he said,

"I say, Polly, I want to take Mary to the Crystal Palace on Thursday, and she says she has nothing to wear. Can you help us out of this dilemma?"

I begged of him not to insist on it, but he was quite determined, and when I saw that he was getting angry I gave way, and on that memorable Thursday we went first to the house of his lady, which was large and beautifully furnished; then to the Palace with her.

She was quite young. Not more than twenty years, I think, and nicely dressed. When father introduced us to each other, she came forward at once and, kissing me, said, "I am glad to see you; I hope we shall be friends."

It was a lovely day, and there is so much to see and enjoy at the palace (as I think every one will say who has been there) that I could not help enjoying myself.

I do not remember much of the conversation which took place, but I think I remember getting the impression that she was fond of and used to pleasure. She spoke of things which gave me to understand that she and father had met at evening parties, and that they had been to the theatre together more

than once. Thus the want of money at home was in part accounted for. She spoke of dancing parties and picnics she had been to and was expecting to go to.

I remember father saying he was too busy just then to go anywhere, that he could hardly spare time that day, he had taken it really against his employer's will. I remember feeling a kind of chill when he said this—a sort of presentiment of evil.

When the dancing commenced she said she would like to dance. Father said, "I do not dance myself, but I like to watch it. You and Mary take a turn."

They were about to dance a schottische. I told her it was a long time since I danced, that I would rather not, but she seemed to wish it, so I yielded. When the dance was over we went to sit down, and father having left us for a few minutes I could not help asking her why she thought of marrying a man with a family.

She said she had never thought much about the family, for she did not know there was one until a week ago.

I said, "How long have you known my father?"

"For more than a year," she replied; "but we have only been engaged for about a week, when he told me of his family."

"And were you not afraid to undertake it?" I said, "Oh, no; not at all," she replied. "For as you have brought them up so long I would not wish to interfere with your management of them, and I told your father so."

"Did you know that we had been very poor for some time," I asked her, "and that we have a very small house and very little furniture in it?"

She looked surprised and said, "No, I did not know much about anything."

I told her I hoped she would not misunderstand me. "If you do marry my father," I said, "I shall give you all the respect due to you, and the children will do the same, I am sure. But when I look at your beautiful home and compare it with ours, unless you have furniture of your own I know you will not be content. We had a lovely home once. Everything heart could wish for, but we have no home now fit for my father to bring you to as a bride. If he keeps the situation he has now he soon will be able to make it comfortable, but it would take years to make it anything like your own home. So now, having told you this you will know what to expect. Should you decide to throw in your lot amongst us I will give you a hearty welcome, for I like you. But a nice home, neither I nor my father can give you."

She did not answer for a minute, then she bent forward and kissed me, saying, "Thank you; if I had wealth I certainly would marry your father and come to you; but as I have not, but have, as you say, got a good home, I will not now at any rate add to your household expenses. You are a brave girl, and I shall not betray your confidence." And she did not, though the engagement was broken off and I never saw her again.

My father, however, lost his situation through taking that day's holiday. When he went to business on Friday they had another in his place, and then began again the struggle for daily food. Six mouths to feed and only one pair of hands to work. And yet I should hardly say that; for both Lizzie and Annie helped with what they could. But you know, dear reader, we had no business learnt. What we did we had to learn as we went along, and at that time work was very badly paid for, even the best of it.



CHAPTER VI.

POVERTY.

“The poor ye have always with you, and whensoever ye will ye may do them good.”—Matt. xiv. 7.

“It is a still, small, holy voice,
The voice of God Most High ;
It whispers always in the heart,
And says that He is by.”

ONE day Lizzie, who did not like sewing, said to me, “I wonder if I could get a place, and earn some money?”

I felt my face burn as she said this, but I did not answer. For, dear reader, God had been gradually drawing me back to Himself, and though at the time I did not realize it; yet now, looking back, I see it.

At first I rebelled against the thought of service for them; but presently Annie said, “Yes, Mary, let

us both try to get a place, then you will only have Harry and Jim to manage. We shall be able to give you part of our money, too."

"How are you going to get a place?" I asked; "we don't know anyone." For, strange as it may appear, in the three years we had been in London we knew very few people. The friends who had visited us in our furnished lodgings had either lost sight of us, or we of them, I don't know which, for I never liked them.

Lizzie suggested that we should ask Miss Mansfield, when she came around with the "tracts," if she knew of a situation suitable. We had never thus far breathed our poverty, but we had nothing now left upon which we could get one shilling, so I told her she might if she wished.

"And may I, too?" said Annie.

"You can," I said, and then I went to my room and, throwing myself on the bed, I gave way to my grief.

Shortly after this a Scotch lady came to our house. She had heard from Miss Mansfield about Lizzie, and came to say she would try her.

Oh! what a friend she was indeed—one of God's faithful few. Soon, under her influence, the dark shadows seemed to separate and show a brighter

light beyond. Instead of constantly thinking of my troubles, I began to try to overcome them.

Somehow, I had got into the way of thinking that, having neglected God so much, I had made Him too angry with me ever to feel the same towards me again. I do not know where I got the impression, or how; but I could only realize that God was a Spirit—something grand and noble—seated in heaven to hear our prayers and to pass judgment on them. I could not have put it into words then such as these, but I remember that it was in this way I used to think of God; and my thoughts of Jesus, our blessed Saviour, were never as I had been able to think of Him in my childhood, but only as the Son of God, the Saviour of the world generally. I had once been made to learn a text of Scripture: "Thou God seest me," after I had done wrong, I forget just now what I had done, but the text I remembered, and many a time it came back to me as I sat at my work, and troubled me.

I thought of Him as seeing me when, in my vexation because Mr. Wilson, the clergyman in B—, did not come to visit us as I thought he ought, I went to some other church, or, as was often the case, stayed at home. I thought of Him as seeing me when I constantly broke his Sabbaths—week after week

taking my pleasure on His most holy day, and not calling the Sabbath a delight, "the holy of the Lord, honorable." I thought of Him as seeing me and knowing my thoughts, when I had sat by the hour wondering why I had to suffer so much; why my mother had been taken away just when I wanted her most; why my father had become so cross and sullen with us all; why he could not get work as well as other people; and why I, who had never been used to it, should have to work so hard and yet remain so poor—and when I thought of Him as seeing all this, I felt sure He must be angry.

One day, as I sat pondering on this text, Lizzie's mistress came in, and soon she had drawn me out, insomuch that I told her all my thoughts about it.

She asked me if I had read the history from whence the text was taken.

I said, "No; I did not know just where to find it."

She told me to take my Bible and read it. She had not time to stay then, but she would like me to remember that when the words were used they were not used in the way I thought of them at all; but a poor woman, she said, was in trouble, and, of course, not liking trouble, she fled from it and from those who troubled her, and when she sat down to think the Angel of the Lord found her. He told her to go

back to her trouble and to the one who troubled her. He then made her a gracious promise, and she, knowing that she had not been seeking the Lord at the time He found and came to her, called the name of the Lord who spake to her, "Thou God seest me."

"And now, dear girl," she said, "I must go. You will find the history of this woman in the sixteenth chapter of Genesis, from the ninth to the thirteenth verses; and when you have read it you will think of a verse I will quote for you: 'I am found of them who sought not after me.'"

I caught her meaning at once; and this is only one of many such like conversations, for which, dear reader, now I from my heart thank God.

The day after the foregoing conversation Lizzie came down in the afternoon to bring me some work from her mistress, and full well did I know that it was work that she did not need done, but which from the kindness of her heart she had hunted up for me. She also sent word to say that Annie could go to see her the next morning, which she did, and Mrs. Martin (as we will call the lady) took her to see her niece, Mrs. La Croix, who was in need of a trustworthy young girl to look after her baby. Mrs. La Croix thought her too young, but after a little while agreed to take her. Annie made a long stay with her, and

was very happy. So the two girls were for a time well provided for.

I must tell you what was to me, soon after this, the most bitter trial I had yet had in all my poverty. One morning my two little brothers were crying for bread, and I could not give them a bit. I had some work on hand, for which I expected to be paid as soon as it was finished. Needing the money so badly, I sat up all night to complete it. About half-past eight in the morning I took it home, and to my dismay found that the lady had gone away the day before, and was not expected home until the next day. Picture, if you can, my distress: I had neither food nor money in the house, nor had I anything whereon to raise a penny.

When I got home, the first sound I heard was Jim crying out for his breakfast. As soon as he saw me he called out, "Where have you been, Sissy? There's no bread in the cupboard, and we want our breakfast." Then Harry chimed in, "And it's near school time you know, Sis."

I sat down and burst into tears.

Dear reader, I cannot describe my feelings to you. I could just see my mother, as she lay on her bed, looking at me. I could hear her words ringing in my ears, "I am dying; take care of my dear boys,"—and

here they were crying for bread! I almost cried aloud in my anguish: "Mother! mother! I have done my best. What more can I do?"

Just then father came downstairs. "What are the children crying for, Mary?" he said.

"Oh, father, they want their breakfast, and I have none to give them!" I sobbed.

Then dear little Jim threw his arms around my neck, saying, "Sissy, don't cry; I'll do without. I didn't want you to cry"; and poor Harry stood looking on. I had never seen my father so moved before. He sat down, put his hand over his face, but said never a word.

I had on a grey skirt with a blouse waist—my only dress. I took the skirt off, and handing it to father, I said, "Just get what will buy us some bread." He took it without a word and in a few minutes returned, and the children got their breakfast and went to school.

In the afternoon a boy came to the door to tell me to go at once around to Mrs. Martin, as she wished to see me. I was just finishing some work for her, so took it with me. And now, dear reader, try to imagine, if you can, what my feelings were, to have to go out without a dress. I had a nice black skirt on, it is true, but it was short. I threw a long cloak over it,

however (though it was a warm day), and away I went.

When I got to Mrs. Martin's house, I found she had some work for me from a lady friend. It was wanted in a hurry, so much so that she said she would not let me stay, as I sometimes did, to have tea with Lizzie; for by taking it right home I should get so much of it done in the meantime.

I thanked her and was about to go, when she looked straight into my face, and putting her hand on my shoulder, she said to me, "Child, you are in trouble! What is it? Am I not your friend?"

Then, dear reader, the flood-gates were opened, and I cried as if my heart would break. I told her all my disappointment about the money; my trial at hearing the children cry for bread, and the giving up of my dress.

"And you would have gone away without telling me?" she said. "Oh, Mary, never do this again! We are placed in this world to help one another, and if God had no poor children, how could the rich help them?" With this she put me down in the easy chair near by and went to the kitchen, soon coming up again with a plate on which was a sandwich—not a little one, dear reader, but a genuine sandwich of beef and bread well buttered? Need I tell you how good that

was? If you have ever been hungry, I do not think I need. After I had eaten it, she said, "Now, I will pay you the price of the work you took home this morning, and when you get the money from the lady herself you can return it to me." And she did so, as well as paying me for the work I then took to her.

When I got home, father fetched my dress, and we were able to get supper, of which he stood very much in need, and never again were we reduced to such a degree, as shortly after this my father, through Mrs. Martin's influence, got a situation; the girls were doing well, and I had as much sewing as I could do, all of which made the days seem brighter.

The children went to Sunday School regularly, and I often went to church, but somehow I did not yet enjoy going. The service was monotonous, and many times the sermon would not be heard at all, as I would be thinking of something else instead. Now and then Aunt Smart would go with me, but not often, and father never went.

It happened one Sunday evening it was raining very fast. Aunt said to me, "You won't take the children out to-night, will you, Mary?"

Father spoke up and said, "I should think not, or go herself either, in this pouring rain."

My aunt said that Mrs. Hill was at her house to tea, and wanted her to go to chapel with her, and would I go too, as the chapel was just across the road; we could easily go without getting very wet.

Father said he would stay in the house. I could put the boys to bed and go if I wanted to.

I remember the sermon was from the text, "Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet." (St. John xiii. 10.) The minister said he particularly wanted to speak to converted people, and to show them that they were washed in the blood of Jesus and could only be washed once, as at that washing they had received full and perfect forgiveness; yet as they walked through life they were constantly—in thought, word and deed—thinking, speaking and doing such things as were displeasing to Jesus their Saviour, and so they would need pardon for each and every offence. He said it was the custom in the East for a nobleman, when he invited guests to a feast, to provide water in the entrance hall to bathe their feet. Each guest would take a bath and put on clean garments before setting out. He would therefore only need to bathe his feet when he arrived at the house of his friend.

I remember the sermon made a great impression on me, and yet I could not realize that I was pardoned.

I tried to think that his sermon suited me ; that I had served and loved God once, was then pardoned and forgiven, and so could claim the right of going to Him now ; but there was a barrier, and what it was I did not then know, but, dear reader, I know now. It was pride. I thought of my sins and shortcomings and of neglected duties, and was beginning to try to do better.

After hearing this sermon I watched myself more, and any little thing I did wrong I asked forgiveness for, thinking of his simile that the feet only were soiled ; but, alas, where was my repentance ? Not yet ! Not yet !

It was long after this that I came to my heavenly Father, and said, "Father, I have sinned." Long after this that I remembered I was a child of a King, living in exile. But I will not anticipate. I have much to tell you yet of things that happened before I could say with one of old, as I now can say, "I know in whom I have believed."

I must now pass on. Nothing of any importance occurred for some time, in our family at least. But it was at this time that the nation was in a state of rejoicing, on account of the marriage of the Princess Royal.

Father took us out to see the great city at night.

It was a grand sight. Miles of shops decorated and illuminated. In fact, it seemed as though the whole city of London was one mass of colored lights. As I write this my thoughts fly quickly from the sublime to the ridiculous, and I am reminded of an act of self-will. I had a new pair of boots. When I was putting them on my aunt said to me, "Mary, if I were you I would wear my old boots; you will have a long distance to walk and I am afraid you will suffer if you wear new ones."

Five miles from home I began to wish that I had taken advice. Half my enjoyment was taken away by the sufferings of that evening, which, before I got home, became intense.

Not very long after this, when we were getting things around us very comfortably, my father again startled me by saying that he was going to be married, but this time to quite a different person to his former choice. She was nurse in a gentleman's house, and only four years older than myself. I had seen her several times, but never thought of her as a step-mother. I rebelled against the invasion, as I then thought it, and did not stay to consider my father's feelings in the matter.

I thought of the children being tossed around by a stranger, and of myself being turned out of the home

I had worked hard for and helped to make, and I determined to leave it.

As I here lay before you the thoughts of my heart, you will see that the love of God was not yet fully shed abroad there, but that pride and selfishness were yet busy within.

My father and I did not talk much about his marriage, which was to take place a month after he first spoke to me. I took that time in arranging the children's clothes as well as I could, and making preparation for leaving home, by engaging myself to a lady as sewing maid, through Mrs. Martin's recommendation.

