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BUDS AND BLOSSOMS,

AND

Friendly Greetings.

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

Vol. VIII.—No. 11 }

NOVEMBER, 1884.

{ Whole No. 32.

Paul's Psalm of Love.

BY LYMAN ABBOTT.

THE thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians is a psalm interjected in the midst of a treatise. Paul has been arguing with his fiery earnestness against the spirit of strife which had broken out in the Corinthian Church; he has rebuked the emulation between men distinguished by the exercise of different gifts; he fears lest his rebuke shall stifle ambition, check progress, deaden life. "Covet earnestly the best gifts," he cries, and then he pauses: heaven opens before him; a vision is let down like Peter's; he passes under one of those sudden transitions of feeling characteristic of all poetic and spiritual natures: "and yet," he says, "I show you a more excellent way." And then follows his apotheosis of love. To comment upon it is like weaving a spider's web over the clear glass through which the light of heaven shines into an otherwise darkened room. I shall only attempt to repeat his teaching in words less felicitous, but in a modern rendering and with modern applications.

Our most common tests of religious character are false and unscriptural, or imperfect and mere fragments of Scripture, or superfluous and extra-Scriptural. Is he active in church? Does he take part in the prayer-meeting? teach in the Sunday-school? speak and pray? Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels and have not love, I am become as sounding brass and tinkling cymbals. Is he sound in the faith? Does he subscribe to the creed? Has he a clear apprehension of Divine truth? Does he read with a prophet's eye and receive it with a spiritual apprehension? Though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and have not love, I have nothing. Has he a mystic's faith? Has he a prophet's exaltations? Sees he visions? Dreams he dreams? And does he show his faith in works of religion greater than those of his fellows? Though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not love, I am nothing. Is he generous in his gifts? Can his pastor depend upon him to head the subscription paper? Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and have not love, I am nothing. Is he self-sacrificing? Is he willing to suffer for his church and his conscience? The martyr spirit is rare in our age; has he any of it? Though I give my body to be burned, and not have love, it profiteth me nothing. Religion is not in speech, or doctrine, or vision, or gifts, or martyr sacrifices: it is love. Love is the only test. He who loves and is silent, loves and is doubtful, loves

and is prosaic, loves and gives not, loves and suffers not, is better than he who speaks, believes, has a mystic's faith, gives, and suffers, and yet loves not.

What is this love which constitutes the heart of religion? Paul does not analyse it; it cannot be analysed. He does not define it; it cannot be defined. He describes it.

Love suffereth long and is kind: it is no effervescent emotion; no dew shining like diamonds in the grass to be drunk up and disappear in the first hot sun. It suffers long, and still is kind: loving on, not for reward, but because it must to satisfy the necessities of its own inherent nature; serving as faithfully in thankless service as in service understood and honored. Love envieth not: it has no mean, miserable desire to pull down another to its own level; will not climb to preferment on the shoulders of others; cannot intrigue. Love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up; the loving soul never rolls its own reputation over and over like a sweet morsel; never plumes itself before its own imagination; never looks at itself in the pleasure of pride, or put itself where others may look and admire. Love doth not behave itself unseemly; it is not careless and inconsiderate; love is the only true etiquette. Love seeketh not her own: is not ambitious, pushing self-assertive, self-seeking. Love is not easily provoked. It may be angry. There is no wrath like the wrath of love. But it is not irritable, cross snappish. It punishes, but it is not vexed; it is angry, but it is not impatient; it rebukes, but never scolds. Love thinketh no evil; never searches for evil motives for good deeds—rather for good motives for evil deeds: and so it never gossips; knows nothing of that carrion-feeding which is the commonest occupation of small society. Love rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth: it will not listen to scandal; it does not read the noisome revelations of modern society made every now and then in our daily newspapers; it does not buy the penny-dreadful to gloat over the last divorce suit or the latest bank defalcation. It never rubs its hands and chuckles and says, Aha! Aha! another church member fallen. Love beareth all things; and this is the threefold secret of its bearing: it trusteth all things; would rather be a thousand times deceived than cherish a suspicious and distrustful spirit; when it can trust no longer, it hopeth all things, still looking for some turn that shall bring good out of evil; and when it can neither trust nor hope, it endureth all things. O sacred love! thou art indeed more eloquent than speech, wiser than knowledge, more wonderful than the mystic's faith, a greater gift than all giving, and the only true martyr spirit.

Love never faileth. It is immortal. Prophecies, tongues, knowledge, are all transitory. Our best

theology is a theology of fragments. Each age unlearns what the age before had learned; or so learns it anew as to make the old learning seem false. We are all partialists in knowledge. We know in part and we teach in part. And all our knowledge and all our teaching is but to conduct us to love. When we have reached our journey's end we shall dismiss our guide. Knowledge is childhood, love is manhood. Theology is the alphabet, love is the literature, and when we have come to understand and read the literature, we no longer spell it out painfully one letter at a time. Love knows instantly, instinctively, intuitively. It reads truth by words, sentences, pages, not by letters. The intellect show only the reflection of truths, shadowed dimly in the mirror. Love turns its back upon the glass, and sees the truth face to face. Knowledge looks for God in the glass, and sees His dim image there; love turns dissatisfied away from the reflection which knowledge brings her, and embraces God Himself. Knowledge sees in the glass, dimly, love, face to face. The babe lying on the mother's lap knows the mother as the mother knows the child—knows it interiorly, personally, spiritually; *knows*. And the child of God, looking up into the face of God, knows God as God knows His child. "We understand one another" is the prayer of such a child, whom love has taught what knowledge never teaches.

Three things abide for ever: faith, or the vision of God; hope, or the desire for God; love, or oneness with God. But the greatest of these is love.

The Regions Beyond—Mission Tidings.

If ever there was a loud, earnest call for action, it is now. The voice of the nations, the call of Providence, the cry of the Word, the wants of a perishing world, changes among the brethren, death in the churches, all say, "Up;—Be doing;—Work while it is day. More prayer;—Greater consistency;—Large offerings;—*Christ-devotion*: Come to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty!" Oh, for a baptism for the dead;—a baptism of the Holy Ghost and of fire! Lord give it; give it now: for thy Name and Mercy's sake. Amen.

The eyes of the whole civilized world are now resting upon the Dark Continent. Five railroads are projected into its very heart; these are backed by the energy and capital of as many Christian nations. They carry with them the paraphernalia of commerce, arts, science, literature, modern civilization. What do these things mean? Are they not the fundamental preparation for stupendous moral and spiritual changes in this country, and a clear indication of their speedy coming? The weird cry of the advance guard of the followers of El Mahdi, "I am coming, be ready," is doubtless the herald of a voice beyond their ken. Does it not seem as though not the El Mahdi, but the real Prophet and King, even Jesus, is proclaiming aloud in the ears of all Christian nations, in regard to the Soudan and all Africa. "I am coming, be ready?"

The siege of Khartoum has been raised, and General Gordon, the pious Christian hero, finds food for his mer. comparatively easy to obtain. The whole world had been looking to hear that he and his army were massacred.

Henry M. Stanley was given a banquet by the Chamber of Commerce of Wolverhampton, England. In response to a toast, Stanley referred to the trade of the Congo country, and said in cloths alone, at two-pence per yard, the manufactures of Manchester might realize £26,000,000 sterling annually. He said the way to secure this advantage was to urge upon the British government the necessity of sending two cruisers to the Congo river, pending decision by the European powers of the Congo question.

The Baptists began their work in Denmark in 1850, their congregations growing fast, until they now number 3,000 members.

The Wesleyans, of England, had an increase last year in membership of 3,281, their total number being now 407,085.

Ribbon of Blue.

Thanksgiving day, Nov. 6th, has been selected for opening the winter series of meetings at the Tabernacle, to be held monthly. Will all who read this notice pray that many may pin on the bit of blue, and have grace to keep from strong drink. The Birmingham Coffee House Co. have now 130,000 customers. Our duty is to *Rescue the perishing*. Let us by precept and practice preach temperance.

A publican asked an abstainer, 'why do you wear that ribbon?' The wearer said 'Why do you put a signboard above your door?' 'Oh,' said the publican 'to sell my beer.' 'Then,' said the abstainer, 'I wear my blue to show you that I don't want your beer.'

Study Table.

MAGAZINE, PAPERS AND BOOK REVIEWS.

The manager of the Canadian Baptist wishes us to state, that the "3 month free" offer has expired, but the paper can be had from this till Jan. 6th for 2.00. In plain words the same thing in a more practical way.

American Agriculturist, comes in new and improved dress and commands a welcome by its appearance and worth.

The Woman's Century, Brattleboro Va., has changed its name from the *Woman at Work*, but it has not changed from its grand principles; its new name only means a renewal of effort to make itself more widely useful. We wish it success.

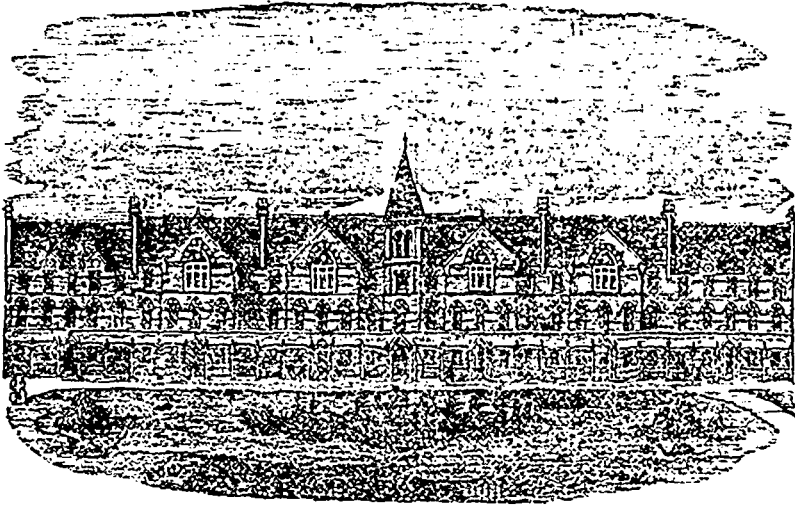
The Christian At Work is seeking to widen its field of usefulness, by taking *The Continent* editor, subscribers and all. It was, is and will be a grand weekly religious paper.

The Old Theology Restated. By Rev. H. Tucker. Those who love the old paths of Scripture Truth, will find that the author points out *the way*, the old way of truth and righteousness, which leadeth unto life everlasting.

The writer grandly and sweetly repeats the old Theological doctrines of the Great Teacher, who spake as man never spake, and in his exposition and sermons thereon seeks to lead and teach as the apostles and disciples taught, Christ and him crucified, the Way, the Truth and the Life. The sermons are short, and the doctrinal points are clearly stated, and verily show that the dry bones of scripture, are full of marrow. A complete index of subjects and clear type makes it a pleasurable, as well as a profitable book to read and study.

STOCKWELL ORPHANAGE.

Mr. Spurgeon writes:—"The plea for help comes to us from all parts of the kingdom, and as the children are selected according to their need, and not elected by favor, only those who are proved to be the most necessitous succeed in their application for admission. Thus the evils which naturally rise out



and it must be an equal joy to the subscribers to know that their loving contributions are put to this blessed use.

"With songs of gratitude we mention that nine hundred and twenty-four fatherless children have up to the end of March, 1884, been admitted to the benefits of the institution.

of the voting system are avoided, and friends are spared the expense and labor of a contested election. Fatherless children, between the ages of six and ten, are eligible for admission, without reference to class, sect, or locality, so long as there is room. This is as it should be, for it seldom happens the necessity which attends orphanhood can be relieved in the district where it is experienced, or by immediate friends. It is a constant joy to the president and the committee that they are able to mitigate, to such a large extent, the misery and need which are brought under their notice;

What an amount of substantial benefit this represents! As we seldom take more than one of a family, we have thus aided nearly as many widows, and how many other fatherless children have thus indirectly been benefitted the readers will be able to estimate. The catholicity of the institution will be evident by reference to the religious profession of parents:—Church of England, 348; Baptist, 219; Congregational, 103; Wesleyan, 89; Presbyterian, 19; Roman Catholic, 3; Brethren, 3; Moravian, 1; Bible Christian, 1; not specified, 138."

The above cut represents the girls' side of the Orphanage Buildings.

Notice to our Advertisers.

We thank you for advertising and ask a continuance, if not an enlargement, for another year. Practical men tell us they consider Buds and Blossoms one of the best mediums on account of its permanent and inviting character. Few papers or magazines are more likely to live and be passed round to many readers. Moreover our large free issue is monthly going out into new channels and enlarging the boundary line of our acquaintance. Increased issue means less profit on your advertisement to us, and makes less space of additional value to you. Already we have space taken in New York by men who well know the value of advertising and they paid our own price and asked no questions. Any change you may wish we will try to make. Notify us at once, or if you do not wish to continue your advertisement, that we may sell the space to some one else. We rest assured we shall not lose many. Our friends once gained, value the work being accomplished by BUDS AND BLOSSOMS, and are satisfied in a business point of view that it pays.