I told father what I had done. He was surprised, but I do not think displeased. I think rather that he was relieved, as I found afterwards that Martha, his intended wife, had said to him, there would be no reason why I should not go out sewing, or something, as she would be able to attend to the house and children. I afterwards heard that she told my aunt she was glad I had the sense to go, as she should certainly have advised me to do so, if I had not.

Thus our home was broken up, and I can't think yet, without sorrow of the way in which my dear little brothers clung to me and sobbed and cried at parting. I cried with them, when I put them to bed for the last time.

I did not feel any resentment towards my father's wife when he brought her home. I shook hands with her and kissed her, telling her I hoped she would be very happy. I took her up to look at the children, and said to her, "When my mother died, she begged me to take care of those two boys. I have done so thus far, and now I resign them to you. You will let them go to their Sunday School, will you not?" She said she certainly would, and then, for the first time, I left my home.

I was not unhappy in my situation; I spent a good deal of my time alone, and this suited me well. My mistress was kind, but I did not often see her more than once a day, when she came in the morning to put out my work.

On Sunday I could go out all day, if I wished. I generally went to church in the morning with Lizzie, and in the evening with Annie. The afternoons I spent between home and Aunt Smart's.

After awhile, I found that there was an afternoon service at St. Luke's Church, and often went there. I do not remember much about the services. They did not make much impression on me; but the seats had high backs, and many a time I got into one corner of them and cried the service through.

As months went by, I got discontented and home-

sick. Many times I have cried by the hour together as I sat at work. This naturally made me feel weak and ill, so much so as to draw the attention of my mistress to my altered looks. She insisted that I needed rest and change. I went to Mrs. Martin, as I had formed a habit of doing when in trouble. I told her what Mrs. Wells, my mistress, had said, and she advised me to go home for awhile.

One day, shortly after this, Lizzie went home on a visit, and my father returned with her in the evening. Mrs. Martin told him how very poorly I was looking, and that she thought I was fretting for the children, which, indeed, my dear reader, was the truth. He came over the next evening on purpose to tell me to go home for awhile. He said Martha was not very well and would be glad to have me. Whether she ever sent that message or not, I cannot say, but I went as soon as Mrs. Wells could supply my place.

At first I was very unhappy, and inclined to be sorry that I had gone home at all. I did not like the way the children were treated. Each word to them was a command, and they were hardly allowed to speak in her presence, and not at all at the table. They always seemed to have a fear of her. When bed-time came they were told to go, and they went without light or anyone to take them. To some, this

would seem all right, but to me it looked hard, for I had always been accustomed to see them to bed, and kiss them good-night.

The first night I was at home, when she told them to go to bed, and they got up and walked away without one word, I felt it keenly, and following them up stairs, I said, "Did you forget to say good-night, my boys?"

"We never say good-night to anybody now," said Jim.

"No, I should think not," said Harry. "Why, Sis, the first night after you went away she told us to go to bed."

"She—who told you?" I said. "Who do you mean?"

"Mother. This mother told us, and Jim says, 'you didn't light the candle yet.'

"Then mother says, 'Light the candle! No; I don't light candles for boys to go to bed with,' and Jim says 'I don't like the dark. Sissy always went with us and took the light.' Then she just got up," continued Harry, "and slapped his head and told him never to tell her again what Sissy either said or did unless he wanted a stick about his back, so I took hold of his hand and took him to bed, and I've took him ever since, and I can't bear her."

I was very indignant at this, and yet I felt that Harry should not speak of his mother as "she," and I told him so. I made the best I could of it by telling them she was not used to children, and that they must be good and obedient and try to make her love them. But I went on to say, "While I am at home there is nothing to prevent you from kissing me good-night."

Then I got such a hugging as made me feel better than I had done for a long time. When I got down stairs I thought my step-mother did not look pleased, but did not know why until the next evening. When the children were sent to bed and I was going with them, she said, "Mary, I wish them to go to bed alone; they are quite big enough, and you need not make babies of them." I said, "I will go and bid them good-night and come down again," which I did. She said, "It was all nonsense kissing children as big as they were every night." However, I did kiss them and bid them good night, though I let them go to bed alone after that.

I stayed home a year, during which time a little girl was born, and Martha's time was so much taken up with her that the management of the house devolved upon me. Father was away all day in the city, and only came home about half-past six, so my

room I found was more acceptable than my company in the evenings, as was also the case on Sundays.

They never went to church, but took their walks in the afternoon, as we had been accustomed to do in former times. They asked me to go with them the first Sunday I was at home, but I declined, and they did not ask me again. I had every opportunity of going to church regularly, and I availed myself of it. For nearly all that year I went three times on Sundays to Christ's Church, South Kensington, also on a Monday and Wednesday evening. It was during this year that I began in earnest to turn towards God; I did indeed truly repent of my sins and neglect of God, and I must say here that I felt keenly the need of some human friend. Many a time I have walked to and from church behind the clergyman, wishing and longing that he might speak to me. Yet I had not courage to speak to him, and of course he could not know me out of a congregation of five or six hundred people; still I used to think sometimes when I went so regularly that he must know me, but whether or not he never spoke, nor did anyone else. Neither did I at this time ever think of going to any other place of worship. It seemed to me as if I could not do enough for God. I began to have a great desire to work for Him. I was constantly

trying fresh plans to satisfy my conscience. I would take certain prayers and read them over three times a day for a little while, then I would try repeating the Lord's prayer only, three times a day; and again I would take the lessons and prayers as appointed in the prayer book, still I could not satisfy myself. Yet I was not unhappy at this time; I had fully repented and given my heart afresh to God and was a regular communicant, but I was ever craving to do something more for God than I had done.

During the year a Roman Catholic lady had heard in some way of me, I do not now remember how, but she came to ask me if I would go and stay with her for a little while as companion. Her sister, who lived with her, had gone on a visit some distance and she did not like to be alone.

She was a widow lady and had one son and a grandson living with her. I spent three very happy months under her roof. I thank God that I went to her, and I will tell you why I thank Him.

I had always had hard thoughts of Roman Catholics, and at first was almost refusing to go to her on account of her being one; but after living there my mind towards them was entirely changed. The self-denial with which they did their daily duty was a lesson to anyone who was disposed to learn it. They

were not wealthy, but they were good to the poor. They were truthful, high-principled people, and, I believe, loved God with all their heart and soul.

Many a question did I ask Mrs. Duval (that was her name) as to why they did such and such things, and many conversations we had which it is not my purpose to retail; but I may say that when we did not agree she always finished up with the words, "My dear Mary, I believe we are both going to the same heaven and to the same God Almighty, and through the same Saviour, because we have faith in that Saviour; we are travelling by rather a different route, but as long as we meet at the end of the journey, what matter."

I often went to afternoon vespers at four o'clock with the little grandson, and used to enjoy the service very much at the Oratory at Brompton.

One day while with this lady I got a letter from my friend Nellie inviting me to her wedding, which I accepted.

It was with a great deal of pleasure that I went to Oxford to be present at my friend's wedding. I was not introduced to Mr. Westbrook until we returned from church, he having met us there. He greeted me very warmly, saying that he thought he already knew me, as Nellie was fond of talking about her

schoolmates in general, and about me in particular. He was a fine, handsome man; and what was of infinitely more value in Nellie's eyes, he was a good man.

We had breakfast after our return from church, then I went with them to Brighton, stayed a few days, and left them to return to my duties in London.




CHAPTER VII.

I BECOME A BAPTIST.

“But seek ye first the kingdom of God.”—Matt. vi. 33.

“Jesus shall reign where'er the sun
Doth his successive journeys run ;
His kingdom stretch from shore to shore,
Till moons shall wax and wane no more.”

TOWARD the end of the year I was much stronger, and began to wish that I might do something for myself. So, as my mother's aunt Davis had asked me to visit her, I went early in September. She lived at Reading, in Berkshire. She, being a Baptist, did her best to persuade me, that now I had quite made up my mind to love and serve God, I should be baptized, for that my being christened as a baby was of no use whatever, and as to confirmation, it was a mere empty form.



These thoughts were all new to me, and I began to wonder how it was that I had never thought of it before. I remembered how friendly the people were at the little Spencer Place Chapel I had gone to one Sunday evening sometime before; for a great many of them, the minister amongst others, had shaken hands with me at that time, although I was a stranger.

During my visit to this aunt we went to her chapel and to the prayer-meetings on the week evenings. Everybody knew everybody else, and there was a great handshaking whenever the people met together, and to me, a stranger, they were particularly kind.

There was a missionary gathering at the chapel, too, while I was there, so I may say the week was almost entirely spent in some kind of religious exercise. For when we were not at the chapel we were at some friends to tea, and the morning service or the last night's service was the topic of conversation.

This just suited my frame of mind at that time, for, having so long neglected God, I now wanted to be ever doing Him service. No wonder then that I said to my aunt I would like to join her little chapel. She seemed pleased, and said she had a very dear friend who was a Baptist minister at Highgate,

near London, to whom she would write, then let me know what answer she got from him.

What she wrote I do not know, but I received through her a pressing invitation to pay them a month's visit, and if I liked the place to settle down there, as they thought I might do well at the dress-making, if I had a taste that way.

I took a little time to think of it, and then spoke to my father. He said I could please myself. There was a home with him for me, but if I wished to make a home for myself he would not gainsay it. So, having decided to go, I accepted the invitation.

I arrived there about eleven o'clock one bright morning. Upon knocking at the door it was opened by an elderly woman, stout and homely, but good-natured looking.

I asked for Miss Hatch, that was the minister's sister.

"Are you Miss Elliot?" she said.

I told her I was, and she showed me into a small study, saying, Miss Hatch would be there in a minute, and in less than that time she came.

Dear reader, how can I describe that dear old lady. I had not expected to find an old lady at all; being Miss Hatch I had thought only of youth. But here she was, a maiden lady about fifty years of age, her

grey hair softly placed under a white lace cap, but her face I never can describe, as she came into that room. And taking me right into her arms she said, "Welcome, welcome, dear girl; your aunt tells me you are seeking Jesus, and if this be so you will not seek in vain, for He says, 'Seek and ye shall find.' And all His promises are true, our precious and beloved Saviour."

She then took off my bonnet and mantle, and told me to rest awhile, dinner would soon be ready.

Soon after this Mr. Hatch came in. His welcome was most kindly, for as he shook hands with me he said, "So this is a friend of our dear friend, Mrs. Davis, and consequently a friend of ours. Allow me to welcome you to Highgate."

We then went to dinner, and I may here say that I spent a month with them and then settled down as a dressmaker, in which capacity I stayed in Highgate a year, which passed very pleasantly.

I went through a form of examination which consisted of being questioned by certain elders of the society, and when they pronounced themselves to be satisfied with the answers I gave them, and by my conduct and general deportment, I was immersed and became a member and a Sunday School teacher, and was in every way pretty well satisfied with myself, thinking I had now found perfection.

Shortly, however, there were times when I had misgivings that I was not where I ought to be. In so many of the members of our little society there seemed to be a lack of real principle, and such speeches as the following, which came under my notice, would perplex me greatly at times :

"John," said Mrs. B. to her husband, "You are not going to prayer-meeting to-night, are you?" "Yes, I must, for Bro. Andrews is going to ask young Hounslow to pray to-night, and I want to hear what sort of a gift he has got."

And one day Mr. Hatch, looking a good deal surprised, asked, "Why, Bro. Williams, how could you leave your wife; is she so much better?"

"No sir, she's no better, but I thought you'd like to have all the choir here for the anthem when Mr. Slocombe was to preach."

Many like instances I met with, showing that the love and worship of God was not of necessity the ruling motive of all even in this small congregation, therefore even in it I need not look for perfection. At the same time I cannot refrain from speaking of some of the members with love and admiration.

I lodged while there with a gardener and his wife, who I believe were a God-fearing and God-loving couple. Mrs. Perry, for that was her name, had a

very hasty temper, but she fought it in the strength of her God. I have seen her get very angry with one of the children. Her face would get excited and red, and her hand would be uplifted to strike, but in an instant she would turn and run up stairs and be away for perhaps five minutes; then she would come down calm and quiet. The child would be called and punished in a proper manner, and the result of this was, as a rule, obedience. She was a good manager, having six children, the youngest sixteen months old and the oldest thirteen years. She took in washing, mangling and ironing, yet I never knew her to miss morning service at eleven o'clock, the school children's address at three, and the evening service on any Sunday.

Mr. Hatch told me that in all her married life he had never known her to miss those services except at times of illness, and then only till her children were a month old. They were all brought with her from that age. Her husband was a teacher in the Sunday School both morning and afternoon. Yet in spite of all this they had a hot dinner every Sunday. I cannot tell you how she managed it all, for her house was scrupulously clean and so were her children. A morning never passed without her reading a chapter in the Bible and praying with her family. Mr. Perry

could not do this, as he went to work at five o'clock in the morning, except on Sunday, when he performed the duty, as also at night he did it.

Was this woman one of a thousand or not? I have never met with just such a manager since; still there may be many more in the world, and perhaps the reading of this page may give some others a desire to do likewise. In case it should I will give a description as near as I can of one week's management, and it shall be a fair copy of the others.

On Monday morning she went to her customers to collect the soiled linen, her son wheeling it home in a wheelbarrow. In the afternoon she mended her own and her children's clothes and got the dirty ones ready for washing. On Tuesday a woman came to her and they washed until all was done. On Wednesday she starched and folded in the morning and mangled in the afternoon. On Thursday she mangled all day for other people who did their own washing, and she gave every one to understand they could not get any mangling done after Thursday night. On Friday she ironed, on Saturday morning she took home her work, then did her own cleaning and prepared for Sunday by putting the children's clean clothes all ready and bathing each one of them. Before going to bed every boot was cleaned, the

potatoes peeled and cabbage put in water. The pudding was made and the meat put into the little dutch oven ready for the fire. The one side of the meat was cooked during breakfast, and just before going to chapel she would turn it round, put the pudding on to boil and the water for the potatoes and cabbage. As soon as we came in at noon she went straight to the kitchen, put her cabbage and potatoes on, mended her fire and looked to see that all was right. Then by the time the children and the table were ready so was the dinner.

We generally sung the verse for "grace" on Sundays, which runs as follows :

"We thank thee, Lord, for this our food,
But most of all for Jesus' blood ;
May manna to our souls be given,
Like angels' food sent down from heaven."

Very happy and peaceful were the Sabbaths spent under that roof. But some of my readers may say this was all very easy when both were such good Christians and belonged to the same church.

We were speaking of conversion one evening, and Mr. Perry was telling us of a young boy who was anxiously enquiring for the Lord and that they thought he would be soon brought in, for he was very

regular at all the services. Mrs. Perry happening to say that she had been converted at a very early age, I asked Mr. Perry how long it was since his "conversion." He replied that it was about six years. I was looking surprised (for it is a rule in that society not to marry an unconverted person), and said, "You were not converted before you were married then?" He said, "No; but you must not think that Margaret broke the rule of our society knowingly. If you care to hear I will tell you all about my own 'conversion.'"

I said, "I would be pleased to have him tell me." Then as I sat sewing he gave me the following history of himself:

MR. PERRY'S STORY.

"When I first got acquainted with Margaret she lived in service, about thirteen miles from Highgate. I used to get out to see her as often as I could, and knowing that she was a Christian, I alus let on as I was one, too, and I used to go to chapel with her when I stayed over Sunday. She never knew before our marriage tha^t I sometimes took too much to drink. I told her as how I went to the Independent chapel, but when we got married I'd go to hers, and perhaps at some time I'd get baptized; but I am ashamed to

say as I did not mean a word of it. Howsomedever, she believed me, and we got spliced.

"Well, for a little while all went 'lively as a marriage bell'; but I soon got tired of this constant chapel goin' and Bible readin' and pretendin' to be good. But not to make my story too long: I had a chum as had bin in London for a goodish bit—a bad un he was, too. Well, he came back to Highgate, and we got together again, and pretty soon I was off to the public every night, and on Saturdays we was alus the last to be turned out. I have heard the landlady say when we was agoin' in that she'd a'most as soon see Old Nick as us two come into the house, for it was such a job to get rid of us.

"Sometimes I'd feel ashamed o' myself when I seed how sorrowful the wife was; but still I got wuss and wuss. One night, I mind, I come in a bit sooner. The front door was a little way open, and the mother was upstairs with the children, prayin'—we'd three young ones then. That night I was sober enough to listen at the foot of the stairs, and when I heard her ask the Lord to break up my hard heart, and make me love and serve Him, I felt as if I would turn over a new leaf and quit the public altogether; but when I'd get near to it or see my chum, we'd go at it again, night arter night. This went on for seven or eight years, and then I got a stop.

"One day I was making a frame for a hotbed, and a bit of a chip flew up and struck me in the eye. I didn't think it was very bad at fust, so I tied a handkercher round it and went on workin'; but by-and-by it began to pain very bad, so I goes over to the doctor. He looked at it, and said he thought it was goin' to be a bad job for me; and so it turned out in one sense, for I was in hospital about three months and lost my eye when done, you see; but, in another sense, it was a great blessing to me.

"The Sisters of Charity, as they are called, go every day to that hospital to read to the sick people; but whenever they'd come near me I used to turn my back on 'em, and I would not listen to a word they'd say. One day, when I was a-gettin' better and was let sit up a bit and have the bandage off my eye, one of the sisters laid the Bible beside me, open, and went away, and when I thought nobody was a-lookin' I took it up, and read these words: 'He that being often reproved hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.' You will find it in the twenty-ninth chapter of Proverbs at the first verse.

"I dunno what way I felt. I was sure as how God meant me to read that verse, and I believe if I had gone on in my sins He'd ha' kept His word, and I

should ha' come to an end. I read it three or four times over. I felt as how I wanted to thank God then and there for showing me them words; but as I thought of that the enemy came in like a flood, and it seemed as if I could hear voices saying to me: 'You are a pretty fellow to thank God for anything, after all you have done. Look at the chances you have had to do right. You had a good mother and you've got a good wife, and you have been just as bad as you could be, and now you think of thanking God for showing you a plain truth, and as soon as you get around again you will go back to all your old habits, and be worse than ever.'

"Then I read the words again, and that night I could not sleep for thinkin' of um. About midnight I got up and knelt down by the bedside, and asked God to teach me how to pray, for Christ's sake. After a little I was able to repent, and though it was slow at first, yet it was sure, for I was (blessed be God) on a sure foundation; even Jesus our Saviour.

"When I came home and told Margaret that I was her true brother in Christ, as well as a better husband, she was glad, and thanked God that though He had taken an eye from me, He had given me a new heart; and from then till now I have been kept steadfast by the grace of God, and hope I shall be even to the end of time."

I could not help asking if things went on just as regularly then as now, and whether Mrs. Perry went to chapel as often and to prayer-meetings.

He replied: "Yes, and when I did not come home to tea, but went from work to the public, I always found my supper ready, and we had a good hot dinner every Sunday just the same as now, and in all that time, mind you, she never said a cross word to me. The first time I came home drunk, I mind she looked kind o' bad, and the next mornin' she said to me, 'Oh, Alfred, you have deceived me, but how dreadfully you have acted towards God!' and that was all she said."

I asked Mrs. Perry how she could have had so much patience without speaking.

She said, "I thought of the sin against God more than that against me, and I used to tell Him all about it, and in His own good time He answered prayer and brought about my husband's conversion."

I do earnestly hope that should any wife read these pages, circumstanced as Mrs. Perry was at that time, she may, by God's grace, trust Him and do likewise.



CHAPTER VIII.

SOMETHING ABOUT HAYMAKERS.

God is love."—1 John iv. 8.

"For the love of God is broader
Than the measures of man's mind."

I WILL now tell you something about my dear Miss Hatch. She lived such a pure, unselfish life, that if I can lead anyone, by reading something about her, to follow her example, I shall not have written in vain. She literally "went about doing good."

We had got round to the time of haymaking, and, as was the custom, men, women and children tramped in to do the work, and while it lasted they were allowed to sleep in the barns and outhouses of the farmers. Provided the weather was fine, it was not altogether an unpleasant life; but a rainy season caused the haymakers great inconvenience.

The summer of which I am writing was an unusually wet time, and their sufferings would have been doubly severe but for the prompt kindness of the people. A soup kitchen was speedily started; tickets were printed and distributed for soup and bread, so much according to the number in a family. Thus, until they were able to work, they were supplied with food three times a day. Some of the young men got employment with the farmers and with gentlemen who kept horses or had gardens. Some of the more respectable people suffered most, as they were too proud to ask for the help that was so kindly provided.

I remember hearing a great many people in talking it over say, "If they would not come forward and get the help thus held out to them they deserved to starve," but I think before judging too harshly we should put ourselves in their place and try to realize how we ourselves should feel.

Towards the end of the season, when the weather was getting brighter and better, I went by appointment to see Miss Hatch; we were to go to the city together to buy a dress for herself and I was to make it. Mary told me to go upstairs; she was in her room. After kissing me in her usual manner she said, "You are ready to go to the city, I see." I said "Yes, will

you be long?" She smiled, saying, "It does not take me very long to get ready for going out, does it dear? But I want to show you something first." She then went to her dressing table, and turning over the leaves of her large Bible, which always lay open upon it, she told me to read a passage to which she pointed with her finger.

Reader, you will find the verse she pointed to in the 1st Epistle of St. John, iii. 17. Will you turn to it and read it? You will not wonder then at my exclaiming, "Dear Miss Hatch, you are not going to the city to-day, you have spent your money."

Her face lighted up with one of those bright smiles, and kissing me she said, "No, dear, I am not going to the city to-day, but if you will go with me I think you will enjoy your afternoon just as much as if I did."

"How about the dress, then?" I asked.

"We will talk about that after," she replied.

As soon as Miss Hatch was ready, we went together down the road until we came to a shady lane, when turning into it we soon saw an old shed, or as we should call it in Canada, a shanty. Two or three children sat around the door looking pale and sickly. A man stood just inside who, as soon as he saw us, came forward.

"How is your wife to-day?" said Miss Hatch.

"I think she's on the mend, mam," said he, "thanks to you."

We went in, and there on a comfortable straw mattress, clean and tidy, lay a woman—oh! so thin and ill. Her eyes, however, lighted up with evident pleasure when she saw her visitor. Miss Hatch went up to her and taking her feeble hand pressed it gently, saying, "I am so glad you are better. The doctor called and told me he thought you would soon be able to be moved, and, just as soon as he gives permission, I have made arrangements for you to go to the house of a good woman who will take care of you and nurse you back to life and health, I trust, if it be God's will."

"Then," said the poor creature in an eager tone, "you will let me finish my story, will you not?"

"Certainly I will, if you wish. And if I can help you in any way, I am sure I will do so," said Miss Hatch.

The poor woman thanked her, then closed her eyes wearily and lay back perfectly still. Her husband came forward and gave her a dose of medicine and a few spoonfuls of beef tea out of a cup I at once recognized as belonging to Miss Hatch.

"Has the clergyman been to see her yet?" she asked.

"No," said the man with a kind of grunt. "I expect he's too fine to come to the likes of us."

"Hush," said Miss Hatch, "do not say that; he has a great deal to do just now, for there are many people ill at the present time."

She then took a little pocket Bible, and standing close to the bedside she read from the parable of the prodigal son, beginning at "I will arise and go to my Father" and ending with "put a ring on his hand and shoes on his feet." She then knelt down and prayed with her. I saw the tears streaming down the woman's cheeks, and yet I wondered at such a choice of Scripture for a very sick person. But I ceased to wonder when I knew more of her history.

After prayer we left, Miss Hatch telling the man she would send some one to help him through the night.

I thought he seemed surly, yet he thanked her and answered her questions civilly as to the needs of the family in general.

When we got outside she turned to me and said, "Now, dear, could I spend money on a new dress for myself and know that these people were in such sore need?"

I said, "No, indeed, you could not, for your heart is too kind to let you."

"My dear girl, it is not a matter of a kind heart," she said, "but a plain duty. I will, however, tell you all about it.

"When we came home from Bible class on Monday evening, do you remember seeing a man looking like a hay-maker on in front of us a piece?"

"Yes," I said, "he turned down a lane just before we got to Mrs. Perry's house."

"That's the man I mean; he overtook me after I left you at your own door," said Miss Hatch. "I was for a moment a little startled when I heard a heavy footstep behind me, but turning round I stepped sideways to let him pass. He looked as though he wished to speak, but did not like to. I said, 'Can I do anything for you, my friend? Are you in trouble or need?' And I was astonished to see the rough man put his hand over his face and burst into tears. Then, seeming ashamed, he said quite gruffly, 'Oh! I be a fool, but I ain't tasted food to-day, and my wife's bad. She's quite out of her head, and what to do I dunno.'

"Well," said I, "come in, I am just at home and will see what can be done for you."

"So, first of all," continued Miss Hatch, "making him eat a piece of bread and meat, I by questioning found that his wife was very ill and two of his

children. He has three, as you saw to-day. I found also that they were in the old tumbled-down shanty to which we have just been. I made my brother acquainted with the facts of the case as briefly as possible, and we decided it would be better to get a doctor to go and see her. Margy then went across to Mrs. Grist and sent her son Willie as fast as he could go to the doctor, telling him where to go to. Margy and I then went with the man, taking with us some wine and milk. As we were going out, Margy called my attention to the man, saying she thought he wanted to speak about something. I asked him if there was anything wanted we could take with us, if so, not to be afraid to speak. Poor fellow, he looked so sheepish when he said, 'Oh! missus, I be ashamed of this night's work, but my young ones be hungry.'

"I had forgotton the children entirely," Miss Hatch went on, "but soon put up a basket with provisions for the time being, and then we started, getting there a few minutes before Doctor Seymour.

"You thought it a dreadful looking p'lace to-day, did you not, dear?"

I told her I did.

"But you would have thought it much worse had

you seen it then," said she. "I pray God I may never see such a sight again. But I will tell you just how I found them.

"The least of the little girls, with fair, curly hair, who sat on the stone outside the door to-day, was sitting in one corner propped against the wall asleep, and down her dirty little cheeks were the marks of recent tears. The eldest girl sat up near the fireplace with the wall for a support for her back, and the mother was lying on the floor with her head on her daughter's lap, the middle girl also lying down with her head across the mother. Each of these three were flushed and feverish looking, while the mother kept muttering and asking for a drink. Dr. Seymour said she was very ill, and to lie on that floor all night was certain death.

"However, not to tire you, dear, we sent Willie Grist (for he had come round with the doctor) to Andrews, the carter, to tell him to take his cart around to our house and get the mattress, bedding, chairs, etc.

"Mrs. Grist went then to sit up with and to attend to them. And by the time Willie had fetched the medicine, and all things had been arranged, it was past midnight; but I am glad to say that the two little girls are better, and as you see, the woman is in a fair way to recover."

Thus ending the narrative with a bright smile, she said, "So you see, dear, when I have paid the doctor, the nurses, the carter, etc., I shall not have much left for my dress; but," she continued, "I am glad I shall be able to hear a voice say to me some day, 'Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of these, my brethren, ye have done unto me.'"

My thoughts, as I sat at tea that afternoon, went back to the time when in my need and trouble Mrs. Martin had come to me, and had been such a faithful friend. Then I thought of Mrs. Grimbly, our friend in B —, and back, back my thoughts went to my childhood. Taking my grandma as she knelt in prayer with and for me at one time, and dear old Mr. Clark in the arbor as he knelt to ask forgiveness for my sin, and to Mr. Stokes, who went to my mother to tell of a fault lest it should go uncorrected and become greater thereby. And I felt that there was, and always had been, a kind care over me, a watchful providence, and I knelt down and thanked God, asking Him to give me something to do that I might prove my love to Him. And He has been pleased many times to permit me to work for Him in various ways since that.

Yet, I look back to-day to see many opportunities passed by, many temptations given way to,

and much work close at home neglected for that which was further off. We are so prone to forget that God gives us our work to do just where we are. He does not expect us to leave little duties to seek out larger ones, and if we think it would be easier to do our duty in some other place we are surely mistaken. We can do it not at all without God's aid, and He can give us that aid when and where we ask it.

On Saturday Dr. Seymour gave permission for the sick woman to be removed, and a carriage was provided in which she was conveyed to Mrs. Fletcher's house to be taken care of until she was better.

The man, by this time, was working. The middle girl was staying with Miss Hatch, the eldest had gone to Mrs. Seymour, the young one, a nice little thing, was with Mrs. Andrews, the carter's wife. The people's sympathies were all aroused, and kindness was showered on the family, and I may here say I do not think it was misplaced.

I was a little puzzled as to why Mr. Hatch did not go to see them, until I found that as soon as Mrs. Hunter was conscious she had asked Mrs. Grist if she thought the clergyman would come to see her. Mrs. Grist told her that she supposed he would, but as she did not go to church she could not say for sure.

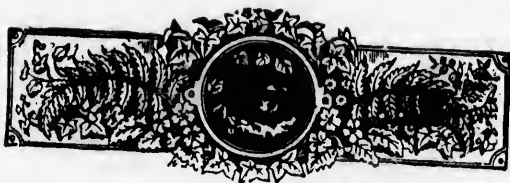
The next day she told Miss Hatch what the woman had said. She at once went to him, telling him of the woman's illness and her request. After some little delay he went to see her, and continued to visit her at intervals. I never happened to meet him, though I was frequently with her. I do not at this time even remember his name. I do, however, remember that I had a certain prejudice against him.

In conversation with the tract distributor one morning, on being asked why I did not attend church I said, "The church people were so cold and stiff, and I expected they would be all Roman Catholics soon if they went on."

"I trust not," she said, smiling.