The more advertising the larger our free price list.

Buds and Blossoms. There are quite a number of subscriptions not paid. Any subscribers who think they can enlarge our list by sending a copy to a friend can have one sent if they write to us, the condition being that they write a few lines to say it is coming. We have been notified by a coloured brother down by the Mississippi that they are organizing a Buds and Blossoms Club. By prayer and work we see no reason why a great work should not be accomplished.

Will you aid us sow the seed? Buds and Blossoms promises fruit for the harvest which is the end of the world.

Other Testimonials. The Editor of the *Presbyterian Witness* writes:—"Buds and Blossoms.—This is the name of a monthly Magazine published by Rev. J. F. Avery, of this city, containing 40 pages. 24 pages are beautifully printed and illustrated in the Religious Tract Society's popular style. The other portion has more of a local tone, and is mainly from the vigorous and pointed pen of the editor. The subscription price is the modest sum of 75 cents a year. To circulate this is to confer a boon upon the community.

The Editor of the *Christian at Work* again publishes the following review.—Buds and Blossoms is the title of a handsome and most interesting monthly for young people, published at Halifax, N. S., by J. F. Avery. We have already taken occasion to heartily commend it to our readers as every way worthy of their attention and support, and at this time, when so much that is pernicious and hurtful to the young is persistently pressed upon their attention, it becomes the especial duty of all who value the endeavor to give them what is really good, and will lead them to true men and women, to give all the encouragement in their power.

C. F. Clinch writes.—I see my notes of last month pleased you. I now send a kind that will most likely be still more acceptable, bank notes for \$3.00. Send Buds to—

Send in names at once, and we will send from date received until the end of the year.

Home Circle.

The Flower Mission.

The season's work has closed. The buds and blossoms and fading flowers teach us many a useful lesson. Lessons which if rightly heeded will draw out our aspirations for that land where everlasting spring abides and never withering flowers. Already the cold mists of a coming winter, have smitten the gardens and our supply of flowers is cut off, but we rejoice to know through the work of the past season, the flowers have been made useful in teaching that, *Love* is the sweetest bud that blooms, and from the flower of the field instruction has been gathered, unto the eternal salvation of souls. We aim to comfort and cheer the body, and thus preach Jesus. Over 1800 bunches have been circulated. As intimated last issue a monthly visit is planned for the hospital and poor house to distribute papers, magazines, etc. If you have any that have done you service, please forward them to us and we can make them the medium of whiling away many an hour otherwise tedious in the extreme. The poor house of Halifax is the old diseased penitentiary, and they are surrounded with all the brightness and inspiration likely to be found in such an institution. We are persuaded if men and women are lifted to a higher level of life, they need to be surrounded by the inspiration which comes from true gospel charity.

Doubtless there are God's poor and the devil's poor, it is hard to distinguish at all times. We do well, not to judge harshly those who have sinned and fallen; sin in rags may be more disgraceful and repulsive in our sight, than when covered and hidden by the flash of gold, the rustle of silk and shine of broad cloth. But in the sight of God, *sin is sin*. Our hint about apples has been taken, and we have received two barrels for which we thank Mrs. Mu-grave of Aylesford and Miss Barss. We should be glad to hear some one say, more to follow; if they are not the best they will not be severely criticised where we take them. Mrs. Morrow, North-West Arm, piece of cotton for an old lady. Papers from Miss Wyman.

Since the first proof came from the printers we have received a letter from Miss M. C. Barss, of Wolfville, from which we make a few extracts. "My sister has greatly enjoyed sending text and flowers for the mission," in your cash acknowledgment you said, when the flowers are done, could you not glean a little fruit for us. My sister asked three young ladies in my Sunday School Class if they would not like to try and collect a barrel of apples. They gladly undertook it, and send you for distribution among sick and poor as you may see fit three barrels of apples. I trust they will give comfort to some who are deprived of many blessings we enjoy. My Sunday School Class pays freight to Richmond. We thank you for the hint; we all enjoyed the gleaning for this good work.

This winter we plan to have CARD PARTIES for the young ladies of our Sunday School Class, *i. e.* to prepare text cards for next summer's *Flower Mission*. We thank the young ladies Misses Edith and Minnie Chipman, and Miss Ida Jones for gathering the apples. Last week we took a barrel and a half to the poor house. Never shall we forget the pleasure that

sparkled in many eyes, and the glad expressions of thankfulness. Remarking, I suppose you do not often get apples out here? one said, with a look of surprise, 'Lor' sir, we never do? which do you like best, apples or the flowers? We like them both, *but the apples is such a treat*. One said, 'they smell just like the apples did when I was a girl!

Could my dear young friends who sent see the eager recipients, they would never forget it. Some are blind and toothless, but it was a surprise to see how soon they tried to taste. Others hid them as if too precious to consume at once. Even the poor lunatics seemed to understand their worth. In each ward the distributors prayed that God's blessing might be added, and that all might meet in God's Eden and partake of the all manner of fruits, and whilst here be comforted with the spiritual apples of a Saviour's love.

Tabernacle Notes.

Baptised October 5th, one; received by letter, two; October 26, one. There are evidence of the Spirit's moving power in our midst. It is shown, not only by increased congregations, but by souls enquiring more fully of the way. Looking toward the needed and ultimate erection of the upper story, the brethren, unsuggested by the pastor, are moving and planning to clear off the debt or the lot, by dividing it up into small pieces and selling and thus paying for the land by giving many a share. Strange, since writing, a letter comes from Miss S., U. States enquiring, has any effort been made since I left towards paying off the debt on the building lot? I am anxious to hear of something being done and will if possible try and send a few dollars, before very long.

Few pastors after nearly ten year's service in one pulpit are permitted to hear such a spontaneous expression of love, esteem respect and honor as fell from the lips of the brethren present at our last quarterly church meeting. The pastor made reference to an invitation recently received from New York, to show that he stayed in Halifax not for gain, but because the Lord evidently wills to continue the work, long since so providentially commenced. It was encouraging to hear the brethren scout the idea of a removal, and express by unanimous vote their desire. That if God wills you may not only be our pastor for another ten or twenty years, but until death, for we love you better to-day than ten years ago. We can only say, by God's grace, tongue and pen shall be even more diligent, if possible, in the future to prove our appreciation of such confidence and love.

Personal Kindness. Thanks to Mr. Reed of Avonport for barrel of apples and roll of butter. Mrs. Estano, pair chickens.

Our Sabbath School plans to have a share in clearing the lot. The Young Men's Bible Class, conducted by Mr. W. Davies, presented him on the anniversary of his wedding-day with a very handsome silver ice-water pitcher with a suitable inscription. We rejoice to note the growth of this class, and that the young men are so united in their esteem for their teacher.

"Buds and Blossoms," is the name of a charming magazine, issued monthly by Rev. J. F. Avery, Halifax, N. S., at 75 cents a year. It is pure in tone, elevating in character, and refining in every way. We must heartily recommend it to our readers who desire to have the best religious literature in their home, feeling sure they will thank us for calling their attention to it.—*Cottage Hearth*, Boston, U. S.

Olive Branches.

Birth, Oct. 21st, the wife of Mr. Bartlow, a daughter. Oct. 6th, the wife of Rev. W. Swaffield of a son.

Orange Blossoms.

Married, Oct. 22nd, William Myers to Jessie Hubley, both of Halifax, at Mizpah Cottage. Oct. 22nd, Ebenezer Hashman to Annie Johnson, both of St. Margaret's Bay, N. S.

FRIEDA'S VENGEANCE, AND OTHER SKETCHES.



The young heart drooped like a lily crushed.

OVER a score of years ago,
There lived, in the heart of a German town,
A lovely maiden, whose modest mien
Rivalled her beauty in just renown.

FRIENDLY GREETINGS. No. 207.

Her neighbours and fellows loved her well,
And called her by many a sweet fond name,
Their lily and rose, their pearl, their gem,
Their queen of girls, and their town's fair fame.

FRIENDLY GREETINGS.

But in the chorus one voice was mute,
 One smooth brow ruffled at Frieda's praise;
 Two black eyes flashed, 'as our maiden tript
 Through the town on the long bright summer
 days.

Until, on the bland and balmy air,
 There was a whisper of calumny,
 That grew and spread till it swelled and rolled
 Like a rill-fed river that seeks the sea.

And the lips that had hailed our Frieda queen,
 Now held their peace, said never a word;
 While the welcome died out of eyes once fond,
 So soon as her blythe young step was heard.

Father and mother had long been dead;
 And now in the midst of her cold, changed world,
 The young heart drooped like a lily crushed,
 Or a tender leaf by the frost-wind curled.

Wherever she went the songs were hushed,
 Speech did but wound her, and smiles deride;
 And where she lingered the folk passed by,
 Like Levite and priest, on the other side.

Until her sorrow and passion grew
 Too grievous and heavy for her to bear;
 And she bent her steps to a distant place,
 Where none could know her, and none need care

What was the terrible lie that scared,
 With its scorching breath, that trusting heart,
 And none would shout in her shrinking ears
 The cruel and hopeless word "Depart!"

And here she toiled for her daily bread;
 And brooding, mused on her wrong and woe,
 And from the depths of a wounded soul
 Vowed revenge on her dastard foe.

"Some day," she said, "I shall see her again,
 Some day, some hour, my turn will come;
 And my heart and hand shall be hard, nor spare
 The malice that drove me from love and home."

But it chanced one day that a preacher passed
 On his northward way through the little town,
 And just outside, on a smooth, green sward,
 With a book in his hand, he sat him down.

And soon from the streets and the country side,
 Men, wives, and children came pressing round;
 Then the preacher rose with his grey head bare,
 While the eager listeners sat on the ground.

And 'mong the listeners was one, still young,
 Who had come with a heart so bitter and hard
 With wounded memories, hate, and woe,
 That her very face was changed and marred.

And now as the preacher opened his book,
 She wondered blankly what he would say,
 But started and flushed as the clear tones read,
 "Vengeance is Mine! I will repay."

Then, with a voice grown hushed and low,
 He spoke of the mighty work of One
 Who had loved His own with a changeless love,
 And for their redemption a battle won.

No thoughts of vengeance were His on earth,
 Though the world refused to greet her Lord;
 Though the rich took counsel against His life,
 And turned deaf ears to His gracious word.

No thoughts of vengeance were His, e'en when
 Death's pangs were piercing Him thro' and thro';
 His gentle prayer was, "Father, forgive,
 Forgive them, they know not what they do!"

And the preacher's eyes were full of tears,
 As he pleaded on for the Lord's dear sake;
 Till the Spirit strove with Frieda's soul,
 And her stricken heart seemed like to break.

That very night, ere she fell asleep,
 She carried to Christ her grief and sin,
 And gave up all; and, renouncing self,
 She let the love of the Saviour in.

The months passed on. But one stormy night
 Frieda was wending her homeward way,
 When she spied a figure, tattered, forlorn,
 Blown by the winds like a bark astray.

"Charity!" shrilled out the homeless wretch,
 And stretched a tremulous, fleshless hand!
 She looked like death on the shores of life,
 Or a ghost from out the forgotten land.

And in that moment the wan March moon
 Peered forth from the clouds like a tearful eye,
 And showed to our maiden the form, though changed,
 And the face—of her one great enemy.

A quick deep sob she gave, as she seized
 The poor thin hand in her strong young clasp,
 And her warm heart murmured, "Now heaven be
 praised

That vengeance at length is in my grasp "

She led the wanderer's faltering steps
 To her lowly dwelling, and took her in;
 Fed and warmed her, and soothed her pain,
 And heard her story of deep-dyed sin;

Heard, and whispered of Him who came
 To cure the sick, and the lost to save;
 Of pardon and peace through His dear name
 Who died, but rose from a conqueror's grave.

So, coals of fire with their sacred heat,
 Were heaped on the head now lying low,
 And from that poor couch there came, new-born,
 A soul, a gem for the Master's brow.

And Frieda, blessed as never before,
 From the depths of a satisfied spirit said,
 "I thank Thee, Lord, that vengeance was Thine
 And in Thy good time Thou hast repaid."

M. E. R.



A WORD IN SEASON.

N aged Christian had a son, who, notwithstanding all his father's instructions, continued quite careless about the salvation of his soul. When his father was on his death-bed, his son came to pay to him the last offices of attention and respect.

The dying parent could not but feel extremely anxious about the best interests of one who was so dear to him. Accordingly, some time before his death, he told him that he had one request to make of him, and before he mentioned it, he wished to have his promise that he would comply with it.

The young man assented, provided it contained nothing unreasonable.