Then of the forms of prayer I said, "How can any one pray out of their heart from a book? I think they should just ask God for what they want." Many more of these arrogant speeches I made, for which I am heartily ashamed. I must have been greatly puffed up with pride to have permitted myself to have made such rude remarks. I particularly remember her saying to me, on one occasion, how dear to her the thought was, that on both sides of the Atlantic the same prayers were being offered each Sunday, so that friends who were separated could pray for each other and chant God's praises with holy worship from

the same glorious liturgy. The remembrance of her words are precious to me because I could not forget them, and like a lever, they kept turning me again and again to the question, "Are you in your right place?"



CHAPTER IX.

MRS. HUNTER'S STORY.

“Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these, my disciples, ye did it unto me.”—*Mat. xxv. 40.*

“But none of the ransomed ever knew
How deep were the waters crossed ;
Nor how dark was the night that the Lord passed
through,
Ere he found his sheep that was lost ;
Out in the desert he heard it cry,
Sick and helpless, and ready to die.”

MRS. HUNTER was a very superior woman, and it appeared that she had married so much against her parents' wishes that they had turned their backs upon her entirely.

During her married life she and her husband had not got on well. He had been a great deal out of work the first year or two, and as a climax to all he

had broken his arm. During the time he was in the hospital their landlord had sold their furniture for rent, at least what was left of it, for they had been obliged to sell portions of it by degrees to live on.

She told us they were near a year in London, shifting about from place to place, trying first one thing, then another, and when he came out of the hospital and found they had no home he was quite broken down. Then they set off to follow a party of hay-makers, trusting that they could earn a little at that. "But here, again," she continued, "the wet weather met us." For two or three days the children had broken food given to them, and so were provided for, but then came this illness, and when she thought she was doing to die, she told us she could not think of anything but God's anger towards her. She had disobeyed her parents, and God had seemed to have forgotten her, or only to have remembered her to punish:

A great deal of this story she had told to Miss Hatch at the first; also that she was a member of the church, and so were her parents, but her husband was nothing, and this had been her parents' great objection to him. Thus it came about that the lesson of the "Prodigal Son" had been chosen.

The clergyman, at Miss Hatch's request, wrote to her parents, telling them of her condition, and what

he considered was their duty under the circumstances. A little note was enclosed from Miss Hatch with just these few words: "You will take your daughter back to your heart, will you not? She knows she did wrong in disobeying you, but she is very sorry. She has been extremely ill, so near death that for a while we thought she had passed away; but our Heavenly Father has raised her up again. Will you not thank Him, and forgive your erring child?"

After some little delay, an answer came from the clergyman of the parish, saying that the letter about Mrs. Hunter had been given to him to read and answer. He was sorry to say that her father was dead, and at the present time her mother and only brother were ill of typhoid fever. He said he did not know Mrs. Hunter personally, only having been rector of that parish about three years, but that since her father's death, her mother had told him all about the daughter's marriage, and was frequently wishing she knew where to find her. He also thought the brother, who was quite young, was kindly disposed towards her, and that if Mrs. Hunter was strong enough, it would, he thought, be advisable for the family to come down at once. He had accordingly sent money for that purpose, as he knew the mother would refund it to him as soon as she knew what he had

done. In the meantime, as soon as they became conscious, he would break the news to them.

Miss Hatch was the one chosen to break gently to Mrs. Hunter the sad tidings of her father's death, and the illness of mother and brother, and the poor thing was most anxious to get to them. So just as soon as the doctor would let her, they started away.

I wish I could remember the name of the place in which she lived, but I do not. It is a long time since, and, of course, I never thought at that time I should some day be writing a book. I do remember, however, that it was a long journey, and that their friend and clergyman had sent only money enough to defray the travelling expenses, never supposing that they were destitute of commonly decent clothing. But who could say there is no charity or love in the world, if they would only look around them?

The people of Highgate seemed but too anxious to come forward in this case and do what they could. Right well they clothed those little ones, and the mother and father, too. A very respectable looking family they were when they left. The mother, full of gratitude, and father very silent; but at the last, when he shook hands, he said, "Good-bye, Miss Hatch. In all the world I never knowed any body as kind as you be, and if ever I do begin to go to church and be

religious, it'll be along o' you, and somehow I kind o' think I shall give it a trial."

"Good-bye, my friend," she said, "I trust you will give it a trial. Ask God to show you your own heart, and then to show you Himself, and he will do it." And then they were gone.

For several weeks we heard nothing from them; at the end of that time, however, came a letter to Miss Hatch, thanking her again and again. The brother had died, and one of her little girls took the fever as soon as she got home, and died. But the mother was better, and they were all living at the homestead. She begged for the doctor's bill to be sent to her, and she paid it.

Some time after, she sent Miss Hatch a drawing of their house, which was a very pretty one, and that was the last I ever heard of them. I do not know if the Highgate people heard from them after I left or not.

At another time, during my stay at Highgate, this dear friend's Christian love was shown to one of our Sunday School teachers, by doing her a great service. She was a young girl, about seventeen years old, whose mother died when she was only twelve, and her father, a man who was very irreligious, and who frequently took a week at a time to drink and be off

work, did not supply the house as it should have been. She took in a little sewing to help supply them with clothes. She was made a member of the chapel at the same time I was, and was very regular at the services.

In some way Miss Hatch learned that she was in debt, and took means to find out how much she owed. I think it was about five pounds all together (I may tell you one of the rules of the society forbids debt of any kind). So, after speaking to her about it, and finding that she was striving to get it paid by working very hard, she called the lady teachers together and asked how much we each could give towards helping her out of her difficulty. We each gave what we could, and thus made up two pounds, fifteen shillings. Mr. Hatch added ten shillings to that, and before the next Sunday her debts were paid. She told me that she got a letter, and she thought it was Miss Hatch's writing, sending her five pounds from her fellow-teachers, with their Christian love.

At another time, she took me to see an invalid who lived at Islington, and had been in bed for five years with some disease in her thigh, which was much larger than my body. She had always to lie in one position until placed in another, always dependent on some one to move her. She lived in what is called a

tenement house, so that if she needed anything particularly, she could knock, with a stick she always kept beside her, and some one would come to her.

Now we might almost expect to hear some discontented speeches from a person in this condition, may we not? But no; here again was one of God's dear ones. Faith and hope was strong here, and the love she bore Miss Hatch was very evident. We sat an hour with her, and I never heard one complaint; she told of the kindness of this or that friend, and of the goodness of her Heavenly Father in supplying her daily need, and was quite pleased at having been able to send some food to a poor family who lived in the underground kitchen of the same house.

Once, as I sat knitting (for she had a stocking begun which was beside her and I took it to knit a bit while I sat), she was looking earnestly at a ring which I wore on my finger. When I looked up at her, she smiled and said to me, "A text of Scripture was fitting through my mind as I looked at your ring, something about being sealed unto the day of redemption. 'Tis a glorious thing to be able to say, 'Christ is mine and I am His.'"

Miss Hatch told me that she had no settled income. The rent was paid for her by a cousin, the only relation she had, and she was supported entirely by

friends. Yet she had heard her say she had never known what it was to want for anything. Thus God takes care of His children. She was most certainly happy, though at times she suffered terrible agony.

I could tell much more of this dear friend; how close she walked with God; how she loved His children, and how she fed on His word, which was indeed "a lamp unto her feet and a light unto her path."

I had occasion to go to her rather early one morning, and found she was not down stairs, so went to her room. There she sat in bed with a shawl around her shoulders and her large Bible on her knee. The tears were streaming down her cheeks; she at the same time looking, oh, so happy. As she kissed me she said, "They are tears of joy, dear. Sit down beside me and look at these precious words. They are yours as well as mine."

She was reading and rejoicing over the one hundred and third psalm. "Look at these beautiful verses," she said. "Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases. As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us." And he pitieth us, "like as a father pitieth his children."

And as she pointed to and quoted text after text,

seeming to rejoice in them, her whole soul seemed to go out to God.

I remember thinking at the same time, "Surely you have no iniquities or transgressions to deplore, for I do not think you could do a wrong thing," and ever then I wished that I could so rejoice in God's Word; but I have since learned that the nearer we get to God, and the more we can rejoice in Him, the more we shall see our own sinfulness and need of God's fatherly pity.

Many people read the Bible and think they understand it because they can quote its texts; but it is not so. As a history they may read it, and like some parts better than others, much of which they may be able to explain; some choosing one part, some another as favorites. But though we love God from childhood to old age our life is all too short to thoroughly understand it. There is even on the surface for all readers, interesting lessons innumerable, but for the prayerful reader every text, nay, every line will supply a lesson. From studying its characters we learn to follow their good examples or to avoid their faults. Its precepts and proverbs come home to us and we must acknowledge them right. The life of our Saviour is so plainly put before us, that even a child may learn enough there-

from for his own guidance, though he can only imperfectly study it out. But, if you are humbly striving to do your duty, never read your Bible without first lifting your heart to God.

A little child asked one day to look at a picture-book which was on the table. Its mother gave permission, and the child taking the book began to look through with it upside down. An older sister coming in just then, said, "Why, Johnnie, you have got the book wrong way first. You cannot understand the pictures that way. Let me show you."

"You go away," said the little fellow. "I know as well as you. There's Jack the Giant-killer, and there's Mother Hubbard," and so on, pointing as he spoke, and quite satisfied apparently with the pictures as they appeared to him.

So it is with people and the Bible. They argue its meanings and speak of its texts with undue familiarity, quite satisfied with their opinions, even though they differ from the opinions of most learned men who have made God's Word their careful study for years.

During the time I was at Highgate, my sister Lizzie left her situation and went home. She was not very well, and her mistress thought a change of

air would do her good. They were going to Scotland for the summer months themselves, and would be glad to have her with them again on their return, Lizzie, in the meantime, became acquainted with a young man by the name of Forth, and very much against her father's wish, became engaged to him, promising to marry him soon.

I do not remember how long the engagement lasted, but I know that father refused his consent, and told her that as she made her bed so she might lie upon it; and she in anger told him she would do so, and if she ever did repent of her choice he should never know of it from her.

As soon as Annie could get a few days' holidays she came up to Highgate to tell me all about it, so I took the first opportunity of going to see them. I had a little trouble to find her, but succeeded at last. She had a very comfortable little house, nicely, though plainly furnished, and she kept it beautifully clean. She was surprised to see me, and was very much hurt, she said, at father being so bitter against her husband. I told her she should have had patience; perhaps in time all would have come right. She thought not, for Martha (Lizzie would never call her mother) had said he was lazy, and she would not

have him in the house. This, she told me, had set father against him. So they hurried things up and were married from her husband's sisters.

I stayed with her a few days, helping her with her sewing and walking out with them in the evening. Her husband seemed to be a very nice fellow. I could see no fault in him, and they appeared fond of each other. They both gave me a scolding about leaving the church, Lizzie saying she was very much astonished, etc. I took it all in good part, but would not argue with them. I told them I hoped they would go to church regularly and be very happy. Lizzie cried when I left her, and they were to come and spend a Sunday with me at the first opportunity, but they did not come, and I have never seen them since.

Little did I think when I bid her good-bye that bright summer morning, that I should never look on her dear face again, yet so it was.



CHAPTER X.

DEATH OF LITTLE JIM.

“Suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven.”—Mark x. 4.

“ ‘Come unto Me, dear children,
And I will give you light.’
Oh, loving voice of Jesus,
Which comes to cheer the night.”

I HAD been about a year in Highgate, when I was one day surprised to see my father. He told me they had removed to Albermarle Street, Clerkenwell, and wondered why I did not go to see them oftener. I told him that it made me unhappy and unsettled the children, as the last two or three times I had gone, Martha had made a point of punishing little Jim where there had been no need, and the last time in a most heartless manner. I had taken him onto my

knee as in olden times, when she called him "Baby!" and cried, "Shame! shame, to be nursed! a great boy like you!" and such like, in a teasing way; then, because he cried, sent him out of the room, yet knowing that I had only a few minutes to stay.

Of course, father excused her. He did not think she meant to be unkind, he said; she only wanted to make him boyish. "But I do not think he is very well," he continued, "and I want to know if you will come home for a few months? Martha has a chance of earning good wages in a gentleman's family as wet nurse, which would enable me to go into business for myself."

I knew he had thought of going into business for some time past, and as she wished him to do this she was willing to go, provided I would go home and take charge of her own babe, which was then six weeks old.

I was greatly taken by surprise. I had not seen the baby, and at first did not know what to say. I had no desire to leave Highgate, and was disposed to refuse. I asked him if she could not get her sister to go and take charge. He said they had talked it all over, and she would only go on condition that I would take her baby. So after awhile I said I would take counsel with Miss Kate which I did, telling her all about it.

She said to me, "Does your father wish it?" and I told her he did. "Then," she said, "I think it is quite clearly your duty to go." So I must confess, very reluctantly I went, and I thank my heavenly Father that I did so, for even then He was leading me by a way that I knew not.

It did not take me many days to prepare for leaving. My adieux were made at our weekly prayer-meeting, and I reached home on the morning of the day my stepmother left in the evening. She received me cordially, but seemed sad at the thought of leaving her baby, which was very natural, and when she put him into my arms, she said to me, "Will you take care of him?" and her wistful look made me say, very heartily, "Indeed, I will," and I did, though all my care could not save his life, for when he was five months old God took him.

I think she was perfectly satisfied that he had every care. I took him every week to see her, that she might know how he was getting on. He grew and thrived wonderfully; but by some means—how I never knew—he got a little cold, and cried one morning the least bit hoarse. I immediately took him to a doctor and got medicine, but seeing he was worse in the afternoon, I sent for the doctor to come to him, which he did, and pronounced it bronchitis.

He just lived one week from that day. I never went to bed one night, and can safely say he had every care that a child could possibly have, but we could not keep him. I felt his death very much, for he was a lively little darling, and I loved him dearly.

Now I come to the part of my story which fills me with grief, for two reasons. The story itself is so sad and it filled me with such bitter and angry feelings towards my stepmother, that for years I could not forgive.

I told you that father said he thought Jim was not very well, and when I went home I saw a great change in him. He was very thin and pale, and had a wistful look in his eyes which made me feel sad.

The first morning after Martha went away father got the breakfast ready, and when we sat down I noticed that he had cut two slices of bread and butter and put them onto each of the boys' plates, and a mug of tea. I also noticed that as soon as Harry had eaten one slice and taken up the other, that Jim looked about him, watching his opportunity, when he thought nobody was looking, to put one of his pieces onto Harry's plate, and that Harry was quite expecting it and helped to watch for a chance. Then I saw the child put piece after piece in his pocket. He did not eat more than two or three mouthfuls. I cannot tell

what made me watch all this without speaking, but so it was, and after we got up from the table I was standing with my back to it, but could see all that took place in a mirror that was over the mantelpiece, and I saw Jim, in a frightened manner, go and look into the cups to see if there was any tea left in them. Finding some in Harry's, he drank it, putting the cup down carefully lest the sound should be heard. I wondered over this, and still watched. Harry had run off at once after his breakfast, but Jim, with his little cap in his hand, stood around while I washed the dishes.