The father replied that he was not going to ask him to do anything that was difficult or burdensome; it was simply this—that he would spend a quarter of an hour alone every morning.

The son agreed, and, after his father's death, began faithfully to fulfil his engagement. At first he thought it a very strange request, often looking at his watch when the time should be expired, and wondered what his father could mean by such a proposal.

In a little time, however, it occurred to him that his father perhaps intended he should spend the time in prayer. He began to try this, but he found no inclination for it. He then began to reflect that his father used to spend much time in this exercise; and as he venerated his father's character, he was led to think of the difference between that character and his own.

From this he proceeded to search the Scriptures, in which are contained the words of eternal life; and we may well suppose he became not very scrupulous in restricting his time to the stipulated quarter of an hour.

In short, these opportunities of solitary and serious reflection were made the means, through the blessing of God, of leading this young man to consider his ways—to reflect on his former carelessness about eternal things—to see his guilt—to ask the deeply-interesting question, "What must I do to be saved?" and thankfully listen to the answer to it, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."

During all the remaining period of his days, he had reason to bless God that his father had proposed such a request to him, and that he had been led to comply with it.

Jesus, lead me by Thy power,
 Safe into the promised rest;
 Hide my soul within Thine arms,
 Make me lean upon Thy breast:
 Be my guide in every peril,
 Watch me hourly night and day;
 Else my foolish heart will wander
 From Thy Spirit far away.

BE YE ALSO READY.

HENRY DOVE was a servant in a farmhouse on the outskirts of my parish. He was a fine, powerful young man; his life had been steady and regular. He had been an excellent servant, and was a great favourite with his master and mistress. He had excellent health; but inflammation seized him, he was ill six days, and now his soul is before God.

To-day is Monday. It was only on Friday morning that I heard of his illness, and of course before the day closed I visited him. On that day and on Saturday, he seemed to take very little interest in what I said to him. Oh, that I had pressed the subject more, that I had been even more importunate with him. On Saturday there was some apprehension of danger, but I was requested not to tell him, as the medical man feared that it might have an unfavourable effect. I remonstrated, but to no purpose, and I left a message that I hoped the medical man, who was expected that evening again, would tell him.

On Sunday I walked round to see after my service, and found him better. There was hope that he would recover. There was a change also in his manner; he wished to know where the verses I had read to him were to be found; he joined heartily in the prayers I offered up; dwelt especially on one verse I had read, "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new;" and heartily said "Amen" to the petition that he might become such a new creature.

You will not wonder that I now dwell on these things; the end was close at hand, closer than I then thought. For this, of which I am speaking, was only yesterday, and I am writing in the early morning of Monday. I had intended to see him by nine o'clock to-day, but I was to see him before that time.

This morning at early dawn I was awoke by a request to go and see poor Henry. I at once feared the worst. I arose, and in a very few moments was on my way to the farm. The village was quiet, its inhabitants for the most part being wrapt in slumber. The busy smith, the stroke of whose hammer early and late has often been a reproach to me, was not astir.

Arrived at the house, all the usual signs of sickness and watching are apparent at once. Henry, I learn, is much worse; they are applying a blister, and I must wait a few moments. In the interval, I call in the master and the fellow-servant of the dying man, that we may pray for him. As we rise from our knees, Henry's uncle, who had arrived last night, enters the room; he has been trying, he says, to arrange about his temporal affairs, but can get no definite answer. He thinks that Henry will tell me his wishes. Will I try? I refuse. I have other matters, I say, more important to attend to. They have had all night to arrange about the few clothes, the watch, and arrears of wages; I may have only a few minutes to speak about the soul. Then I ask, Has any one told him his danger since the unfavourable change took place? Can it be believed, he has not yet been told? O God, and he so near Thy



judgment!" I go upstairs; he knows me and grasps my hand. Tenderly I tell him that he cannot live. My heart is full. I beseech him to give me all his attention. He takes some ice to cool his mouth, that he may better attend to me, and then he is "ready." Ready! with that poor weak body, with that fevered brain, with that wandering attention. Is this a condition in which to transact the business of eternity? But he is "ready." Every moment is precious. His mind may wander again directly.

"Henry," I remarked to him, "I want you just to think of two things—your sin and your Saviour; put all else away except just those two things. Your sin is great—in thought, word, and deed. Conscience will tell you. Try to recollect. You have been sinning since you knew right from wrong; you have forgotten God, refused His invitations, often transgressed against Him; your sins in His sight cry against you for judgment; they are a fearful load, and will press you down to hell."

And then the Saviour, ready to save him—dying to save the lost—willing to receive all who come to Him—a perfect, all-powerful, loving Saviour, blotting out transgressions as a thick cloud. Oh! what a message is this to take to a dying man. What other message could suit such a one as that, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved?"

He takes hold thankfully of the hymn, "Rock of Ages, cleft for me," and repeats it after me. "Do you repent of your sins, Henry?" "I do." "Do you believe that Jesus takes your sins away?" "I do." Oh! how the minister's soul clings to a straw in such a case. My reason and experience confess these expressions at such a time to be but straws, and yet I cling to them. They are all that I have.

Then the poor fevered brain wanders again. He rises up and then throws himself down upon his pillow, crying, "It is all darkness!" Poor soul! What is it that is darkness?

"It is all over," said the uncle. "He has passed away without a struggle."

"All over;" far from it; rather all begun. New scenes are opening now upon that soul which has just escaped so silently from the body. What scenes they are, whether light or dark, whether full of joy or agony, I cannot tell. What messengers came to take him hence—whether the ministers of God's awful justice, or the angels of mercy—I know not. I only know that the soul which has just escaped from that body lying before me is now before its God, giving up its account of the deeds done in the body. Did it close by faith with Christ's offer of mercy before it left the body? that is the question now, a question which cannot be answered till I myself stand before the same great throne.

All is not over; a larger longer life has begun, which can never end. Is it, for this soul, truly life, even life eternal? or is it that living death, "where the worm dieth not and the fire is never quenched?" Reader, may these thoughts sink into your heart and mine. We may be nearer to death and judgment than we think we are. The veil that separates time from eternity is very thin, and we may break through it when we least expect it. The moment we do so, a wondrous light will be thrown on all the things of time. How different will they seem to us to what they seem now! Even the minister does not truly realise the vast importance of his work, or the worth of the soul. But the moment we break through that thin veil, we shall see and know it all. Then, if you be not in Christ, what misery will await you—what remorse! How you will hate yourself for throwing away eternal joys, and for laying up for yourself a treasury of wrath which shall never be exhausted!

Do not put off repentance and turning to God. You are not stronger than Henry Dove. Your life is not more secure. Your sickness may be as short as his; nay, your death may come more suddenly. Even if, on your death-bed, you profess repentance and conversion, how untrustworthy these are!

And now I pass out into the open air. It is still early, but what a solemn scene has this day already witnessed. The men are going to their work. The world does not stop, though a soul has just departed. How true it is that in the midst of death we are in life, as well as that "in the midst of life we are in death." The activity, the common work, jars upon my feelings. I speak to the men as I pass. I tell them that the soul is flown. I press upon them the concerns of eternity, and then I come home, to pray for myself and for those that remain, and to make this record that I may be stirred up and reminded in time to come. And may the Holy Spirit impress on every reader the solemn warning of the Saviour's words, "Be ye also ready!"

The time is short! sinners, beware,
Nor trifle time away;
The word of "great salvation" hear
While it is called to-day.

The time is short! ye heedless, now
To Christ the Lord submit;
To Mercy's golden sceptre bow,
And fall at Jesu's feet.

A THIEF IN THE NIGHT.

SOME years ago a large firm in Calcutta had their premises broken into during the night, by thieves digging through the wall, and had property carried off to the value of many thousand pounds. The thieves, moreover, did their work with such silence, speed, and dexterity, that they were never found out.

Here was treasure to which, in the language of the Bible, "Thieves might break through [or 'dig through'] and steal." The engraving represents an Indian scene, which will serve to illustrate these words. The wall in front forms part of a building called a "serai," very

gather that our Lord's hearers were mostly of the poorer classes, and that they probably lived, or at least some of them, in houses of earth.

In the East the lower classes require but very little furniture in their houses, and what they have is most inexpensive; so that whatever property they have is generally in money. This they keep concealed about the house; and when a thief enters, his object is to get at the bag of money. Sometimes the bag is placed beneath their pillow; but it not unfrequently happens that it is carried off, even from that position, without awaking the sleeper.

Every one has some treasure on which he depends; but, like the Oriental's money bag, it is only defended



Thieves digging through a wall.

much resembling "the inn" where Joseph and Mary lodged at Bethlehem, when Jesus was born.

Many of these Indian "serais" are built of mud. Accordingly, when thieves desire to rob the travellers during the night, instead of attempting to get in at or over the gate, the common method resorted to is to dig through the outer wall, and thus arrive at the travellers and their property. Once inside, a robber may move about in the darkness unobserved or unsuspected, as if he were one of the peaceful travellers.

Now our Lord's admonition to His hearers was, "not to lay up for themselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break [or dig] through and steal." From the words we may

by earthen fences. All earthly good with these cannot be defended against all comers. Home, riches, health, reputation, none of them can be surrounded by an impregnable fortress, into which the spoiler may not make its way. A man may possibly have them all one day and lose them all the next. But, suppose that he enjoys all in safety for a time, the great spoiler, Death, will certainly rob him at last. Against his inroad there is no defence. There is no secure treasure on earth. Riches that are *earthly* are not true riches; the true riches are *spiritual*—in the heart and in heaven. No man is so rich as to be beyond the possibility of utter ruin, until he becomes rich towards God. Hence the advice of our Lord, "Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where

neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal."

By nature we are all poor as regards heavenly treasures; yet we may become rich. There is One "who, though He was rich, yet for our sakes became poor, that we, through His poverty, might be rich."

Lay up for yourselves, therefore, treasures in heaven; and do it *now*, for now is the accepted time to secure salvation.



FIRST BELIEVE.

WHOSOEVER therefore thou art who desirest to be forgiven and reconciled to the favour of God, do not say in thy heart, "I must first do this; I must first conquer every sin, break off every evil word and work, and do all good to all men; or I must first go to church, receive the Lord's supper, hear more sermons, and say more prayers." Alas! my brother, thou art clean gone out of the way. Thou art still ignorant of the righteousness of God, and art seeking "to establish thine own righteousness" as the ground of thy reconciliation. Knowest thou not that thou canst do nothing

but sin till thou art reconciled to God? Wherefore, then, dost thou say, I must do this and that first, and then I shall believe. Nay, but—

Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, the propitiation for thy sins. Let this good foundation first be laid, and thou shalt do all things well.

Neither say in thy heart, "I cannot be accepted yet, because I am not good enough." Who is good enough, who ever was—to merit acceptance at God's hands? Was ever any child of Adam good enough for this?—or will any be, till the consummation of all things? And as for thee, thou art not good at all—there dwelleth in thee no good thing; and thou never wilt be, till thou believe in Jesus. Rather thou wilt find thyself worse and worse.

But is there any need of being worse in order to be accepted? Art thou not bad enough already? Indeed thou art, and that God knoweth, and thou thyself canst not deny it. Then delay not. All things are now ready. "Arise, and wash away thy sins." The fountain is open; now is the time to wash thee in the blood of the Lamb. Now He shall "purge" thee as "with hyssop," and thou shalt "be clean;" He shall "wash thee," and thou shalt be "whiter than snow."

Do not say, "But I am not contrite enough; I am not sensible enough of my sins." I know it; I would to God thou wert more sensible of them, more contrite, a thousandfold than thou art. But do not stay for this. It may be God will make thee so, not before thou believest but by believing. It may be thou wilt not weep much till thou lovest much because thou hast had much forgiven. In the meantime

look unto Jesus—behold how He loveth thee. What could He have done more for thee which He hath not done?

"O Lamb of God, was ever pain,
Was ever love like Thine?"

Look steadily upon Him till He looks on thee, and breaks thy hard heart; then shall thy "head" be "waters," and thine "eyes fountains of tears."

Nor yet do thou say, "I must do something more before I come to Christ." How long wilt thou forget that whatsoever thou doest, or whatsoever thou hast before thy sins are forgiven thee, it avails nothing with God towards the procuring of thy forgiveness; yea, and that it must all be cast behind thy back, trampled under foot, made no account of, or thou wilt never find favour in God's sight; because until then thou canst not ask it as a mere sinner, guilty, lost, undone, having nothing to plead, nothing to offer to God, but only the merits of His only beloved Son, "who loved thee, and gave Himself for thee!"

Whosoever thou art, O man, who hast the sentence of death in thyself, who feelest thyself a condemned sinner, and hast the wrath of God abiding on thee, unto thee saith the Lord, not "Do this perfectly, obey all My commands, and live;"—but "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." "The word of faith is nigh unto thee;" now at this instant, in the present moment and in thy present state, sinner, as thou art, just as thou art, believe the gospel, and "I will be merciful unto thy unrighteousness, and thy iniquities will I remember no more."