Just before school-time Harry came in to ask for the milk-can, which he was in the habit of leaving at a house as he went to school, to call for it as he came back. I was just washing the baby, and did not take any notice of them that they could see, but was really watching.

I heard Harry say, "Did you stay in here all the time?"

"Yes," said Jim.

"And did father see you?" asked Harry.

"No, he didn't come in," was the reply.

"Did she tell you to stay in?" said Harry, nodding his head toward me.

"No, I stayed myself," was the answer.

"Well, maybe she wouldn't want you to go out all the time. I'd ask her, if I was you."

"You ask her. I don't like to," said Jim.

"Well, I will by-and-by," said Harry, "but 'tis school-time now," and then they both went out, without one word to me.

It was Wednesday, I remember, and it would be a half-holiday. When they had gone out I had a thorough good cry. Then I asked myself, "Are these my mother's boys, afraid to speak above a whisper, acting at the table with deceit?" Then I suddenly remembered that the child had had no breakfast, and I was filled with grief at the thought of his pinched face and pale cheeks. I could hardly wait patiently for him to come home to dinner.

I was determined all this must be stopped; but how was I to win their confidence and love without showing them that their stepmother's rule was a hard one? and would not this make it all the worse for them when she came back again? I spoke to father about the breakfast. He seemed hurt when I told him that Jim had eaten nothing, and said, "Well, now you are at home you can do as you like with them, only don't spoil them, or it will make it worse for them by-and-by." This was the very thought I had had myself, and I was convinced that they had been kept pretty strict.

In the afternoon, I said, "Now, boys, you can stay

and talk to me, as it is a half-holiday. I want to know what you have been doing all the time I have been away from you?" By degrees I got to know something about the way in which they were treated. Not as beloved children, but like two little fellows allowed to stay around because there was no other place for them. The slaves of their half-sister, who would have been a very affectionate and loveable child, but that she was allowed to tyrannize over them and to have her own way too much. I was a long time before I found out all Martha's want of love and care; but every day some new thing came to light that made me sorry I had ever left home.

This giving away the breakfast had been going on for weeks, and many a day the dear little fellow had been kept without pudding, because he could not finish his meat and potatoes. The pieces he put into his pocket were fed to hungry dogs when they got outside. Sometimes, Harry said, if they were busy talking, he would help to eat up Jim's meat for him, so that he could clear his plate and have his pudding, but very often he had to do without. If he could not either eat, or do away with his breakfast, it was saved for his tea, and Harry, whenever he could get a chance, changed his own fresh piece for it.

How it ever came to pass that my father could so

much neglect them, or allow them to be so treated, I do not know. The following Wednesday afternoon I took him to a doctor, who said he was very ill, and he advised me to make him an out-patient of the children's hospital, as he would require long and careful treatment. I lost no time in getting an application from our old friend, Miss Mansfield. Nor can I ever forget the day I took him there for the first time.

Doctor Hillier was the one to examine him. He asked me many questions concerning him; then calling for another doctor, they stripped him and made a very thorough examination. Then Doctor Hillier said: "I don't know whether we can save his life or not; we will do our best for him, but you will need to follow our directions to the letter, and bring him to us twice a week. You must also be very careful that he has all the nourishment he can take, and that he has it regularly, for I must tell you that he has for at least nine months been starved."

"Oh! surely not?" I said.

Seeing my troubled look, he said: "What I mean, is that he has not, for at least that length of time, had the food suitable for him. He should have had everything of a nourishing nature, and never have been allowed to miss a meal. However, we will do

our best for him. You are going to take care of him; see that he has such as we order."

When I told father what they said, he was very much put about, and helped me in every way to do for him what was required.

Under their treatment, he appeared to get better and more cheerful. Yet, whenever I said to the doctor, "Do you think he is better?" he always replied, "Persevere, never miss giving him his oil and wine, or his bath, and do not let him miss a meal." That was the invariable answer to my question, "Is he better?"

One day I took Edith with me, the little step-sister, and she was running about in the waiting room, when the doctor noticed her, and, patting her on the head, said: "Is this child with you?" I told him she was. "What's wrong with her?" he said. "Nothing, that I know of," I replied. He said, "You had better get a turn for her, and bring her as a patient. There *is* something wrong with her—she is too fat."

I then remembered how fat little Jim was at one time, and, indeed, had often thought how much Edith resembled him. But, not to tire you, I must hasten on with my story.

I got a turn, and they treated her for three months.

She was then pronounced well, but my boy never got well. When the weather became warm, he was so tired and languid that I could hardly get him back and forth to the hospital. At last I had to get a carriage to wheel him there. Still I persevered.

One day, Dr. Hillier told me if I would leave him in for a few weeks, they could do better for him, and he would be placed under the care of Dr. Jenner himself. This was about three months after the baby's death. He had been under their treatment about seven months.

It cost me a great effort to let him go in, but I knew that if there was a chance for his life he would have it in this way. So I consented, he, himself, being quite willing. He was just there three weeks when he died. A short time before he was taken into the hospital, he awoke me one night to ask if I thought Jesus would let him go to Heaven when he died? I said, "Yes, my boy, I do. Why do you ask me that?" He said, "Because I have not always been a good boy, you know." I told him that Jesus had died for us, and that he loved little children. Then he threw his arms around my neck (for I had taken him to sleep with me after the baby's death) saying, "I want to love Jesus more. Will you tell me that little hymn about the sweet story of old?"

And there, in the middle of the night, I repeated the familiar words :

I think, when I read the sweet story of old,
 How, when Jesus was here among men,
 He called little children as lambs to His fold,
 I should like to have been with Him then.
 I wish that His hands had been placed on my head,
 That His arms had been laid around me ;
 And that I might have seen his kind look when he said,
 " Let the little ones come unto Me !"

Yet, still to my Saviour in prayer I may go,
 And ask for a share in His love ;
 I know if I earnestly seek Him below,
 I shall see Him and hear Him above—
 In that beautiful place He has gone to prepare
 For all who are wash'd and forgiven ;
 And many dear children are gathering there,
 " For of such is the Kingdom of Heaven !"

The next day, in the afternoon, I was sitting beside him, and I asked him what he would like for his tea? He said, " I think I could eat some shrimps, if papa would let me sit on his knee to eat them." And the little pale face flushed crimson, as if he was doing something wrong. I did not answer him ; my heart was too full, but I sent for the shrimps ; and when father came in to tea, I told him what Jim had

said. He was greatly moved, and took him at once into his arms, and the little fellow gave him such a clasp around his neck as almost to exhaust himself. But, looking perfectly contented and happy, he ate a larger tea than he had done for a long time.

Dear reader, how I grieved for my boy when he died. How I vexed myself with the thought that I should not have left home, and how I thought of Martha with bitter anger in my heart, comparing her conduct to him, with my own to *her* children. But, here, as in all cases, God, our Father, knew what was best; "He doeth all things well." I have since then thanked Him sincerely for the great love which took the child into that haven of rest, where he is shielded from the stormy wind and tempest.

My stepmother stayed in her situation eleven months, then came home. I had consented to stay with them at my father's urgent request, and I made up my mind to do my best to be agreeable. I had spoken strongly at the time of dear little Jim's death, and said things which, perhaps, I ought not to have said. It was not natural to me, however, to bear malice, and we were outwardly on good terms again, though I cannot say I had forgiven her.

I could not stay long, however; she took so many ways of annoying me, treating me so much like a

child that I was very unhappy. Harry and Jim had got into the habit of kissing their father good-night before Jim's death, and Harry had continued to do so. He and Edith would run together, to see who would get first to his knee. Harry, for fun, always fell down, stumbled, or caused something to happen, so that she might win the race.

The first night Martha came home, I took Edith and undressed her as usual down stairs; then at the child's request, said, "Bell-horses, bell-horses, what time a day; one o'clock, two o'clock, three, and away." Then both started, as usual, got their kiss, and then were about to run up stairs. I said, "Edith, there is somebody else to-night, see!" pointing to her mother. Then she ran to her, crying out, "I got first, Harry!" and jumping up into her mother's lap, kissed her good-night. Harry went up to her in a timid manner, saying, "Good-night, mother," to which she replied, "Good-night." But Edith, not satisfied with this, said, "You must kiss Harry, too, mama, Sissy kisses him!" "Oh, no!" she said, "I don't kiss boys; Harry is too big for me to kiss." And thus she missed the chance of winning his love and obedience, to which I had been training him. For he has told me since he has grown up that he had made up his mind to try and be a good boy when she came home;

but that when she said that to Edith, he felt as if he did not care.

The next day, and, indeed, every day after this, there was little or no peace. Whatever I did, she would misunderstand.

One Monday she complained of neuralgia, and said she did not feel able to get up to wash the next morning, as was our custom. So, without saying anything to her, I got up earlier myself, and got things all ready for blueing by breakfast time. When we had finished breakfast, I told her to lie down and I would wash the cups and saucers after awhile. I then went out to put out the clothes, the wash kitchen being behind the house, and the yard behind that again. She could not see what I was doing, and I wished to surprise her, when the clothes were dry, by taking them in to her. When I went back to the house, she asked me where I had been. I said not far, but it was a secret she should know, sometime, and I smiled, never thinking that she was vexed. At dinner-time, however, when we were all seated, she made two or three remarks which I did not understand at the time; and when father asked me some question, before I had time to answer, she said, "You must not ask Mary any questions, or she will tell you to mind your own business, as she told me this morning. I

was quite taken by surprise, and said, "Do you mean me? I never told you to mind your own business, I am sure."

"You might just as well," she said.

I said, "How; I do not understand you at all?"

She tossed her head, saying, "Oh, no! Of course not. You know your father does not like gossiping, and after being away at some of the neighbors for about an hour, when I asked you where you had been, did you not say it was a secret?"

I understood her then, and, rather in anger, said, "Yes, I did tell you it was a secret, but I had been talking to no neighbors, as you will see if you go and look in the back yard. The secret, as you call it, I had intended as a pleasant surprise. Knowing how much you disliked washing, I got up earlier this morning to do it."

"Yes," was her reply, "so that you might be able to tell people you did it."

This is only one instance of many like it, and I soon found that we could not get on at all together. If father was in any way affectionate to either Harry or myself, it was enough to make her cross for the rest of the day.

Not feeling well one day, I had been to see a doctor, and was a little late for dinner. They were just

ready to sit down when I went in; so I hastened to lay aside my bonnet and mantle, and took my seat.

"How pale our invalid looks this morning," said my father, "especially about the whites of the eyes." I really was very weak and tired, and, feeling that he was making fun of me, though only in a joke, I said also in a joking way, "And *you* would be pale, too, if you had been as ill as I have for the last few days, I can tell you."

Martha turned around on me furiously: "How dare you speak to your father like that?" she said. "Is it any use my teaching the children to be respectful, if you behave like this?"

I asked her what I had done; and turning to father I said, "Did I speak wrong to you, father, or disrespectfully?" But, before he could answer, she jumped up, and, stamping her foot, bade me leave the room at once, as *she* would not be answered, at all events.

Then I, too, was angry, and said, "I will both leave the room and the house," and immediately put on my things and went out, I scarcely knew whither.

Presently, I found myself in the Borough, walking slowly, and stopping occasionally to look in at the shop windows. I saw some one looking at me very intently, a young lady whose face seemed strangely familiar. After looking at each other more

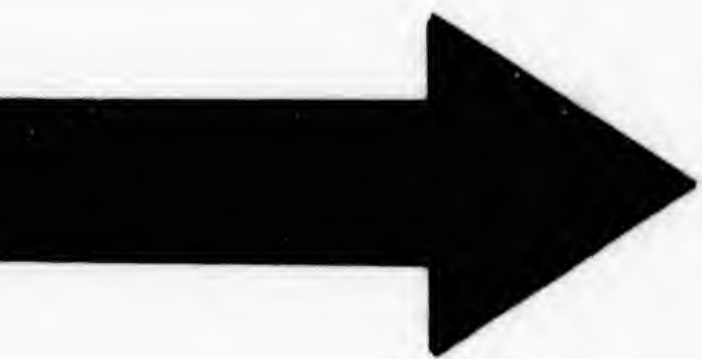
than once, she moved forward, saying, "Is it Mary Elliott?" I said, "Yes, and you are Jennie Maynard."

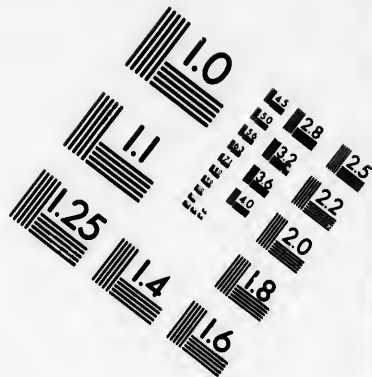
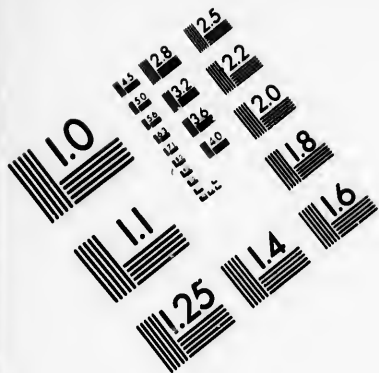
It was many years since we parted at the Oxford station. She had been one of many who had gone there to see us off when we left for B——, and we had never met since. Now, at her request, I went to take tea with her. She was keeping house for her only brother. Her parents were dead. I told her how I was situated, and she insisted that I should stay awhile with her, and I could be on the look-out for a situation in the meantime.

Perhaps my readers are wondering why I did not go back to Highgate. I can hardly explain it, except in this way. God was leading. I was very happy when there, and I paid Miss Hatch a visit after the baby's death, and spent a very happy day with her, but I never had any desire to join any other Baptist church. I sometimes went to the little Spencer Place chapel, but oftener to St. Matthew's church. Once more I was under a cloud, something seemed to hide God's love from me. I still read my Bible and prayed, but I was unhappy and listless. I could not understand myself at all.