Rev. John Wesley.

HEAVENLY LIGHT.

THE light of the world which seemed to go out on Calvary has been rekindled in the heavens.

He who descended into the lower parts of the earth has now ascended above earth's horizon, as "the Sun of Righteousness, with healing in His wings." Have you observed the force of that beautiful metaphor which the prophet Malachi employs in the last Old Testament promise? What wings? They are the wings of the Holy Dove, that other Comforter whom He promised to send from the high heaven, to which He was about to go, to ward His disciples round with the light and the warmth of His own perpetual presence.

See how beautifully expressive is the sacred emblem. Christ Himself is the Sun now exalted in the heavens. The Holy Spirit is the Light which streams perpetually from Him. The sun in the sky has its local presence in one particular place in the heavens, but is by no means confined to that spot, but with those wonderful wings of his fills every point of space wherever his rays are not cut off by intervening obstacles; and so, too, the Sun of Righteousness has His local habitation in the highest heavens, and yet is not confined to it, but by His Holy Spirit is present everywhere, except where He is shut out by barriers of wickedness erected against Him, or excluded by soul-windows fast closed within by those who love the darkness rather than the light.

"At that day shall ye know that I am in My Father." How do we know that the sun is shining in the heavens? Only by the light which streams down from it and reaches our eyes. In the same way "No man can say that Jesus is Lord, but by the Holy Ghost;" or, as it is in the Revised Version, "No man can say Jesus is Lord, but in the Holy Spirit." "At that day ye shall know that I am in My Father."

"And ye in Me." On a bright but chilly day in early spring you see your friend walking on the shady side of the street, as some foolish people will do. You call over to him, "Come and walk in the sun with me."

The sun is many millions of miles away, yet you speak of being in it, and walking in it, when you are bathed in the light and warmth continually proceeding from it. In the same way are we in Christ, when we are surrounded by the gracious loving presence of His Holy Spirit. So "Ye in Me."

"And I in you." Not only must the light be around us, but in us, before we can be said to live in it and walk in it. A blind man is surrounded by the sunlight as any one else is, but he does not live in it; he does not walk in it; he cannot enjoy it. Why not? Simply because it is not in him. We must have eyes, and these eyes must be opened to receive the light into the body, so that we may live in it, and walk in it, and enjoy it. And in the same way must the eye of faith be opened to receive the heavenly light into the soul before we can even be aware of its presence; and it must be kept open in order that we may "walk in the light as He is in the light." Christ must be in us by His Holy Spirit in order that we may live in Him.

Rev. Dr. M. Gibson.

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GOLDEN THOUGHTS.

—Go to God as a sinner, if you question your right to go in any other character: He always receiveth sinners.

—Whenever you feel your wants, remember then God waits to be gracious.

—In every company remember you profess to be a member of Christ, a son of God, a temple of the Holy Ghost.

—Never forget that Jesus had you in His eye when He died on the cross.

—Christ left the cross and went to glory, that you might take it and follow after Him.

—If you suffer for Christ, your sufferings are called the sufferings of Christ.

—A Christ-like sufferer is an honour to religion.

—Growing Christians are little in their own eyes; grown Christians are less than nothing.

—He that thinks much of himself is standing at a great distance from God.

—The fountain of salvation is always open: you may take of its waters freely.

—If you complain that you cannot step into the pool, Jesus says, "Wilt thou be made whole?" He waits for your answer

JOHN SAUNDERS' MISTAKE.

JOHN SAUNDERS, a cartwright in a small way of business at Hillwood, had long since given up attending any place of worship. He had formerly gone to the Forest Chapel, and he had been a scholar in its Sunday-school. Mr. Evans, the minister, had been very hopeful about him with regard to the best things, but for the present his hopes had been sadly disappointed.

This is how it all happened. John thought himself very badly used in regard to a matter of business by Mr. Allen, who also attended the Forest Chapel. He told his story to Mr. Evans, and Mr. Evans tried to put things straight; but he did not succeed. Mr. Allen was quite as sure that he was in the right as John was that he was in the wrong; and Mr. Evans could not take upon himself to judge between them.

Mr. Evans was very sorry that John should leave the chapel, and he did all he could to persuade him to remain, but it was of no use. "No," John said, "not he; he was not going to a place where a man went who made such a big profession of religion and who had used him so shamefully."

It is always a bad thing when, without a very good reason, a man breaks away from the place of worship where he has attended nearly all his life, and especially when, like John, he breaks away in a bad temper. It is often a long time before he settles anywhere else, and sometimes he never settles at all.

After leaving the Forest Chapel, John went on a Sunday first to one church or chapel, and then to another; but he did not find one of them quite to his mind. Either he did not care about the minister, or he did not like the people, or the singing was bad, or something else was wrong. So it often came to this, that on a Sunday morning he could not make up his mind where to go, and in the end he stayed at home. By-and-by he gave up going anywhere.

But the Sundays hung heavily, and John did not know what to do with himself. Of course he could not open his shop and work, and though he was fond of reading, he could not read all day. When it was fine weather he strolled into the country; but then the weather was not always fine. When it was fine he did not care to go by himself, and the company he found was not of the right sort. At length, not a Sunday came which did not find John in the public-house. Of course he went on other days as well.

This kind of thing is sure to bear its fruit, and very bad fruit too. John's home was no longer the happy home it had been. His wife got disheartened, some of his children, following his example, began to neglect both Sunday-school and chapel, and John's business fell off. He was on his way to ruin.

Happily, however, something occurred which, by God's blessing, brought him to a better mind.

A friend and former companion of John, who had left the town some years before, came back again. Like John, George Walters had been a scholar in the Forest Chapel Sunday-school, and after he had ceased to be a scholar he had continued to attend the chapel.

When he returned to Hillwood, he went to the old place, and one of the first things he did was to look out for John; but John was not there.

The first evening Walters had at liberty he went to see John, but John was not in. He had gone out not long before to the Green Dragon.

Walters sat down with Mrs. Saunders for a few minutes, and he saw at once that all was not right. Mrs. Saunders did not tell him of her husband's altered life. Two of the children were there, and she was wise enough not to say anything against John in their presence; but as Walters went away, however, she told him in a low voice where she thought John might be found. Walters, however, did not care to go and seek him there, but he left a message for John, asking him to go to see him the following evening at his own house.

John went, and the two men exchanged very hearty greetings. Of course they had a great deal to say to one another of what had happened to themselves and to old companions and friends since they had met. At length Walters, who in the meantime had heard a little about John, told him how he had looked for him at chapel, and how sorry he had been to miss him.

This opened the way for John to tell how it was that he had left.

"And where do you go now, John?" asked Walters.

"Well, George," replied John, "it is of no use going about the bush, it is not often I go anywhere. The fact is, I got so disgusted with what Allen did to me, that I did not care to go where he was; and then I've heard such a lot of things since of the same sort, that I made up my mind to have nothing more to do with religion or religious folks."

"That's a pity, John," said George, "and I think it is a mistake. Now would you mind answering me a question or two?"

"Well, what?" asked John.

"How many people, do you think, go to the Forest Chapel? or rather, how many went before you left off going?"

"I don't know," replied John; "maybe five hundred."

"Then," asked George, "out of that five hundred how many could you name who wronged you, as you think Mr. Allen did—you or anybody else?"

"Well," replied John, after a little thought, "I can't say I could name anybody just at this moment."

"And of those other professing Christian people you spoke about as having done wrong," asked

George again, "how many do you think you could name?"

"Oh, I can't tell," replied John, "half-a-dozen, at least."

"Half-a-dozen out of how many? I suppose out of ever so many hundreds?"

John was silent.

"Now, is it fair," asked Walters, "to judge religion by the half-dozen or the dozen who dishonour it, and take no account of the hundreds who, though still not perfect, were honest and true? And even though most of the people you know who profess to be religious were not what they ought to be, would that make the Bible and the Gospel false, or would that render it needless for you to seek salvation?"

John had evidently nothing to say to that.

"How much did you lose by Mr. Allen, John?" asked Walters.

"Every penny of twenty pounds," replied John.

"Well," said Walters, "that's a lot of money, and yet I suppose you did not think it enough, but took all the money you had in the house and threw it away."

"What do you say?" asked John.

Walters repeated it.

"Nay," said John, "you know better than that. I was not such a fool."

"I did not think you were," replied Walters; "but have you not been throwing away what was worth a deal more—your peace of mind, your immortal soul? And then what harm you have been doing your family, by setting them such a bad example. If your children all go wrong, John, who will be to blame?"

This was plain speaking; but it was said so kindly that John could not take offence. He hung down his head for some minutes, and then he said, "Well George, it's true. I have been a fool."

They had a good deal more talk together, which we have not space to repeat. Enough if we tell the result. Under the influence of his friend, John went back to the house of God, and forsook the public-house. It was a hard struggle for him to get on his feet again in regard to his business, but he did it. His children are turning out well, and Walters hopes and believes that he has sought and found salvation.

Lord, with this guilty heart of mine,
To Thy dear cross I flee;
And to Thy grace my soul resign,
To be renewed by Thee
Sprinkled afresh with pardoning blood,
I lay me down to rest;
As in th' embraces of my God,
Or on my Saviour's breast.



When fine, he strolled into the country.

PRINCE CHARLIE'S STICKS,

AND OTHER SKETCHES.



LD Kitty Smith was sitting by the side of her little fire in a brown study. It was Sunday evening, and she had just come in from church.

Now Kitty had no one alive belonging to her except a son, who was in Australia; so she lived alone in

one of the comfortable almshouses, and made a great friend of her little dog, Prince Charlie.

As usual, when anything puzzled her, she sat down by the fire with Prince Charlie on her lap, and talked it over with him. And believe me, reader, there's a great deal of good sometimes to be gained by quietly

talking things over, even though your companion may only be a dog. The very fact of speaking aloud of what bothers one, often puts it in a different light, and one sees a gleam of sunshine where all had before been dark.

"Well, Charlie boy, tell me what you think of this?" said Kitty, rousing herself from the deep study in which we first saw her. "I've thought and thought, but I can't see anything clear yet. The minister says that we can all help some one. 'However poor you may be, you can do something to help some one else. Old age, poverty, or even sickness are no excuse for leading selfish lives, for if you are ill in bed, you can generally pray for others, or at least give them a kind look.' Now those were his very words, Charlie, and I've been sitting here till I'm just dazed, wondering how I can do anything for anybody. I have no money, for I live on charity myself, and I am so stiff with rheumatism that I can't even pick up my own sticks. What do you think about it, Charlie?"

Prince Charlie barked and rubbed his head against the old woman's hand, as if he quite understood it all; but he found his mistress rather a dull companion that evening, for she was still thinking what she could do to help some one.

"The dear Lord has been very merciful to me," she thought, as she went up to her little room to bed; "and I'd like to do something for somebody just for His sake."

Then Kitty did the best thing we can any of us do in a difficulty. She just prayed to God to show her the way to serve Him, and to give her the willing heart as well as the power.

Some weeks passed away, and still Kitty did not see her way to work for God. She had often brought peace to a sad soul by the glad tidings of the Gospel which she loved so well, and she still remembered that it was better to help a soul than to feed a body; yet she knew that Jesus Himself did both; and, like David of old, she did not want to give to God of what cost her nothing. So she still prayed on, and at last the answer came, though in a way which she little expected.

Kitty was, as she told Prince Charlie, so stiff with rheumatism that she could not pick up the sticks to light her own fire. So she gave little Nellie Brown twopence a week, and that small maiden was quite proud to be able to earn so much on her half-holiday, and take it home to her mother.

Even that little helped the poor widow, who had six children to feed; and Nellie would not for the world have missed earning it, though it did stop her going out for a bit of fun with her schoolfellows.

"Why, Nellie, you are late to-day," said Kitty, one Saturday afternoon.

"Yes, ma'am, I'm very sorry, but mother wanted me to mind the house. Mrs. Stillwell has broken her leg, and she was round there all the morning. Mr. Stillwell's out of work too, and mother says there wasn't even a bit of wood to light a fire. So mother

gave her some of ours, and I'm just going to work double quick and pick up some sticks for Mrs. Stillwell too. Isn't it dreadful, ma'am?" and little Nellie's blue eyes filled with tears.

"It is indeed," said Kitty; "run along then, dear, and be quick."

When Kitty was alone again she locked round her cosy room.

"No fire, no food, and a broken leg," she said. "One of them is bad enough, but to have all three! Dear, dear, isn't it dreadful! Don't you wish you could help them, Charlie?"

"Bow wow," said Charlie, skipping round with a bit of stick he had brought in from the back yard, and tossing it up into the air as if it were a ball.

Suddenly Kitty's face brightened. The answer had come at last, and she saw how she could help her poorer neighbours. She trudged off to the wood with Prince Charlie behind her, and he, being an obedient dog, soon learnt to pick up the sticks and carry them to his mistress. He would hold them in his mouth and wag his tail proudly; and then Kitty could stoop down so far, in spite of her stiff back, and take them out of his mouth. So the two worked together until a nice bundle of faggots was collected; then Nellie helped to carry them to Mrs. Stillwell's. Little Nellie looked a bit sad at first, when she saw Prince Charlie at his new work, for she began to fear that there would be no more coppers for her. But Kitty soon set her mind at rest, and told her she should still be her wood-gatherer.

Kitty patted Prince Charlie's head that night, and whispered in his ear, "We've had a happy day to-day, Charlie, and please God we will have many more."

But God willed it otherwise. Before many months were gone by old Kitty Smith was seriously ill. Mrs. Brown came in to sit beside her very often, and the minister's wife came every day.

"I'm going home, ma'am," said Kitty, one evening, "and I'm very thankful. There's just one thing I'd like to tell you about. Every Saturday me and Charlie have been to get faggots for Mrs. Stillwell. I'd not like her to miss them now, and Charlie is so clever at it he'd almost get them alone if one of the children went with him. And so ma'am, please I'd like you to keep Charlie. I know the minister likes him, if you'd kindly lend him to Mrs. Stillwell on Saturday still."

And so, in God's good time, the old woman went to her rest, having done what she could.

May He help us to do as much!

E. M. W.

PRECEPT—PROMISE—PRAYER.

Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and serve Him.

Deut. vi. 13.

The fear of the Lord tendeth to life: and he that hath it shall abide satisfied; he shall not be visited with evil.

Prov. xix. 23.

O Lord, I beseech Thee, let now Thine ear be attentive to the prayer of Thy servant, and to the prayer of Thy servants who desire to fear Thy name.

Neh. i. 11.

GOD'S CARE.

An aged minister once said to a very timid young man, "So long as you fear, and humbly depend on God, you will never fail."

Years after, when that young man occupied a very honourable and influential position, he gratefully testified he had found this assurance quite true.

The Rev. J. Brown, of Haddington, said, "I soon lost my parents, but I have never missed them. I have had the care of God, and would not desire any event of my life to be changed; only I should wish to have had less sin."

God cares for His children temporally and spiritually, for this world and the world to come; and if we give ourselves and others to Him, and lovingly trust in and obey Him, then He will withhold no good thing from us.

When a poor widow and her daughter were reduced to utter destitution, and would have been without fire and food, God caused a good man to miss his way, and to go into the dark room, where, after talking to the widow for her comfort and good, he quietly left five shillings on the table, which sufficed for them till they got effectual and permanent relief.

God feeds the birds and clothes the flowers, and He much more cares for His children, temporally, spiritually, and eternally.

Cantly, a Scotch butler, became such a clever mathematician, musician, linguist, and physician, that Ferguson said, "I think he might, with much propriety, be termed 'God Almighty's scholar.'" And so we may all be "taught of God." Then the Word of God's grace may be our guide, our comfort, our support, and a benefit to us in other ways.

Dr. Marsh, in his very old age, being found reading God's Word, he remarked of it, "With this staff I have journeyed through life, and," added he, with a bright smile, "I will pass over Jordan leaning upon it."

EXTRACTS FROM OLD DIVINES.

The Wonders of Prayer.—Abraham's servant prays—Rebekah appears. Jacob wrestles and prays—the angel is conquered, and Esau's mind is wonderfully turned from the revengeful purpose he had harboured for twenty years. Moses cries to God—the sea is divided. Moses prays—Amalek is discomfited. Joshua prays—Achan is discovered. Hannah prays—Samuel is born. David prays—Ahiathophel hangs himself. Asa prays—a victory is gained. Jehoshaphat prays—God turns away his foes. Isaiah and Hezekiah pray—185,000 Assyrians are dead in twelve hours. Daniel prays—the dream is revealed. Daniel prays—the lions are muzzled. Daniel prays—the seventy weeks are revealed. Mordecai and Esther fast—Haman is hanged on his own gallows in three days. Ezra prays at Ahara—God answers. Nehemiah offered up a prayer—the king's heart is softened in a minute. Elijah prays—a drought of three years succeeds. Elijah prays—rain descends apace. Elisha prays—Jordan is divided.

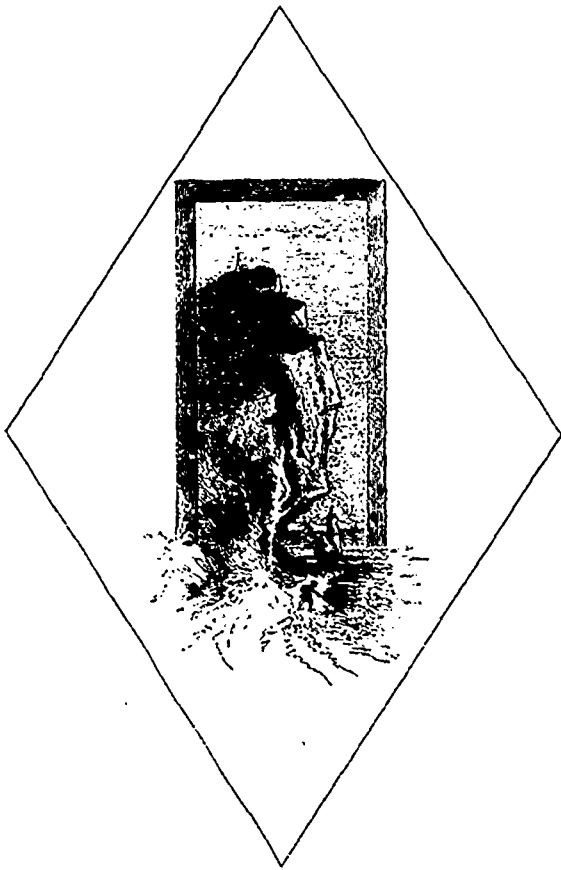
Elisha prays—a child's soul comes back. The Church prays ardently—Peter is delivered by an angel. Paul and Silas prayed and sang praises—the doors of the prison were opened, and every man's bands were loosed. Prayer has a thousand commands and promises. Prayer has a thousand examples of rich success.—*Ryland.*

A Leaking Memory.—God hath given man a faculty above other creatures, to retain and keep what he reads and hears; and to be able to bring it forth from thence, as out of a treasury or storehouse, for use afterwards. "Every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven, is like unto a man that is a householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old." Now, in this treasury or storehouse, the word of Christ in a special manner should have a place. "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip." He compares the memory to a leaking vessel; and so it is—it is cracked by the fall. Oh, take heed! The word of Christ is precious liquor poured into it; and purer and finer any liquor is, the more likely it is to soak through. Take heed, lest you let it slip.—*Philip Henry.*

True Faith.—It is not enough to see food that is wholesome, but you must eat it; nor is it enough to understand the Gospel, and believe that it is true, but we must embrace it; it must be accepted, else we do not believe with the whole heart, and to the saving of the soul.—*Manton.*

GOLDEN THOUGHTS.

DE not discouraged by past failures in duty; but confess to God, beg His interference, and try again: "The way of the Lord is strength to the upright."
 —Never take your eye off the cross when you think of salvation; all its lines centre there.
 —Expect the Spirit when you have prayed for His assistance.
 —Be sure Satan will oppose you if what you are doing is for God's glory.
 —Peace of mind is produced by reliance on God's promises.
 —Love is the greatest ornament a believer can wear.
 —Contentment springs from humility.
 —Forgiveness is a godlike grace; resentment is diabolical.
 —Every trial says, go to Jesus: go now.
 —Every trouble is the forerunner of some mercy.
 —Every chastisement is gracious; it is sent that you may be a partaker of God's holiness.
 —When enemies are more than ordinarily cruel, think of Jesus—how He was circumstanced when He prayed, "Father, forgive them!"
 —Out of love to yourself, you ought to pray for your enemies.
 —When your foes act very badly, think what a mercy it is you are not doing as they do; only grace preserves you.
 —Ascertain that God is with you, and then bid slavish fear depart.



THE LITTLE LIGHT.

THE light shone dim on the headland,
 For the storm was raging high;
 I shaded my eyes from the inner glare,
 And gazed on the wet grey sky.

It was dark and lowering; on the sea
 The waves were booming loud,
 And the snow and the piercing winter sleet
 Wove over all a shroud.

"God pity the men on the sea to-night!"
 I said to my little ones;
 And we shuddered as we heard afar
 The sound of minute guns.

My good man came in in his fishing coat
 (He was cold and wet that night),
 And he said, "There'll lots of ships go down
 On the headland rocks to-night."

"Let the lamp burn all night, mother!"
 Cried little Mary then;
 "'Tis but a little light; but still
 It might save drowning men."

"Oh, nonsense!" cried the father
 (He was tired and cross that night),
 "The headland lighthouse is enough;"
 And he put out the light.

That night on the rocks below us
 A noble ship went down;
 But one was saved from the ghastly wreck,
 The rest were left to drown.

"We steered by a little light," he said,
 "Till we saw it sink from view;
 If they'd only 'a left that light all night,
 My mates might be here too!"

Then little Mary sobbed aloud,
 Her father blushed for shame:—
 "'Twas our light that you saw," he said,
 "And I'm the one to blame."

'Twas a little light—how small a thing!
 And trifling was its cost;
 Yet for want of it the ship went down,
 And a hundred souls were lost.

AN EXAMPLE OF FORGIVENESS.

A YOUNG lady, whom Samuel Hick had been accustomed to see, one day called at his shop on her palfrey, to get a new shoe instead of one which she had dropped whilst she was riding. As she looked very delicate, the blacksmith thought she was ill; and, eyeing her with compassion, asked,

"Dost thou know whether thou hast a soul?" He then instantly continued, "Thou hast one, whether thou knowest it or not; and it will live in happiness or misery for ever."

The young lady had never been told of these things before; and on her return home, she indulged in serious reflections. Her father, perceiving that she was sad, inquired the cause; and, on being told, exclaimed, "What, has that old blacksmith been at thee, to turn thy head? but I will whack (beat) him."

So, arming himself with a thick stick, he set off in a rage, and finding Samuel at the anvil, struck him a heavy blow on the side, which, he says, "nearly felled me to the ground; and it was not a little that would have done it in those days."

Guessing that the cause of this cowardly assault was connected with religion, the blacksmith turned his other side to his aggressor, saying, "Here, man, hit that too."

This meekness disarmed his adversary, who retired to ponder over the effects of true religion.

Some time afterwards, being taken seriously ill, he sent for Samuel, and stretching out his hand to him, said, "Will you forgive me?"

The blacksmith replied, "What for? I have nothing against thee nor any man living."

The other rejoined, "Will you forgive me?"
 "Forgive thee! I tell thee I have nothing against thee. But if thou art barn (about) to die, we will pray a bit, and see if the Lord will forgive thee." He then knelt beside the bed, and poured out his heart in supplication for the dying man.

He had hope in his death. The daughter also became truly religious; and Samuel lived to see some of her children also walking in the way of godliness. Such were the blessed effects of his Christian temper and conversation.



FAMILY WORSHIP.

HERE is a story told by a man of business about himself with regard to family worship.

When he first set up a household, having felt the value of religion in his own soul, and being convinced alike of the duty and advantage of family worship, he resolved to observe it regularly; and he did so for a great many years. He had apprentices who lived with him, and he required them, as well as his children and his servants, to be always present.

Through the blessing of God he prospered greatly; but his prosperity was by no means without its snares. His thoughts became more and more occupied with his business, and the day seemed too short for all he wanted to press into it. This led at first to the omission of family prayer now and then; but before very long it was left off entirely, and he contented himself with a few words of prayer along with his wife before they left their bedroom in the morning.

This state of things had continued for some time, when one day he received a letter from a young man who had formerly been an apprentice with him. The letter was respectful and affectionate, the grateful outpouring of the young man's heart. He spoke in it of his own welfare and prospects, but, having done that, he spoke with the deepest thankfulness of the religious privileges he had enjoyed whilst a resident under his master's roof, and especially of that of family worship. Eternity, he said, would be too short for him to praise God for what he had learnt through the service, and for the hallowed impressions it had made on his heart.

He then besought him most sincerely on no account to give it up; for there was every reason to hope that it might prove to others, as it had proved to him, the means of everlasting life.

The letter came to the man's heart as a message from God, and it overwhelmed him with shame and deep sorrow. He took it with him to his secret chamber, and there he spread it before the Lord, confessing his neglect and sin, and humbly imploring the Divine forgiveness.