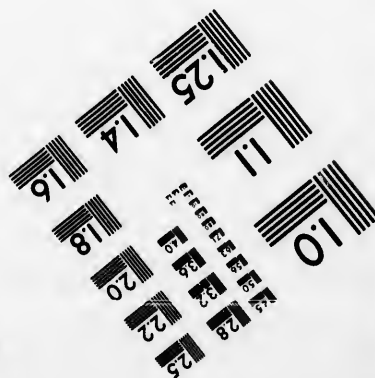
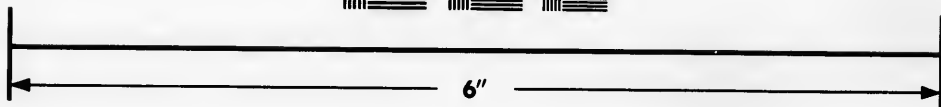
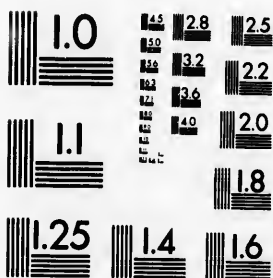
But, dear reader, I can tell you now what the shadow was that came between me and my God. It







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was an unforgiving spirit. I could not forgive my stepmother. I did not love her. I did not even like her; and though I tried to make myself believe that I was doing my duty and trying to live peaceably with her, yet, I did it in a would-be martyr spirit, and I am afraid I often did and said things that would place her in a disagreeable light to my father. How then could I be happy? As a member of Christ, was I not bound to obey Him, and did He not say, "Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you," and "Except ye forgive men their trespasses neither will your Heavenly Father forgive you?"

Some would say it was chance which made me take the direction I did, and so meet an old friend, but I would rather think of it as a divine providence, inasmuch as it not only led me in temporal matters, but was the means of leading me back to the fold in which I had been placed as a child, and from which I had been straying of late.

But I am digressing again. It was a little late before I got home that night, and there was a look of relief on my stepmother's face when she saw me. She had evidently been crying, yet she could not resist saying to me in a taunting way, "You thought you had better come home, it seems."

I said, "Yes! though I had a very pressing invitation

to stay all night, but I thought if I did you would be uneasy." I told father of my meeting with Jennie, and that I had been to take tea with her, also of her kind invitation, which I had accepted for a fortnight, purposing to go in the morning.

I spent a very happy time with Jennie and her brother; and while there got a letter from Mrs. Westbrook telling of the birth of her little daughter, and the marriage of her sister Lucy to a Mr. Neville. In our school days Lucy had been the baby.

On Sunday morning I went with these young friends to church, and in the afternoon to a mission Sunday School, where they each worked for their Divine Master. And again the desire arose in my heart to do something for God; conscience again began to cry out, but with every cry I seemed to hear the words, "You must forgive, if you would be forgiven."

During the time of my visit Jennie got a letter from a clergyman's wife in Yorkshire asking to pay her a visit. Holding the letter up she said, "Guess who this is from?" Of course I could not guess, and even after her reading it to me I was no wiser, as I did not know the name. "Do you remember old Mr. Clark?" she asked me; "he who used to take us so often to his garden in the summer time?"

Of course I did, dear old man; "but what of him?" I enquired.

"Well, this letter is from Charlotte Ann, his grandchild. She married a clergyman, and they have a parish in Yorkshire. I must answer this at once, if you will excuse me."

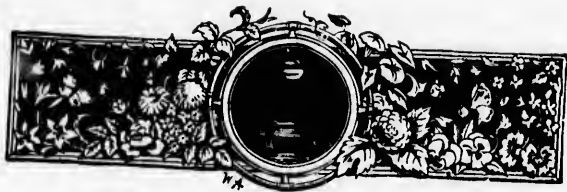
Unknown to me she wrote to accept the invitation, and asked for one for me, explaining, I afterwards found, what she thought necessary, and saying that I should be glad to get a situation as nursery governess.

By return of mail came a very pressing invitation for me, so warm and earnest that I could not but accept it, and so I bade farewell to all at home and took my journey into a far country—two hundred miles from all who were and had been near and dear to me.

I was sorry to leave Annie and Harry, for I knew they would miss me; and yet I hoped Harry, who was strong and hearty, would do well, and Annie was to write to me every week.

I went to Hampstead to bid Lizzie good-bye, having sent a letter to tell her I was going. Annie and Harry went with me for a treat, but when we got there the house was shut up and all the blinds down. The next door neighbor told us they had gone away to his sister's on a visit, and would not be back for a week. They had gone three days before, hence they had not got my letter.

We were all disappointed, I more than any of them, as I was taking such a long journey. However, I left messages of love with Annie and was obliged to be content. I bid my stepmother good-bye, asking her to let by-gones be by-gones and kissed her. She returned the kiss a little coldly, but I think there were signs of tears in her eyes. I am glad I kissed her and that we parted in peace, for she is dead and I never saw her after that time.



CHAPTER XI.

MARY'S GOOD NAME IS IN DANGER.

“He feedeth the young ravens when they call upon Him.”—
Psalm cxlvii. 9.

Could we but kneel and cast our load,
Even while we pray, upon our God,
Then rise with lightened cheer ;
Sure that the Father, who is nigh,
To still the famished raven's cry,
Will hear in that we fear.

I MAY pass over the events of our journey, which ended in a cordial welcome at a pretty little vicarage in B——, in Yorkshire, where our friend Charlotte resided. She was the mother of two lovable children—a boy, three years old, and a girl, fifteen months. Both she and her husband made me very welcome, and I may here say that I became convinced by their daily life and conduct that it was possible to

live a holy life in the church as well as out of it ; and being led to speak of my perplexities and doubts to them, they were then and forever set at rest, and I returned to the true fold, humbled and penitent.

From that time I have tried to learn more and more of God and His Word, and I do not feel myself now, in my old age, half so clever, or half so learned, as I, in my arrogance and self-love, believed myself to be when I was in Highgate.

I must say that, though I have been fortunate enough to meet and to know some very good and holy people who did not belong to the church, yet all dissent has a tendency to make us think too much of ourselves, and too much of what our lives appear to others, instead of what they are to God.

I remember seeing a picture one day, representing a beautiful flower garden, in which two children were playing. They were gathering the most lovely flowers and strewing them over each other's heads, laughing gaily all the while. In the sunshine above them a pure angel was hovering around, and looking down on them, perfectly happy. A little further on in the picture, the same surroundings, the same two children, but each grasping the same handful of flowers, and their faces changed from happy laughter to sullenness and anger ; the sunshine gone, apparently

the same angel bending over them, but her face, too, was changed. It was full of grief and sorrow, and slightly sheltered beneath her wing. I will leave my readers to cull from this picture what lesson they can, as I did, simply saying that I do believe our precious Saviour looks down upon each member of His body, and in all our grief is grieved, and when we sin He is troubled. For if we are members of Him we are a part of Him. As such we cannot be hurt without hurting Him, and sin in ever so small a form hurts us.

But to go back to my story. We had a very pleasant visit. During the time Jennie stayed Charlotte took us to York and several places of interest. We went to morning service in the Minster. We went also to Ripon and enjoyed morning service there at the cathedral.

At the end of two weeks Jennie was obliged to go back to her home duties, leaving me behind, and Charlotte set about trying to find a suitable situation for me, which she succeeded in doing at the end of a month, and I became engaged as a nursery governess to a lady at S——, not more than five or six miles from B——. Here I had a very pleasant home for about two years as governess to three young children; respectively, three, five and seven years of

age. Their father, whom we will call Mr. Grant, was a great deal from home, sometimes months together, and Mrs. Grant, being somewhat of an invalid, made a companion and friend of me. Many were the pleasant hours we spent together, and having to leave her was a sad trial to me, but it became a duty.

One member of the household would persist in paying attentions to me which I knew were not lawful, and were in every way distasteful to myself. So after much thought I told Mrs. Grant I would have to leave. It was hard to withstand her pleading with me to stay, and made harder by the fact that I could give her no reason for going. Thus we parted, I will not say in anger, but certainly on her side with coldness, and no wonder. What could she think, but that I was fickle-minded and fond of changes? for I left her to take a situation as cook in a small family.

The household was small, four servants only were kept: cook, housemaid, parlor maid and lady's maid. Here, too, I found a happy home, though it was not without its trials. Memory takes me back, even now, to the kind lady who was my mistress in that pleasant residence, which was situated on the Roundhay Road, near Leeds. My mistress truly she was, but

not that only. She was a kind and faithful friend in a time of trouble, and herself nursed me through a two weeks' illness, winning my confidence and love by her gentleness, and several times by her loving kiss.

While there I received a letter from Jennie Maynard telling me that Harry, my brother, was very self-willed, so his stepmother had told her, and would not go to school, but was constantly playing truant and giving her a great deal of trouble. I wrote to him at once, urging him to be manly and try to do his duty, as he knew I would like him to do, and as he ought to do, with much more in the same strain; but he never answered it. I do not know if he ever got it.

About the same time I received a letter from Annie telling me that he had run away from home and stayed two days; then had been brought back by some neighbor, but had run away again, staying three or four days, and that father had then put him into a boys' home somewhere in the city. I was so greatly distressed at this, that for several days I could hardly attend to my duties; I had thought so much of him, and it seemed such a disgrace to think of him as having been placed anywhere for misconduct. Again the old bitterness against my stepmother came

back to me with redoubled force. I blamed her for it all. If his home had been a happy one, why need he have left it? and what could have induced father to place him there I could not understand.

I wrote to father, sending the letter to Annie that she might take an opportunity to give it to him when alone. She did so, and he promised to answer it, but he never did.

About this time I was quite puzzled with the behaviour of my fellow-servants. They all at once began to shun my society, and would get together and talk in whispers, only speaking to me when they were obliged. Even John, the gardener, who was a married man, did the same, and his wife, who used to run in at least once each day for a minute or two, now did not come at all. It took me some time to get to the bottom of the trouble, but I will tell you how it came about.

I had often spoken to them of my brother, of my own mother's death, and my great love for her boys which she had left in my charge. I had said to them that I should send for him as soon as he was a little older, and try to make a home for him in Yorkshire. I spoke freely of this as being a great wish of mine. And the gardener, who had a family, had often been present when I had spoken of this

scheme. I had a great habit of calling Harry "my boy." When I was at Mrs. Grant's, three of her nieces had visited her at different times from Leeds, when between them and myself was formed an attachment which lasted many years, they proving themselves true friends, for their home was ever open to me and mine.

Now whenever they came to Roundhay to visit me I was permitted to show them over any part of the grounds, and one day I asked permission to gather a few flowers for them, as the gardener was away from home. He did not like his flowers gathered by anyone but himself; but, as I had leave, I gathered each of my friends a few. As they were walking home, I found afterwards, they met the gardener, and he knowing the flowers spoke of them at home. His little girl told him that I had gathered them. He was very angry. Then it was for several days he did not speak to me more than he was obliged.

I knew nothing of all this at the time. So things went on for a week or two, and the girls in the house began to act, as I said, very strangely. The night I got the letter telling me of my brother being placed in the Home, I read it in their presence, and aloud I said, "Oh, my poor, poor boy," and leaning my head on the table, I cried long and bitterly. I was too much

troubled then to notice their want of sympathy, though I afterwards remembered it. But I am very glad to remember that I never told them either of his running from his own home or being placed in another.

At last one morning I said to the housemaid, "Hannah, what is wrong with you girls, and with John? Have I done anything to vex or displease you? because if I have I think it would be only just to me that you should tell me what it is."

She then told me that they had made up their minds to give notice and leave.

I was greatly astonished and said, "On my account, do you mean?"

She said, "Yes, they had all agreed to do so rather than stay with me."

"Then," I said, "if you do that you must tell me why?"

"No," she said, "John had thought it best not to tell."

"But," I said, "you have now told me too much not to tell me more."

"Well," she said, "I shan't tell you, but when the next girl comes, don't talk so much about your 'dear boy.'" With which speech she tossed her head and left the room.

I was completely in the dark. What she could mean, I knew not. I could think of nothing to cause them to be angry with me; and what could she mean by telling me not to talk so much about my dear boy. Not a shadow of her meaning flashed across my mind. I went on, however, through the day, performing my several duties in a dreamy sort of a way until a time of leisure. When we were all in the servants' dining room together (that is, the female servants, of course,—the gardener did not live in the house) I then shut the door and told them I was determined to know of what they accused me. "It must be something terrible," I said, "if you are obliged to leave because I am not good company for you. To my knowledge I have done nothing, so now tell me what I have done."

They all looked at each other, and at last Hannah said, "It is not us, it was John told us."

"Told you what?" I said, "I must know."

"Well, he said he did not think you was fit company for young girls."

"But why?" I persisted; "surely you would ask him why?"

"Yes, we did," said Hannah.

"Then," said I, "what did he say?"

"Oh, you had better ask him," they said.

"I certainly shall do that," I replied, "unless it be the truth, and if it is you will have no need to leave me."

"Come, Hannah," I said, "for the sake of our past friendship, what is it I am accused of? Can you not see how I am troubled about it, and I have trouble other ways just now, so I beg you tell me. Do not bid me seek my bed to-night without knowing what I have done."

Thus appealed to, Hannah said, "Well, I don't care what John said, let us tell her." And the others agreeing she told me that John had told them the boy that I made such a fuss about, and so often called my dear boy, was not my brother, as I gave out, but my son, and that I had never been married, and so had no business to call myself respectable or fit company for young girls. And, besides all this, he had known me to take things that were not my own and give them to the upstarts that came to see me. What was I, he should like to know, any better than the rest of them, that fine ladies should come to visit me.

Hannah ran this all off while I stood horrified, unable to speak. The accusation was so dreadful to me, having, as I had, the greatest love for all that was pure and holy. I could not have felt worse if he had accused me of murder. No; nor as bad.

At last I turned and looked at each one of them, as I said, "Which of you believes this of me? Is there one?"

They all began to cry, and begged me not to feel so bad about it, and to protest that they did not half believe it at the first, and that now they did not believe it at all.

I thanked them, saying, "He was indeed my brother, much beloved, because given into my charge by my dead mother." "But," I said, "John must acknowledge that he had told an untruth. However, I will deal with him."

"Then," I said "did he not join the Methodist chapel in the lane a few Sundays ago?" They said "Yes." "Oh, then," I replied, "how could he think to rob me of my good name. But I am so distressed that I must bid you all good-night," and with that I retired to my room. Not, however, to sleep, but to wrestle with anger and to fight against the strong temptation I had to bring John to justice and have him punished for trying to do me so great and grievous a wrong.

Now, dear readers, can you not in these pages trace God's guiding hand. In all the later years, how had I been fulfilling Christ's command, "Forgive, if ye would be forgiven." Surely most imperfectly. And so now another trial is given me. Nor can I attempt

to describe to you that night of suffering, when for hours self was uppermost, and so nearly conquered, that when I look back to it even from this distance, I feel ready to cry out afresh, "My feet had well nigh slipped, but thou, oh God, hast held me up."

At last I was, by God's help, enabled to kneel down^d and say from my heart, "Heavenly Father, teach me what to do and how to do it, for my own good, for John's good, and most of all, thine own glory." And who shall say that God does not answer prayer? "He does, He does." He both taught me that night how to pray and answered prayer, for only his good Spirit could have helped me to do what I did.