Nor was that all. He gathered his household together, and declared to them his intention to resume the service and to hold it regularly. He would give up, he said, a part of his business, if that were needful, rather than omit the service. And he held by his resolve.

Are you, friend, who read this the head of a household? If you are, let us kindly ask if you observe in it family worship? If not, will you consider a few thoughts we have to offer you on the subject?

Every man should pray alone, entering his closet, and there praying to his Father who is in secret.

Every man should go to the house of God, especially on the Lord's own day, that he may join in public worship, confessing with his fellow-worshippers their common infirmities and sins, offering with them common prayer and praise, and listening with them to the teachings of the Word of God.

But, besides all this, every man who is the head of a family should gather wife and children and servants about him, once a day at least, but, if possible, both morning and evening, that he may read with them

God's Word, and pray with them and for them. Better still, if, in addition, there be "the service of song," in the form of psalm or hymn, and in these days, in which music is so greatly cultivated, there is surely in most houses some one who can lead this part of the devotion. Such worship as this is an acknowledgment of our dependence on God as the Giver of all our mercies.

It is a practical avowal, in the presence and hearing of our children, of our desire to live in the way of God, and to regulate our whole lives according to His Word.

It is to assure them in the very best way—that is, by example—of our belief in the duty and the efficacy of prayer; and if we pray most of all for their spiritual good, it will teach them what they should most care about, and what they should seek most earnestly for themselves.

Further, if we try in simple words to explain the portions of Scripture which we read, and to bring out the lessons which are taught in them, it can scarcely fail to make impressions on their hearts which will never be forgotten.

Parents may do very much in this way to train up their children to become true followers of the Lord Jesus Christ; and there have been instances without number in which, as in that we have narrated, servants have thus been deeply impressed with their need of salvation, and have been led to give their hearts to God.

We have heard, moreover, of many cases in which, when men who had sadly wandered, remembering their fathers' prayers offered in the family when they were children, were thus, by the blessing of God, led to true repentance.

We put it to your conscience, then, if, in case you have neglected this duty hitherto, you ought not to resolve that you will neglect it no longer? Say, like Joshua, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

And if, having observed it in times past, you have for any reason given it up, we entreat you to resume it without delay.

Perhaps some reader says, "But I have not time for this. I am a working man, and I have to be off so early to my work in the morning that my family could not be got together in time; and then in the evening it is too late, and I am tired." Of course you know your own difficulties best; still, we should say, "Try. Where there's a will there's a way." It is not necessary to make the service a long one. Children, moreover, are apt to be tired by long services.

Or it may be you say, "I don't think I could pray before my family; I am afraid I should break down." Again we say, "Try." And if you cannot pray without a book, by all means get one. There are some very good books of family prayer which you can get for a small price, which you would find very helpful. By-and-by, let us hope you may be able to do without them, and to offer prayers of your own.

Or is the reason why you do not observe family worship that you feel your life is inconsistent with such prayer, and that therefore it would be little better

than a mockery to offer it? But ought a reason like that to continue? Go to your closet, and there confess your sins before God, and beseeching His forgiveness, ask Him for grace to live a new and better life. Then, first seeking God's mercy daily for yourself alone, let no day pass in which you do not also gather your household about you, that you and they together may worship God.

A LESSON ON CONTENTMENT.

THE REV. J. GRIFFIN, in his excellent "Memoirs of the Past," says:—

Calling one day at the cottage of a poor widowed old man and his daughter, who were members of the church, he said, "A strange thing happened the other day. Last week Elizabeth and I were both of us so poorly that we could not work; so nothing was coming in, and at the end of the week we had only three-halfpence left. We were sitting on Saturday evening with the door open, for it was a fine evening, when something was thrown in and fell under my chair. I thought it was a stone thrown by the boys who were playing in the street; but presently I looked under the chair, and found it was something wrapped up in paper, and when I opened it there was half-a-crown. I at once went out to see if there was any one in the street, but there was no one but the boys; I can't understand it!"

"Oh," I said, "the Lord, no doubt, put it into the heart of some kind friend to think of you, and to take this way of supplying your wants, without your knowing from whom it came. And it is designed to teach you that 'the Father of mercies' has His eye upon you, and that His ear is open to your cry, and to give you assurance that He will never leave you nor forsake you."

The pious poor, generally, so far from desiring to be pensioners on the church, or on public or private charity in any form, are very reluctant to let their wants be known. These are not the people, as a rule, who make large demands on the poor rates, and their contentment in their poverty is often very touching.

A lady asked me to visit a poor man by the name of Benson, who was ill. The place was not easy to find; it was a cellar, a very dark one—so dark that at first, when I entered, I could see nothing. After a while, I perceived that there was a bed and a man lying on it, but I could see no one else in the miserable room. I talked with the poor man for a time, endeavouring to lead his mind to a knowledge of himself and of Christ, for he seemed very ignorant, and then knelt down and prayed with him.

While in prayer, I heard a voice close by me seeming to respond with something like an "Amen" to the prayer; and when I rose up, I discovered by the light of a little fire an elderly woman standing near me.

She immediately said, "Why, it is Mr. Griffin, isn't it?"

"Yes, but how do you know me?"

"How do I know you? I know you well enough.

Haven't I heard you preach there at Rusholme Road Sunday after Sunday! And ah, how often, as the people were leaving the chapel, some of them in their carriages, have I said to myself, They are going home to what I have not got; my potatoes are on the hob, and that's all; but I thank God I can say I have got Christ as my Saviour, and I shall have heaven as my home, and that's all I want; I don't envy them their riches; perhaps I am happier than some of them." She said this in a tone of most evident sincerity.

I was deeply interested in this discovery, and asked how it was she had not made herself known, for I had never heard of her.

"Oh, I go up into the free seats in the gallery near the door, and slip out as soon as the service is over, for I am not in a dress fit to be seen, and nobody knows me; but the Lord knows me, and that is enough."

Of course, I soon became better acquainted with her, and brought her to the acquaintance of others besides, and, after a while, she was encouraged to unite with us at the table of the Lord in fellowship with His people, to the great joy of her heart.

She continued for some years growing in Christian knowledge and experience, and died rejoicing in Christ Jesus. I preached on the occasion from those words of James, "Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which He hath promised to them that love Him?"

TELLING GOD EVERYTHING.

WHEN my mind is full of joy or of sorrow, I do not try and forget it all while I am "saying my prayers." I like to remember that my Father above knows all about it, and that He likes to hear from me what I am really thinking about.

Sometimes we have a great wish. We do not say much about it, but it is always in our heart, and yet we do not like to tell it to our kindest, truest Friend. He must be grieved when we do not trust Him, just as loving children trust their parents.

Everything comes to us from God. But we may, through our own fault, get evil out of this good. Just as the sweet honey which the bee gets from the flowers would be poison to the spider.

If we form the habit of telling everything to God, we shall find great help and comfort in it. Every day He gives us blessings, and keeps away many troubles which we deserve. We too often fancy we must pray only about great things. This is all a mistake. We could not go to our gracious Queen, if we were longing to speak to her. Yet the King of kings likes us to draw near to His feet, and tell Him all our wants and wishes, and whether we feel sad or happy.

Even when we are busy we can look up with our heart and say, "My God, I thank Thee." Those who pray about everything are sure to prosper. They may be poor in gold and silver, but they are rich in faith, and no harm can come to them. Are we really trusting? Are we really praying? "Lord, teach us to pray!"

A. W. F.

CARE FOR YOUR CHILDREN YOURSELF.

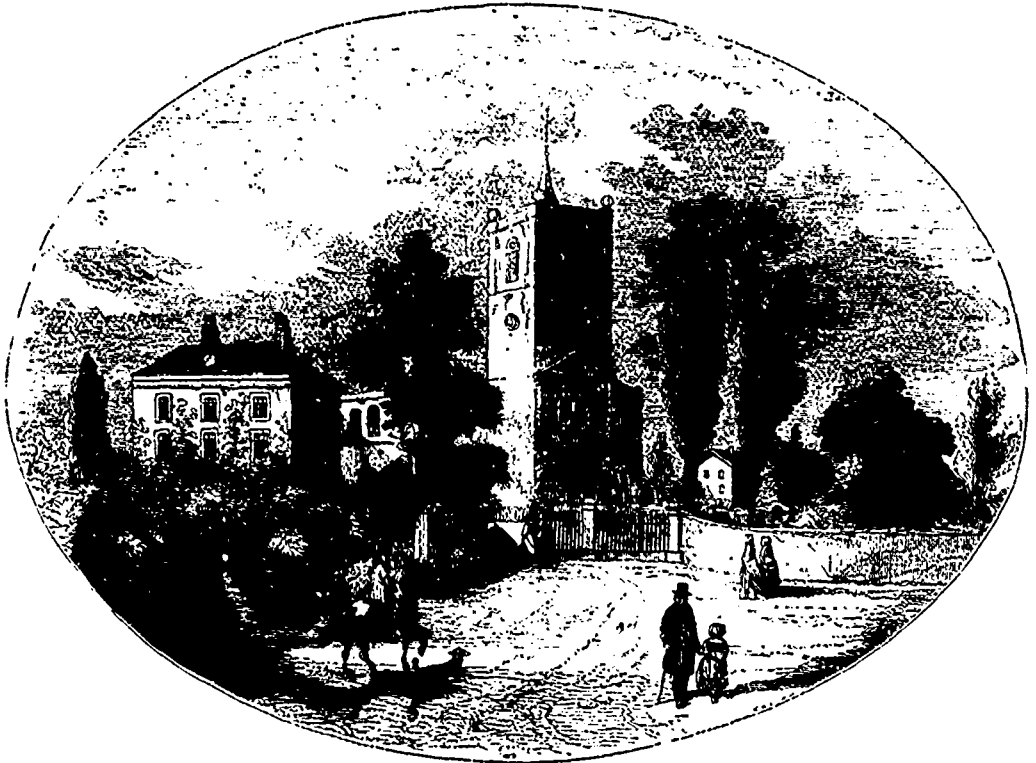


I AM a grandmother; have brought up a family of six lovely, devoted children, the youngest daughter of whom is a missionary with her husband in Turkey, and the motive power was love. Dear young mother, don't blame everything your little boy does. Watch him. Don't leave him to the care of servants, and when bedtime comes, which should be early, undress him yourself. Have him kneel and repeat his little prayer, "Now I lay me," and after he is in bed talk to him of the dear Shepherd who watches over the little lambs; and as he grows older, if any fault has been committed during the day, you will find this the time when he is most tender.

Oh! how often have I been talked to and blamed for leaving company and friends and devoting myself to my darlings; but, dear mother, I have had my full reward. Don't fret at your child; don't "nag" at him; get him a slate with round corners, and supply yourself with plenty of slate pencils. A dozen cost only a few pence. Let him scratch and draw and play with them. The slate will be broken, the pencils lost: renew them. Draw something on the slate, no matter how rude—cow, dog, cat—'twill interest him. Have him sit down in his little chair, place him a low chair before him, and give him empty spools or other playthings.

Do not give him too many commands. When you say "No," don't trifle with him, but let him see you mean "No," but don't say it too often. When he has stubborn fits, quietly take him and put him in a room by himself, or try diversion, or take no notice of him for a while.

I had all kinds of dispositions to manage. Don't whip your child if you can possibly help it; don't break his spirit, but direct it; and, above all, go constantly to your Heavenly Father—sewing, walking, any time—and ask for His guidance in training this little immortal soul, and He will give your mind such a bias that you will be enabled to do right. God bless and help you is the fervent prayer of A GRANDMOTHER.



Madeley Church.

THE ROBBER DISARMED.

MR. FLETCHER, the Vicar of Madeley, had a very profligate nephew, a military man, who had been dismissed from the Sardinian service for base and ungentlemanly conduct. He had engaged in two or three duels, and dissipated his resources in a career of vice and extravagance.

This desperate youth waited one day on his eldest uncle, General de Gons, and, presenting a loaded pistol, threatened to shoot him, unless he would advance him five hundred crowns. The general, though a brave man, well knew what a desperado he had to deal with, and gave a draft for the money, at the same time expostulating freely with him on his conduct. The young madman rode off triumphantly with his ill-gotten acquisition.

In the evening, passing the door of his younger uncle, Mr. Fletcher, he determined to call on him; and began with informing him what General De Gons had done, and, as a proof, exhibited the draft under De Gons' own hand.

Mr. Fletcher took the draft from his nephew, and looked at it with astonishment; then, after some remarks, putting it into his pocket, said, "It strikes me, young man, that you have possessed yourself of this note by some indirect method, and in honesty I cannot restore it but with my brother's knowledge and approbation."

The nephew's pistol was immediately at his breast.

"My life," replied Mr. Fletcher, with perfect calm-

ness, "is secure in the protection of an Almighty Power; nor will He suffer it to be the forfeit of my integrity and your rashness."

This firmness drew from the nephew the observation that his uncle, De Gons, though an old soldier, was more afraid of death than his brother.

"Afraid of death!" rejoined Mr. Fletcher; "do you think I have been twenty-five years the minister of the Lord of life to be afraid of death now? No, sir, it is for you to fear death; you are a gamester and a cheat, yet call yourself a gentleman; you are a man of profligate life, and still you say you are a gentleman; you are a duellist, and for this you style yourself a man of honour! Look there, sir—the eye of Heaven is fixed on us—tremble in the presence of your Maker, who can in a moment kill your body, and for ever punish your soul in hell!"

The unhappy man turned pale and trembled with rage. He still threatened his uncle with instant death.

The vicar, though thus menaced, gave no alarm, sought for no weapon, and attempted not to escape. He calmly conversed with his relative, and at length perceiving him to be affected, addressed him in language truly paternal, till he had fairly disarmed and subdued him. He would not return his brother's draft, but engaged to procure for the young man some immediate relief; he then prayed with him, and after fulfilling his promise of assistance, parted with him, with much good advice on one side, and many fair promises on the other. Such was the power of courage founded on Christian principle.

A GERMAN LAUNDRESS'S STORY, AND OTHER SKETCHES.



My father was a poor day-labourer in a village. I cannot call him a peasant farmer, though we had a little cow and a field or two; but I am glad that I was brought up in a country village, because poor children in a town have so very few enjoyments. And now I am glad also to remember that we were poor, because the poor value all things so much more than the rich do. Rich people have so many things to vex them, and so little pleasure. The rich farmer holds back his corn from the market till it is dear enough to satisfy him, and if the price falls, he is almost out of his mind. As for us, you should have seen what joy we had when we brought home our little bit of barley, and ate bread of our own corn;

FRIENDLY GREETINGS. No. 209.

and when we had a good apple crop, or when the cow calved, was there not joy!

When I look back to those times, it seems to me as if there was nothing but happiness; all the rest has been long forgotten. And I had God-fearing parents, and that is a blessing for a lifetime. In this respect I was more fortunate than thousands of rich children. When one has so little that one does not know how to find food for the second half of the year, and yet, when the whole twelve months have gone round, one has not died of hunger, it is like the working of a miracle, and one takes renewed courage.

I did not know for a long time how good it was at

home. In my tenth year I went to be a nurse with a farmer's wife. It was not exactly what I wished for; but it was what I needed, and there I learned to bestir myself and use all my faculties. Shortness of food I never knew there; and one mouth the less to feed was a relief to my parents. Whenever I saw my mother carrying home bread, I used to feel so happy to think that they had my share to eat. Our parents died early, in honour and peace; we children buried them decently, and the clergyman preached a sermon for them.

After this I went, as it were, from pillar to post, to all sorts of service, just such as I needed in all ways, and last of all to the old landlady of the "Star," who had the character of changin' her servants once a week. If I imagined that I had been before knocked about, I had now to learn a different lesson. But I thought to myself when I entered her service, "Now here I mean to stay, and I shall just see which can stand it out longest, she or I." And I held it out the longest; I lived with her twelve years, and the old landlady treated me like her own child. Of course, you understand, she could box her own children's ears! When she died she left me a hundred gudden down, a handsome bed, and a chest. Now, don't you think that was good luck for such a poor wench?

After this it would have been better to have again gone out to service, especially if I could have found another mistress like the old landlady of the "Star." But then came my husband, who was a butcher, and would have no nay, but I must marry him. It might have been put off, but still I should have wanted it, and it is such a rare thing now-a-days for a poor girl to get a husband. But it was a great delight to me when we went to a house of our own; and one way and another I passed many a happy hour there—our Lord be thanked and praised for it!

If I should now say that my husband were not rough and churlish, I should not speak the truth; but that might come from his trade, but he did not begin at once his worst. He had a pleasure in our first lad, that makes me cry when I think of it; but his trade did not flourish; we had not capital enough; he took to living too much from home, and also to drinking.

Those were anything but good times; but the harder they were, the more help from God I experienced. Oh, nobody who has nothing but prosperity knows what it is, when one feels oneself alone in the whole world, to hear a voice saying in one's heart, "Fear not, I am with thee!" And it would have been a great deal worse with my husband if God had not enabled me always to meet him with gentleness, and perhaps all might have been again right had he not fallen into bad company.

I was the mother of four children, all of whom died one after the other: I would have been very willing to have gone with them, but God did not then want me.

One fine morning my husband set off and left me. It was unkind of him, and at first it seemed to me harder to bear than death itself; but, after all, it was a blessing that he was not taken off in his sin. I was

able to pray for him, so that, when he was dead, I knew not but that my prayers might have helped him.

Thus I was left alone with one little lad; and a good lad he was, but weakly. Of my household gear not a stick remained; however, I then began the washing, and you can have no notion what a nice living I was able to make in that way. Sometimes, too, I went about selling children's toys; but after a time I had to give that up.

Frequently, when I came home at nine o'clock at night from a day's washing, I would begin again at home and wash till one o'clock in the morning for single gentlemen, and again at the wash-tub early in the morning. I would not spare anything for my lad; he had as good schooling as a prince. And he took to his learning so readily. Oh, you should have seen his writing-book!

It is a great good fortune when people are fond of their business—and there is nothing more beautiful than washing! I have often thought to myself the most elegant ladies do nothing but make their beautiful clothes dirty; but thou makest them beautifully white! And when dirty things have come into my wash-tub, and afterwards have hung out in the fresh air like driven snow, my very heart has laughed in my body; and when I have heard people say, in passing by, "That is a beautiful wash; it can be no other than the butcher's wife, Catherine!" I don't think that the joy I then felt could be a sin.

My lad was confirmed; the clergyman was so pleased with him! I wanted him to be apprenticed to a trade, and he would hear of nothing but being a watchmaker. That seemed to me like pride; but he was so remarkably clever with his hands, that the clergyman recommended it. God be thanked and praised that I let him have his way! I sold my garnet necklace and my silk wedding apron for the first payment of the apprentice fee. Oh, how delighted the poor lad was when he first went into the room where was such a number of watches!—the remembrance has made me happy all my life.

And he would have been, the master often said, the cleverest watchmaker he ever saw; but the dear Lord knew better what he was fit for, and made an angel in heaven out of him. And he had such a beautiful Christian's end, it would have done any person, much older than myself, good to have witnessed it. He prayed at the very last, quite plainly, "Lord Jesus, in Thee I live, in Thee I suffer, in Thee I die; Thine I am, whether dead or living; make me, O Jesus, eternally happy. Amen!"

About two years ago a person from America brought me a message from my husband, who had died in a hospital in New York. And he prayed me, for the love of God, to forgive him, for he had come plainly to see what he owed me. If things had gone on better with him there, he would have returned home. Now, therefore, if he was brought to a knowledge of what his duties were towards me, there is no doubt but that he repented before God.

Thus God has taken from my heart this anxiety also, and I can die peacefully. And that He has sent

to me a kind young lady before my death, to take good care of me, is what I should not have been bold enough to ask for: I should have been willing to have died alone, if He had thought well; but He has done much better, blessed be His name!

Such, in substance, was the story of the poor laundress. As to her worldly concerns, she expressed but one wish: "If I could only once more do a good wash! I can't think who is to take it after me."

She gave to her kind nurse the Bible which had belonged to her lad; and not long after she fell into a quiet sleep, from which she never awoke.

DO WHAT YOU CAN.

IN a close, miserable London street, a little boy used to sit out to breathe such air as he could find. He was ten years old, but no bigger than he had been at three, for he was a dwarf. He was weakly and deformed besides, poor little Bobby, and his round back made him sit very uncomfortably in his chair.

The neighbours, though poor, were very kind to him, and all the children round about, knowing that he could not join in their games, ran to tell him at what they were playing, so that he was interested in watching them.

One day the rector's wife took her little daughter Alice to see Bobby. Alice had a kind little heart, and it made her unhappy to see any one suffer, and she thought that his back must give him pain, though it did not, and that it caused his young face to look old and distressed.

His chief amusement was reading, but sometimes the stories described merry, healthy children, and made him long to be like them. He showed Alice his books, and a plant which he tended with great care. Every spring he watched it budding into green with great delight. "You are very fond of flowers, then, Bobby?" The loving look in his sunken eyes was answer enough.

"And is this true?" he asked, showing her one of his tales describing the country. "And I have heard about it too, but I never thought anything could be so beautiful except up there," meaning to indicate heaven, but he could only point to a scrap of grey sky above the chimneys. Alice was shocked to see the longing in his face for a thing which she saw every summer. It had never occurred to her that there was any one who had never seen the country. "Bobby," she said, "you shall see the country. I promise you that."

"It would cost too much, and I have nowhere to go to, and mother and father couldn't spare me. I earn a trifle, and it's a help."

"I never knew you did anything, Bobby." His pale face flushed at speaking of himself. "There's a gentleman close by who is blind, and I read to him. Sometimes we get talking, and he tells me wonderful things about—"

"The country, and the flowers and the birds?"

"Yes, and of God and the angels; and," lowering his

voice, "I am sure that the angels are not like me—they are straight and beautiful; and one day when God is ready for me He will send one of these beautiful angels to fetch me to Him."

"But, Bobby, I don't think it can be right to want to die. I'll ask mamma."

Mrs. Godfrey was much interested in her daughter's little friend; and soon they took him into the country, and put him to lodge with a cottager near them. Bobby was in raptures at all he saw. No dirty streets, nothing but neat cottages with gardens, handsome houses, ivy-covered churches, green hedges, fields covered with buttercups, waving trees, pretty hills, and chattering, singing birds flying about, and seeming almost to touch the blue heaven above him. Soon his mother came too, and each day he understood more and more that Alice was right. "It must be wrong not to rejoice in so beautiful a world," he said to himself, "and to wish to leave so many who are so good to me, and try to make me happy and contented. And yet of what use am I? How much I would like to do, oh, so much! and yet how can I?"

He spoke of these thoughts to Alice's mamma, and she had a little conversation with him.

"Though your body is feeble, my child," she said "you are gifted with an intelligent mind, and you will be of use to others. Already you have been able to benefit that gentleman who is deprived of that greatest of blessings—sight. He can't see the green fields, Bobby, nor read of them, and he can't see the faces of those he loves."

"Oh! how dreadful it would be if I could not see!" he said, clasping his hands as his eyes looked with thankfulness towards the cottage where his mother was, and at the beautiful scene around him. "And," he went on eagerly, "you think that I am of a little use, although I am so different from other boys. If I could—if I could only——"

"Bobby, I wish you had been able to come to the class last Sunday. I will read out a portion of what we read."

She opened the Bible at the twenty-first chapter of the Gospel of St. Luke, and read: "And He looked up, and saw the rich men casting their gifts into the treasury. And He saw also a certain poor widow casting in thither two mites. And He said, Of a truth I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast in more than they all. For all these have of their abundance cast in unto the offerings of God, but she of her penury hath cast in all the living that she had."

"What do you understand by that, Bobby?"

"That it is not the amount that one gives or that one does, that pleases Him; but if one gives or does as much as one can."

"Exactly, Bobby, for He is a just God. Give Him your mite, dearest child, cheerfully, ungrudgingly, with all your heart, indeed, and He will 'commend' you as He commended the poor widow."

She had to leave him; but as she left him she saw that his face looked very thoughtful, but also very bright. His diminutive fingers pressed her hand as he said, "I understand; I can be happy now."

THE OLD STONE-BREAKER.

INSTRUCTION of the most useful kind sometimes comes from sources and at seasons the most unpromising. A clergyman, in impaired health and depressed spirits, had left his home to spend a few weeks at the house of a relative who resided in a distant county. While taking a lonely walk one morning, he saw an old man kneeling on the roadside, breaking stones. He went up to the stone-breaker, and asked him his age.

"I shall be seventy-two if I live till my next birthday, which will be next Wednesday."

"I thought you must be about that age," said the clergyman; and then added, "I am sorry to see one so advanced in years obliged to work so hard, for I suppose you find it hard work."

"Indeed, sure, it is hard work, but not so hard as when I used to do it standing. I find it much easier since I took to do it on my knees."

At the same moment that he uttered these words, down fell his hammer, and a stone of considerable size divided into several pieces. The clergyman said, "Hard as your work is, mine is much harder."

"Work, hard work?" said the stone-breaker, inquiringly; "you're a gentleman; you don't know anything about work; it's we poor people that work. You know nothing about harder work than this. Though, thank God, I can work and be happy."

"Ah!" said the clergyman, "my good man, you little know to whom you are speaking;

you are speaking to one who is a workman oppressed with the greatness of his work. I have to work for the salvation of souls. It is a hard work. I should be as happy as you are, if I could break the stony hearts of my hearers as easily as you break these stones."