I wrote to John telling him what I had heard, and how very much I was hurt by it. I asked him why he should want to injure and take away my good name. I reminded him of his own daughter who was at that time living at York in service, asking him to picture to himself her in my present position, and how would he feel? Then I spoke of him having joined the little society in the lane a few Sundays before, and of his having told his master that he joined it because he thought he could serve Jesus better by doing so. And now, I said, one of the first things you do is to lie wilfully, and to bear false

witness against your neighbor. Surely this is not serving Jesus at all, much less better than before. Then I told him how angry I was at first, and how determined I felt to have justice make him prove his words, and so on, but that our Heavenly Father had put into my heart good desires, and I had, I trusted, taken a better way, so that I might be enabled to forgive for Christ's sake, and that he might see the sin of which he had been guilty, and that he by his penitence, and I by overcoming self, might each glorify God, in whose strength and by whose help alone we could either of us succeed. And now, I went on to say, in justice to myself, I ask you, in the presence of my fellow-servants, to take back the slander. Tell them why you spoke it, and I will try to prevent its being talked of outside of our own house. If, after reading this, your heart is softened and you are prepared to do what I wish, you shall have at once my full forgiveness, and I shall never mention the circumstance again. If, on the other hand, you are not willing to do this, I shall certainly lay the accusation before the master (he was a magistrate) and he, I doubt not, will do what is right. When you come in the morning with the vegetables, if you are sorry for having wronged me and wish to do me justice in the way I have described, simply say

good-morning, as usual; I will then call the girls together. If not, don't speak to me one word.

After writing this I again prayed over it, and somehow felt a peaceful feeling as of having done right. Then, as it was near morning, I sat down by the window, from whence I could see the sun rise, and fought myself still in the strength of my God with regard to my stepmother, and then and there, for the first time, I knelt and prayed for her.

This happened a great many years ago, but I still believe, as I did then, that to be faithful children of God we must forgive, and the best way to get able to do this is by praying for those to whom we ought to extend our forgiveness, when we find it hard to do so.

A while before six in the morning I went down to the little gate through which the boy came who assisted John in the garden. I told him to give the letter to John at once, then went about my usual duties, waiting, as patiently as might be, the result.

At last the kitchen door opened and John walked in. He was very pale, but looking me straight in the face he said, "Good-morning, cook." I noticed that he trembled exceedingly. So placing him a chair, without speaking I went to call the girls, telling them I would be glad to have them come into the kitchen for a few moments. They came, but on seeing John

were about to step back again, only I closed the door, saying that he wished to speak to them.

He got up and fully proved to me and to them that in his profession of serving God better than before, he was at least sincere, though he had yielded to temptation. He explained that he was very angry about the flowers, and so in revenge on me for taking them without leave, he, thinking about my boy and my great love for him, spoke to the girls as though he knew that he was my son; but, he said, "I tell you now most emphatically that all I said against cook's character in any shape or form I take back. I have never even seen or heard anything to justify me in saying what I did, and I now ask her in your presence (turning to the girls) to forgive me. She has written me a letter," he went on to say, "which has taught me a lesson I trust I never shall forget, but I hope to be, through it, a humbler and a better man. I only ask you to let me know when any of you would like a bunch of flowers and I will get them for you."

I told him that I had not, as he thought, stolen the flowers, but had asked permission to give each of my friends a few and to gather them myself as he was absent. Moreover, I said, I had been careful, in gathering them, to take from where they grew thickly and not to destroy the beds. I then shook hands with him and he passed out.

I expressed to the girls a wish that they should not speak of the affair to anyone. They were very indignant, and thought he should be exposed. But at my earnest request they promised to let it drop, and from that time they did their best to show by all means their respect and love for me in countless little attentions and acts of kindness.

As my book may be read by some who are in service, I will tell of a little incident which happened at Christmas, and by which some may learn a lesson of straightforwardness, which so many lack.

While doing the baking for Christmas, the girls asked me what I was going to make for the kitchen. I said, "Well, what would you like?"

Hannah told me that the last year cook had made them a lot of things, and put them in a washing tub down the cellar and had covered them so that they could get to them when they liked.

"Why put them in a tub?" I asked.

"Oh, because you know the 'missis' goes down the cellar every day," said Hannah, "and cook did not want her to see them."

"Do you mean to tell me that she cooked stuff that was extravagant then?"

"Oh, no, but she was not told to make us a cake or anything, so she thought it better to hide it."

"Well now, girls," I said, "The mistress did not tell me to make anything expressly for the kitchen, but when she engaged me she said she wished the kitchen table to be kept up comfortably and well, so I think we will take a different way this time. You may leave me to have you a nice dinner and something good for Christmas."

When I made the pork pies, after decorating as many as I thought would be sufficient, I made four plain ones for the kitchen, with no difference in them, except the trimming off, which took a good deal of time. The sausage meat was made up in shapes, and rolled in flour for the family. For us, I put up a small dish without the rolling; I made a nice plain cake for ourselves, also a pudding, and after getting everything in order and placed in the cellar, according to custom, I invited my mistress to inspect my work, purposely arranging that Hannah should be in the cellar at the same time. I had also set apart four mince pies for our own use.

My mistress had a great way of rubbing her hands together, when pleased; and as she looked at my handiwork she rubbed away, saying, "Very nice, very nice; I am well pleased. If they only taste as well as they look! Why are these not dressed?" she said; "did you get tired?" pointing to our pork pies.

"No," I said, smiling; "this pretty pile here is for you, and this plain pile is for the kitchen. I thought we could do without the decoration, and it would take less time."

"Very good; very good! I am glad you are taking care of yourselves, and I trust you will all have a very happy Christmas. If you would like," she continued, "to invite a few friends for the day after, do so. We are all going out for the most of the day, and shall not want either dinner or tea at home."

I thanked her, and went to tell the girls what she had said. They all agreed with me that mine was the better way, for they would not have to eat each piece of cake as if it were stolen.

Now, dear reader, if you are a servant, do likewise; be straightforward. Do right, and no true lady will find fault.

In the following spring the family decided to go abroad, and once more I changed my home. I became young ladies' maid in a large and wealthy family, and again my home was all that I could desire. Mr. Tetley was kind; his wife, beautiful, good and true, a just mistress, a pattern mother, a faithful wife, and, above all, a true servant of God. I was nearly two years with them, and during that time I never once saw her angry. She was firm in her rule, both with servants and children, but never unjust.

When walking out one day with the young ladies, it being very hot, I sat down on a grassy bank and told them they might sit down, too, and rest awhile.

Miss Louisa said, "Thank you; we would like to, but mamma told us never to sit down on the grass at any time, unless she were with us, or had given us leave."

I could see at once there was reason in the charge. So many who are inclined to be careless would be apt to allow the practice, even when the grass was damp. I was very proud of Miss Louisa's conduct, too, for it spoke plainly of her loyalty to her mother, though she was not more than eight years old.

At one time Bertha, three years old, came into the nursery after dinner, looking quite sad. I said, "What is the matter, pet?"

She drew a deep sigh, saying, "Please, nursie, put me into my 'ittle bed. I was naughty, and mamma is very sorry, but she must whip me."

I told her I was sorry, too, to hear she had been naughty, and I took her at once and put her to bed. Presently I heard her mamma go to her and stay a few minutes. She got up at her usual hour, about four o'clock, and coming into the nursery, placed herself in a corner which was used by nurse as a punishment, if at any time she was disobedient.

When nurse saw her go into the corner, she said to her, "Miss Bertha, are you naughty that you go into the corner?" and the child, turning half around, said, tearfully, "No, nursie, but I *was* naughty, and mamma had to whip me, and she was so sorry she cried, and I want to cry now, 'cause I'se sorry, too."

"Very well, dear," said nurse, "then when you have cried a little, we will go and tell mamma how sorry you are, shall we?"

"Yes, please, nursie," said the child.

I can never forget that touching little scene. There stood the fair-haired, beautiful child, her pinafore lifted, and now and again wiping away a tear. At last she came forward, her little cheeks flushed, and said she was ready. So Crowther took her hand, and going with her, told her mamma that she had brought a little girl to her who was sorry for having been naughty, that she was unhappy about it and was needing a little comfort, which she doubtless got, for after awhile the dear child came back to her play as happy as a queen.

Indeed, everyone in that house was happy. The poor were cared for in many ways. There were always from three to seven families who sent for milk morning or evening each day, and seldom less than three basins, sometimes more, filled at dinner-

time for invalids. These were taken into the dining-room and filled by Mr. Tetley himself from the best on the table.

At Christmas, it was a busy time preparing for the poor. Every child was allowed to do something special at that time; indeed, they delighted in giving. It was the custom for the singers from the church they attended to come up on Christmas afternoon to sing carols, etc., and after singing for the family and receiving a sum of money, they were sent into the kitchen to refresh themselves and to sing for the servants.

We were each allowed to invite two friends on that day for dinner—which was always a grand one—in the servants' hall. There was no lack or stint of anything.

On the twenty-sixth of December, the first year I was there, a baby boy was born; but he only lived thirteen months and then was taken away. He was ill two weeks only, but his illness was the beginning of a time of trouble. Each servant had ulcerated throat, except the cook, and she had quinsy; and when the dear baby had been ill about a week, nurse noticed his throat was sore, and told the doctor, who pronounced it diphtheria and scarlet fever. Four of the little girls and myself took it.

Here I must speak again of the goodness of Mrs. Tetley. She did not leave me to be waited on by my fellow-servants. While I was very ill, she herself gave me each dose of medicine, and with her own hands brushed my throat every hour with nitrate of silver. After this illness, as after typhoid fever, I did not rally quickly. The children were ready for the seaside before I was able to walk around the garden, so the family went to the Isle of Wight; but not before Mrs. Tetley had made provision for me to go to Ilkley, a watering-place for invalids not far away. She took lodgings for me, paid for them, paid my doctor's bill, and in every way provided for my comfort until I was quite well. It was wonderfully kind of her, and I can never forget it. I have still in my possession amongst my treasures a letter which I received from her while at Ilkley, in which she speaks of missing her dear baby more and more every day, at the same time asking tenderly and kindly after my own health.

I must now go back a little, and tell you of something that happened while I was living with Mrs. Tetley.

I paid a visit to London, and went to the school in which my brother Harry was placed. I made the necessary arrangements for having him sent down to

Leeds. I also persuaded Annie to go, too. I saw father for a few minutes only, and told him what I had done; I think he was glad. Aunt Mary, my mother's sister, was living in London at that time, and I spent a day or two with her.

I was enabled to get Annie a situation with a Quaker lady living in Leeds. Harry and I stayed with Mr. Gell for a few weeks until I was quite strong. While staying with these kind friends, I received a small legacy from my mother's aunt Davis, who died about that time.

I thought I could not do better than make a home for my brother and sister, which I accordingly did, furnishing a small house and taking in a little sewing. Annie's master, who was a wealthy merchant, took Harry into the warehouse, so that we were very well and happily placed. Thus things went on for about two years—two very happy years they were. We attended St. John's church. I taught in the Sunday School, and was able to rejoice in the Lord and once again to feel the peace of God in my heart. Mr. Gell and his three daughters were our true friends, and we were received with them wherever they went. Such a restful, blessed time in which to prepare for work to which God was about to call me, and for which He had been preparing me all my life.



CHAPTER XII.

I BECAME A BIBLE-WOMAN.

“The poor ye have always with you, and when ye will ye may do them good.”

To the work, to the work, we are servants of God,
Let us follow the path that our Master has trod,
With the balm of His counsel our strength to renew,
Let us do with our might what our hands find to do.

At last God has called me to work for him. What a privilege, and what a responsibility! I am offered a position as Bible-woman in a large parish. Shall I accept it? Is it possible that I shall be able to do what is required of me?

These were my thoughts as I sat with the letter in my hand. I looked back over the past and I realized as I never had before God's goodness and wisdom. What a great Head Keeper we have got!. Now I shall

be able to use the lessons, some of which I thought so hard to learn. Thus thinking, I prayed that God would go with me to the work and follow with his blessing.

Many people hardly know what a Bible-woman's work consists of. I will give you a brief sketch of mine. It is chiefly among the working classes, of course. I was supposed to visit every house, and there to speak such words as should be helpful, and do such things as commended themselves to my notice. Thus, it was a good-morning to one, a short conversation with another; reading God's Word to a blind woman, and to an old man who had been twenty years in bed; teaching a little crippled girl to crochet, so that she may not have so many lonely hours; helping a cripple boy to make a scrap-book; taking a sick child from some weary mother for a little while; speaking words of comfort to a mother whose daughter was worse than dead; managing the work and getting it ready for the Mothers' meeting; getting the boys together one evening in the week; reading to them some interesting story to get their attention, then turning it into a Bible lesson almost unknown to them; the girls another evening in the same way. Thus the sick and the poor were visited and ministered unto.

I never was refused admittance to any house, but always welcomed. God's leading of me and the way in which He had prepared me for the work, was a perfect way. In trouble and bereavement I could sympathize. I knew how to feel for the very poor, and I had learned from kind friends just how to minister to their needs. I could feel for those who had come down in the world, and help them without wounding their pride. I soon became thoroughly interested in my work, and spent many happy hours in the parish.

We had quite a staff of district visitors and tract distributors, some of whom I remember now with love and respect. They were, for the most part, ladies of high position. I was in no way their equal, yet they helped to make my life pleasant. No week passed in which I was not invited to some of their houses; to lunch here, to five o'clock tea there, or to spend an evening somewhere else.

But suddenly a great calamity befell the people of Leeds. The large iron foundry belonging to Sir Peter Fairburn was closed and hundreds of men thrown out of employment. Very soon want and sickness were everywhere. I do not think I could have continued the work at all but that the clergyman and his wife were so good, and being wealthy they enabled

me to carry to the houses of the poor temporal blessings as well as spiritual. I was supplied with tickets for coal, flour, bread and soup. This made my task easier, for it would have been a hard task to go where there was hunger and want and not to be able to relieve it.

In spite of all our care, however, sickness was soon added to want. Typhoid fever stalked into our midst. One young man in the prime of life, who was soon to have gone home to be married, was stricken down, and I could tell from his ravings that he had a mother who was expecting him. He seemed to picture her at a garden gate, and several times he went over words which were like a greeting to her. Then he would appear to listen for a minute and say, "Is that Katie's voice I hear? Why don't she come to meet me?" Then he would get excited again, and nothing but showing him his boots and clothes all ready to go to the station at the proper time would satisfy him. Thus I left him at eight o'clock in the evening, And a mother of five children I left so weak and low that it was hardly possible she could recover. A girl of twelve years in another house, who had never been strong, now gave out entirely, and in another house a baby boy lay dying.

Each of those families I left with a promise of

being there as early as possible the next morning. Thus it came about that I went out so much earlier than usual on this well-remembered day. I went first to the young girl; she had been dead an hour. I then went to the baby boy; he had died at nine the night before. Then to the mother; she had died through the night. The young man, also, was dead; he had lived till early morning, but never was conscious. I had written to his friends, who lived in London, telling them of his illness. They were expected to see after and attend to his funeral, which they did. But in each of the other cases there was abject poverty. Each one had to be buried, and they had not wherewith to put their dead out of their sight.

Witnessing their sorrow and grief, helping to relieve it, and hastening from one place to another, was too much for me. I was completely unnerved, and just about noon I started for home to take dinner and rest, but fell on the street before I could get there.

This was the beginning of a severe illness. The doctor said the nervous system was entirely run down; and here again I realized the kindness of many friends. There were weeks in which I had to be watched night and day. And oh! how kind everyone was. Two friends, each night, to sit up with me.

so that Annie could get her proper rest and be fit to attend to me through the day. Every teacher in our Sunday School took their turn—high and low, rich and poor. As soon as I was able to go out I was taken for a drive almost every day.

I went back to my work in about six weeks, and will pass over a year in which nothing very important took place.

At the end of that time, however, the time had come in which I had to take the one step in a woman's life which should be most carefully taken. I had during that year found a family who were very proud and very poor. There was the mother (a widow) and three sons; the youngest was dying of consumption. Soon after they moved into that neighborhood I was told about them. I was at the same time informed that nobody was admitted into the house. After making it a matter of prayer, I one day knocked at the door. A sad, pale-faced little woman opened it a little way, but I could see that she had no intention of letting me in.

"I beg your pardon," I said, "but I heard you had a sick boy here. Will you give him these?" handing her a small bag of oranges. "If he is able to see me I will call to-morrow and bring him some grapes." I then said "good-bye," as though I were in a hurry, not giving her time to say more than "thank you."

The next day I went about the same hour and found them quite prepared to ask me in, and this was the beginning of my visits there, which were almost daily until the young man died two months later.

His name was Joseph, and his brother William was his constant nurse, most gentle and tender. They all three had worked in the foundry which had closed down so suddenly, but had not lived in my parish at the time. They had moved on account of getting a cheaper rent.

Our rector, his wife and the young curate went to see them, and between us we broke down the barrier of pride and helped to make their lives brighter until the two boys got into work again, which they did with the rector's help.

After Joseph's death, William sometimes spent an evening with us, and he and my brother became friends. I found him very well-informed and high-principled, though not by any means what you would call a well-educated man. He was a machinist. His father had learnt his business and had risen to be a foreman in the same foundry to which attention has been called. His mother was a doctor's daughter, who had married against the wishes of her friends, and at her husband's death refused to be reconciled to them on the terms offered to her, and at the time I became

acquainted with them her parents were both dead. She was a very gentle little woman, and very often spent a day with me. One of her granddaughters lived with her and attended my Bible-class. She became so very much attached to me that I hardly ever went home from my district but I met her somewhere on the road, when she invariably walked with me to the little garden-gate in front of our house.

Thus things went on for about a year. The foundry was in running order and the people were more independent, and it was quite easy to tell in some cases, though not all, those who came to me only for the loaves and fishes.

Now came a critical time, in which I had to make a life's choice. It was between William, a working-man, on the one hand, and the Rev. W. H——, our young curate, on the other. I liked them both, and found it very hard to make a choice.

It was Wednesday evening, after the service. My sister Annie was with me. Mr. H—— said, "I have to go to the Rectory to-night. You will not mind going home alone, will you?" Annie, in her saucy way, said, "No, indeed! If anybody runs away with her, they'll soon be glad to bring her back again."

He smiled, and said, "Good-night. To-morrow I shall spend the evening with you, when I shall have

an important question to ask." Our eyes met, and I knew what the question would be.

For some time before this I had noticed that William had changed towards me—there was a something which at first I could not understand. Often when going from the district or from any of the meetings alone, I had a feeling as of being watched or followed.

One evening, after nine o'clock, when going past the town hall, two so-called gentlemen, who had evidently taken too much to drink, thought to amuse themselves at my expense by asking if I had any tracts to give away or soup-tickets. One of them, a little more unsteady than the other, lurching to one side, pushed a little roughly against me, when suddenly they were both seized by the collars, one went to the right and the other to the left, my hand was placed on William's arm, and we were soon some distance from the scene. We neither of us spoke until the garden gate was reached.

"Won't you come in?" I asked.

"No, not to-night; but, remember, you must not come home alone any more. Good-night," and then he was gone.

I then spoke of this to Harry. He told me that he knew William had been in the habit of following me

at a distance ever since the evenings had begun to grow dark.

Another time, Annie, Harry and William were sitting at the table playing some game, and I was at the window making up my reports, when I overheard the following conversation. I do not know what led up to it, but I heard Harry say:

"Oh, well now, suppose I had no grub and you had, what would you do?"

"Why, I'd give you half mine, of course."

Annie laughed, saying, "My, how generous! What would you do if I was in the same way?"

"Why, you must know that I would share with you to the last bit."

Then Harry, boy-like, said, "Well, suppose our Mary had nothing and you had plenty, what would you do?"

"Why, I would give her all I had."

Then, getting up suddenly and saying "Good-night," he went away. Our eyes met as he shook hands, and I think he knew that I had overheard.

I did not see him again for some time, but one night Lizzie, his niece, said to me that he was talking of going for a soldier (he had for some time been a volunteer), and that his mother was in great trouble about it.

From some things she had said, and from a conversation with his mother, I found that he was deeply in love with me; yet he felt that he could not tell me so, lest I should think it presumption on his part and refuse him.

Thus matters were on the Wednesday evening above spoken of, and I felt that I had only the one day in which to make my final choice. As I said before, I liked them both, but as I looked at the matter, and as I laid it before God, I felt that Mr. H—— could do without me, and that William could not. I felt that he was, and had been for some time, leaning on me. He was going forward shortly for confirmation, and I knew that I had been permitted to help him to a decision. Thus I made up my mind to refuse Mr. H——, and after repeating one of our beautiful collects, viz., "Prevent with Thy grace and follow after with Thy blessing," I fell asleep, fully believing that I was doing as God would have me do.

Three months from that time I took William for better or for worse; and I may here say that I think I should do the same if I had my time over again.

The forepart of the first year of our married life was not very eventful, but about three months before its close, my brother and a friend of his were determined to go to Canada. His friend—Walter Ross

we will call him—was greatly vexed that his mother would not give her consent, and I found that they were planning to go without it. I had a little talk with him, and said I would go and see his mother and get her permission. I did so, and we became friendly from that time. Walter was glad that I was successful in getting her to agree that they should go, and everything that we could do for their comfort we did, and they sailed away on one of the Allan Line steamers about the end of June, 1868.

In the first letter that we got from Harry he said that he liked Canada very much, and that he found the city of Toronto was nearly as fine a place as good old Leeds. "Not quite, you know, Sis, because you are there." He went on to say that he had hired with a farmer five miles west of Toronto, and that Walter had hired with one five miles east of the same place, so they were separated as soon as they landed, or nearly so.

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CHAPTER XIII.

OFF TO CANADA.

“In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths.”—Prov. iii. 6.

“ I lift my eyes ; the clouds grow thin,
I see the blue above it ;
And day by day this pathway smoothes,
Since first I learned to love it.”

I NEED hardly say that I missed my boy very much, and I think William did, for he was so often in a brown study after we received the letter; and whenever I rallied him, he had always something to say which proved that he was thinking of him.

About a week after—it was Sunday morning, I remember—he said, “I guess the boys are having a jolly time out there. Did you post the letter?”

I said, “Yes; I wonder how soon we shall hear from them again?”

Without answering my partial question, he said, "If I was a single man I would go out to them."

I quickly made answer; "Do you mean that? Would you really like to go to Canada? If you would I am quite willing to go with you. It was only the thought of your mother that kept me from suggesting it."

"Poor mother," he said, "I dare say she would feel bad at parting from us. Yet I am sure she would say 'Go,' if she thought it was for our good."

I will pass over the getting ready, the farewells, etc., the saddest being his mother and Annie. She had gone as maid to Mrs. Dr. Price, when we were married, and was so happy with her that she would not go with us, so we left her to take care of his mother.

We landed at Quebec on the 11th of September, and reached Brampton on the 14th, just twenty-seven years ago.

Some day I might write the history of my married life, with all its joys and sorrows, if I am spared. I begin to feel old age creeping on, but the great Head Keeper is ever near. He has kept me and He kept my husband until five years ago. He then took him home. His end was peace. I have asked myself the question sometimes, "Did God bring us

out here? and if so, why? Has he not always a reason for what he does?" I believe so; and then comes the thought, "Have we fulfilled his purpose?" We cannot answer, but this we know, He may allow us to mar and disfigure the work He gives us to do. He may permit us to hinder the work, even as to the conversion of a soul, but to trust a soul to us that we could lose it, never! But, what a thought! How many souls we shall find in heaven which, humanly speaking, had been given to us to save! We have passed them by; we have missed our opportunities. My husband was amongst those who went out surveying for the Canadian Pacific Railway. I have heard him speak of an Indian dying, and he was the only one who could talk to him (the poor fellow spoke such broken English.) He always thought, however, that he was a comfort to him at the last, and that he made him understand something of the Saviour's love.

Was this his work? Who can tell? More or less I have worked for the Master here, as I did at home. How much of it was hay and stubble, or how much was pure, we shall not know until the great day!

I love Canada and the people of Canada. I have met kind friends everywhere, and as I am getting this simple story of an everyday life published in

commemoration of our beloved Queen's Diamond Jubilee, I perhaps cannot do better than give a brief account of it here, before drawing to a close.

We hear of great rejoicing everywhere on account of her long reign—sixty years. She has received the homage of her people from all parts of the world, and has given them her return message as seen in front of this little volume. Ministers of every denomination have preached at least one sermon in reference to her just and happy reign. We have a very large church here in W——, which was full on Sunday afternoon, June 20th, when the Sons of England and some other lodges marched in a body to listen to a sermon preached on the subject. It was here, at twenty-three minutes past four, after a few moments of silent prayer, that we sang the national anthem in company with people of every clime, the Sons of England having made arrangements for it to be sung at four o'clock by the sun wherever a British subject was to be found.

On the 22nd doubtless no place in all the great Empire was without its special rejoicings. In London the sight must have been wonderful. As early as five o'clock in the morning people were seen flocking in from miles around. By nine o'clock the stream had become a flood. White carnations, red roses and

blue cornflowers were the order of the day. Every window, every roof, every church-steeple had its occupants. We read of loud cheering when the Colonial Premiers, Sir Wilfred Laurier at their head, drove by in state, followed by a tremendous procession. Every nation was represented, and at last came the Queen herself, and we read that a cheer broke forth that seemed to shake the ground, renewed again and again. The scene at St. Paul's must have been very imposing, by the description we read of it. It was, indeed, a gala day for all, and in remembrance of it the very poorest in all that great city were fed. For once in their lives they had a good dinner.

One very pretty thing I must not omit. The Lady Mayoress of London, attended by her daughters, met the Queen on her way to St. Paul's at the Mansion House, and presented Her Majesty with a gorgeous bouquet of orchids in a silver flagree basket, on which was engraved "To Her Majesty, Queen Victoria, presented by Helen Fandeb Phillips, Lady Mayoress." We are told that the Queen said, twice over, "I am deeply grateful," as she gave her hand.

And now it is over. We have seen our Queen as she was aroused from her slumbers to be told she was a queen. We have heard her voice as she asked

the Archbishop to pray for her. We have seen her go quietly away by herself and beg not to be disturbed. We have seen her as a faithful wife and mother, a fearless ruler and a sympathizing friend. Her influence, who can measure or judge as to its greatness for good? One little incident I read of comes to me, and may not be out of place here. It was told by a missionary in Africa.

A great chief who would not hear of his women wearing clothes such as Europeans wore, was shown a picture of our Queen, and he is reported as saying, "I won't let them wear clothes to please the missionary, or because of the Bible, but if the Queen of England wishes it, then they may."

May God keep her safe until He shall see fit to take her into His everlasting arms, is the prayer of a very humble yet faithful subject. Now I will gather up the threads of this little history.

I do not know whether my father is living or not; we have completely lost sight of him. Lizzie we never heard of; I think she must be dead. Indeed, most of the friends mentioned have dropped out of my life, and here in the newer country I have made fresh ones.

I cannot finish without drawing your attention to one thought which comes to me and takes me back

to my old home in Highgate, and to the tract distributor, when she spoke of the grandeur of our Church service, our glorious liturgy, and of the happy thought that friends so far apart could worship in the same holy words, and the one common faith, the great Saviour of mankind; and, dear readers, it is to me now a precious thought. As I look back over the years I remember that I was given to God in my baptism, made a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of Heaven. Thanks to my dear Sunday School teacher, at an early age I was reminded of this, and taught to ask God for myself that He would make and keep me His forever. In simple faith I asked Him to do this, and so far He has done it, through all the changes and chances of life. He has kept me. Will He fail me now? Nay! I think not. He will, for His part, most surely keep and perform those promises which He has made. But, dear reader, do not think that with the end of this little history came the end of temptations and shortcomings. No, no, though I am twenty-nine years older since coming to Canada, and in some things perhaps twenty-nine years wiser, yet I am just as needy as ever where the grace of God is concerned. But I know that He, having given "His son," will "also with Him freely give us all things."

He being our great Head Keeper we are safe. "He who keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep."

Although this is only a simple story of an everyday life, I think, as you read it, you will see that it brings out one truth very clearly, namely, that as God's children we are being saved, and that it takes a lifetime to prepare us for the inheritance of the saints in light; also that our preparation is marred and hindered by our perverse wills. Another truth is very evident. Those who watch providence will see how it surrounds the children of God and governs every movement of their lives.

Watchman, what of the night? is the question with which my story is headed. One o'clock and a rainy morning, rang out the voice of the watchman, was the earliest recollection with which I began it. An hour later the same voice rang out, two o'clock and a cloudy morning, as I closed my eyes to sleep until the bright sunshine awoke me next day.

Rain, clouds, sunshine, our portion through life, literally, temporally and spiritually. As a child I loved God's precious word, and tried to follow its teaching literally, and I did, to a certain extent, in a childish way do so. I knew all the old stories, such as Abraham offering his son Isaac, Joseph with his coat of many colors, David who slew Goliath, as well

as the beautiful parables of the New Testament, and the life of the One who went about doing good. And I studied with much interest the rites and ceremonies of the Jewish law.

When at Highgate I took great delight in spiritualizing. I enjoyed the prophecies and the epistles, and was always glad to get some new thought. During the last ten years I have made great progress in the study of the Word, and yet there is more to learn. I feel to-day that not one-half has ever been told of all its wonderful truths; so, dear reader, let me conclude by begging of you to search the Scriptures to see if these things be so. What things? The things I have been trying to make plain to you, namely, that the God who made us also redeemed us, and He is keeping us and will, if we will let Him, sanctify us wholly so that we may rest in Him.

“Sound the alarm, let the cry go forth
Swift as the wind o'er the realms of earth;
Flee to the Rock, where the soul may hide!
Flee to the Rock, in its cleft abide.”