"Perhaps you try to do your work standing, sir; try to do it on your knees; I think you'll find you can do it then."

"Thank you, my good man. your advice is at least worth consideration."

"Why, don't you see!" said the stone-breaker, "if you try on your knees to do your work, you get Almighty God to help you, and the work will be well done, and easily done too."

The clergyman had made an appointment which he was anxious to keep, and he therefore hastily bid "Good morning" to the stone-breaker.

As he went on his way, "Try to do it on your knees" was repeated again and again to his inmost soul. He had not gone far before he began to pray

most earnestly for some of the most depraved and hardened of his flock. He continued to pray for them in private; and on his return to his parish his prayers increased in fervour and frequency. God heard his prayers, and soon after he resumed his public services he had the high satisfaction of seeing a decided change in the character and conduct of several of his hearers.

The hint may be profitable to parents, teachers, ministers, and others who labour for the salvation of souls—"Try to do it on your knees."

THE POOR MAN'S INVENTORY.

"Be content with such things as ye have."—*Heb. xiii. 5.*

THE believer is to be content with such things as he has. Behold Lazarus at the gate of the rich man, his body full of sores, without shelter, food, or friends. Is he to be content with such things as he has? He has nothing. Yes, he has something. Let us try to take an inventory of it.

He has a Father in heaven, upon the throne of thrones, possessing all wealth, and exercising all power, forgetting him never, and making all vicissitudes and severities of life conduce to his ultimate unspeakable good.

He has a Saviour in heaven, one that died for him, and washed him from his sins in His own blood; his righteous Advocate ever interceding for him.

He has a Holy Spirit, who has taken up His

abode in that polluted heart, to make it new, spotless, and perfect.

The angels of heaven are his friends: they celebrated the day of his conversion with songs of transport; they hold his crippled limbs so that he does not fall, and they are waiting to convey him to Paradise. All the saints in the light of heaven wait for him, that they may know him and love him.

He has promises more in number than it is possible to count, and each so precious that all the money in the world could not buy it. He has an inheritance ten thousand times more magnificent than the boasted patronies of earth.

Everlasting life is his. His diseased body shall be fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body. To all his other treasures he may well add this treasure, contentment.

Oh! to grace how great a debtor
Daily I'm constrained to be!
Let that grace, Lord, like a fetter,
Bind my wandering heart to Thee.

Imern.



The Old Stone-breaker.



A STREET OF HUMAN BODIES.

IT was promised to God's ancient people that no more should victorious foes say to her, "Bow down, that we may go over;" no more should the chosen race lay down their bodies "as the ground, and as the street, to them that went over."

The custom here referred to was formerly practised in the South Sea Islands, but with a different meaning. It was performed in families of distinction on the marriage of the first-born. For example, a pet girl had recently been wedded, and something must be done to render the occasion memorable. The son-in-law, gaily dressed in the fantastic trappings of heathenism, makes his appearance outside his dwelling, where a continuous pathway of human bodies leads from his own doorway to the house of his father-in-law. The entire tribe, men, women, and children, assemble to honour their dusky kinswoman by permitting her recently married husband to walk over their backs as they lie prostrate on the ground. As lightly as possible does this distinguished individual step over this "street of human bodies." Should the numbers of the tribe be insufficient to reach to the dwelling of the father-in-law, those first trodden on rise up quickly and run through the admiring crowd, again to take their places in front.

I once saw a somewhat similar sight, in quite another part of the world, which I shall not soon forget. I was walking one Sunday morning just outside the walls of Jerusalem, when I found my-

self in the midst of a large crowd of Arabs, all talking and shouting, and in a state of wild excitement. Evidently something extraordinary was about to take place, and so I followed them.

Presently the crowd stopped, and the ringleaders of it cleared a large space in the middle of the road, the people forming a ring round it. Into this open space stepped thirty or forty men, who flung themselves upon the ground, each man lying on his face close alongside another, until there was a compact mass of men stretched on the ground. As soon as the men lying on the ground had been packed closely together, an opening was made at one end of the crowd, and an old man with a long white beard entered the open space, riding upon a magnificent horse! and then, amidst the shouts of the people, he rode over the long row of men lying on the ground. Again and again these wretched men threw themselves down, and allowed themselves to be trodden upon by the horse and its rider!

Were any of them killed? I cannot say, as their friends lifted them up as soon as the horse had passed over them; and if any scream of agony was uttered as the horse trod upon their backs, it was drowned by the wild shouts and clappings of the bystanders.

But why did these men throw themselves down before the horse and its rider? Were they compelled to do so? No. Was it a punishment? No. Were they paid for doing it? No. They did it of their own accord, because they were told that if the horse

trod upon them they were certain to go to heaven ; and they were ready to do or suffer anything if only they could make sure of reaching heaven !

You will say, What foolish men these must be ! Yes, they are certainly foolish in thinking that entrance into heaven is to be obtained by being trampled on by a horse ; but, nevertheless, they will rise up in the day of judgment and condemn many of us. They will stand up and say, "We poor Arabs longed to be saved, but we had no Bible, we did not know anything about the Son of God coming to die for us ; we never had anyone to tell us of God's love and of His longing to forgive us, and to welcome us to Himself. All that we were taught was that if we allowed one of our holy men to ride over our bodies, and went through the agony of being trampled on by the heavy hoofs of his horse, then we might at last get to heaven. And so anxious were we to be saved, so earnestly did we long to reach heaven, that we were ready to go through any suffering, we were ready even to be killed, if only we could by that means be saved. But you, though you had a Bible in your house, the Gospel preached close to where you live, and many around you who were willing to tell you all about God's glorious salvation, you went on week by week, month by month, and year by year, and never made the slightest effort to be saved, never were in earnest about escaping hell and reaching heaven !"

My friend, if you are not anxious to find out how you may be saved, though surrounded by opportunities of finding out, what excuse will you give at the day of judgment ? Those poor Arabs will condemn your indifference ; you will be speechless.

Octavius Walton.

MARTHA AND MARY.

Two old women sat one afternoon in a bright room. The elder, Martha, who had turned three score years and ten, had invited her dear friend Mary, who was only a few years younger, to have an early cup of tea. They both loved the Lord, and their great delight was to talk of Him who had done so much for them. They were very full of a hymn which had been newly introduced into the mothers' meeting they attended on Monday afternoon.

"Have you found the text that belongs to our hymn ?" Martha asked, when she had made the tea, drawn the table close to the fire, and sweetened her friend's cup with sugar. "Pour the milk in to suit your taste, Mary," she said, and then repeated her question, "Have you found the text which belongs to our hymn ?"

"Of course I have, Martha ; the very first thing I did after I got home from the meeting was to turn to the Psalms. It's the one hundred and twenty-sixth, verse two : 'Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing : then said they among the heathen, The Lord hath done great things for them.' Our hymn has most to do with singing."

"You're right, Mary. Now listen to me saying the first verse :

'I feel like singing all the time,
My tears are wiped away ;
For Jesus is a friend of mine,
I'll serve Him every day.'

And I do like the chorus, 'I'll praise Him, praise Him ! I'll praise Him all the time.' It is just true, Mary : Jesus is my Friend ; He has filled my heart with joy and peace ; He has made me to sing songs in the night ; and I will serve Him so long as I live here, and through eternity in heaven."

"Supposing I take the next verse, Martha, to see if I know it ; and you follow on with the third, and leave me to finish up.

'When on the cross my Lord I saw,
Nailed there by sins of mine,
Fast fell the burning tears ; but now
I'm singing all the time.'

Do you know, Martha, what it is to cry when you think of what Jesus has done for us poor sinners ? The first time I understood what a sinner I was, and what a great Saviour He is, and thought how much He suffered for me, I couldn't keep the tears back ; but now I can sing, for He is my risen Redeemer, sitting at God's right hand, and He is holding and keeping and feeding me every day and all the hours of the day."

"That is just how it is with me, Mary, and I certainly have proved the truth of the third verse of our hymn :

'When fierce temptations try my heart,
I'll sing "Jesus is mine !"
And so, though tears at times may start,
I'm singing all the time.'

I don't believe any old woman has sharper temptations than I have. The devil is so busy with me ; he tries me when I read and when I pray—and he puts all sorts of thoughts into my head, so much so that if my poor old body is not quite well I am apt to get depressed. Then I cry out, 'My dear Saviour, Thou art mine. I cannot do without Thee ;' and often the tears come, and peace and joy soon fill my heart, and I begin to sing."

"The peace of God which fills a believer's heart is past understanding, Martha. It comes straight from God. I do indeed desire to tell with my voice and in my life the wondrous story of the cross. Let us sing the last verse together."

The voices of the old women were not very melodious, but their hearts were full as they sang out—

"The wondrous story of the Lamb,
Tell with that voice of thine,
Till others, with the glad new song,
Go singing all the time."

A RISEN JESUS.

On the third day after the burial of the Lord Jesus Christ, three sorrowful women, very early in the morning, came to His tomb. They had watched His dying agonies while standing by His cross, and had seen Him laid in the sepulchre. And now, on the first day of the week, they had come

to embalm His body, and to look upon it for the last time. In the awful tragedy of the crucifixion they had forgotten the promise their Lord and Master had frequently given to them, that He would rise and live again after death, never more to die.

What a scene awaited them! The stone was rolled away from the door of the sepulchre, and two angels in white clothing appeared to them, announcing the fact that Jesus was risen, and soothing their fears—for they had been much afraid when they saw such glorious heavenly messengers. From that moment their sorrow was turned into joy; and soon the disciples of Jesus went everywhere preaching the good tidings of salvation through the crucified and risen Saviour.

Are you "seeking Jesus," my reader? Are you anxious to know His salvation, and to yield yourself to Him? There is no reason why any seeking heart should be afraid. Let the angel's words bring encouragement to your heart: "Be not affrighted: ye seek Jesus of Nazareth." Consider this sweet name "Jesus." From the worst present consequences of a sinful and godless life, and from all the eternal ruin, punishment, and misery which awaits you, if you be yet unsaved, Jesus is almighty to deliver you.

Many whose condition was more desperate than yours, and whose guilt was greater, have yielded themselves up to Him, and have found Him to be a willing and all-sufficient Saviour. A dying felon first turned to Him for mercy and salvation while undergoing the extremest penalty of human law, and he has for more than eighteen hundred years been enjoying the pure delights of Paradise, purified and forgiven!

Since then multitudes from among all nations have found in Jesus all that they needed for time and for eternity. He has made even profligates, worldlings, and drunkards fit companions for His saints, yes, for the very angels before the throne of God. Let this encourage you—not one who sought Him sincerely in repentance and faith has ever sought Him in vain.

No sinner can now plead in vain. Jesus is just the Saviour you need, and you are just the sinner He seeks. Only believe, and nothing in your case can render void God's promise: "He that believeth on Him is not condemned," but "hath everlasting life."

A MOTHER'S STORY.

"I AM sorry to find you in bed," said Mrs. Stone to a poor woman whose careworn face bore the marks of deep suffering.

"I am ill, ma'am," she replied; "but it's more mind than body, I believe. I am so weak I can hardly stand. If I get up I feel so faint that I long to go to bed again."

"Suppose you tell me your story, Mrs. Noble; I may be able to comfort you, and we can ask the dear Lord to strengthen and help you," answered Mrs. Stone, drawing a chair close to the bedside, and sitting down so near to the invalid that she could hear easily her low voice.

"It is my boy, my youngest son, who is bringing my grey hairs with sorrow to the grave!" sobbed Mrs.

Noble; "it's hard work for a mother to have to tell of her own. You know, ma'am, he's fond of drink, and left his home some months ago because he wanted to be free. He came to see me one day, and said, 'Mother, I'm going into the country; work is scarce about here, and there is plenty to be had at Shelton. It's about forty miles away. I want a few more shillings to make up my railway fare, will you lend them to me? I shall soon send you back the money when I begin to work.' He spoke so nicely, telling me that he meant to reform, that I believed him. 'Jack,' I said, 'you wouldn't deceive your old mother; she'll have to put her Sunday dress away to raise what you want.' He kissed me and was so thankful, my heart warmed to him, and I promised the money should be ready for him next day. He wouldn't stay the night, for he had several matters to square up before starting. He returned next day, and I gave him the money, and I put up a bit of bread and cheese, and a rasher of bacon and a bottle of tea, and away he went. 'I'll be sure to write, mother,' were the last words he said. So he left me. But he did not go away; a friend told me he was living in his old lodgings about three miles off. My own son had deceived me. My heart was bowed down with grief, but I couldn't harbour anger against my own.

"Four months passed, and he came again.

"He gave a soft tap at the front door. I opened it. There stood Jack looking so sorry. 'Mother,' he said, 'I've come to ask you to forgive me. You know I deceived you, but now I am really going to be a better son, and turn over a new leaf.'

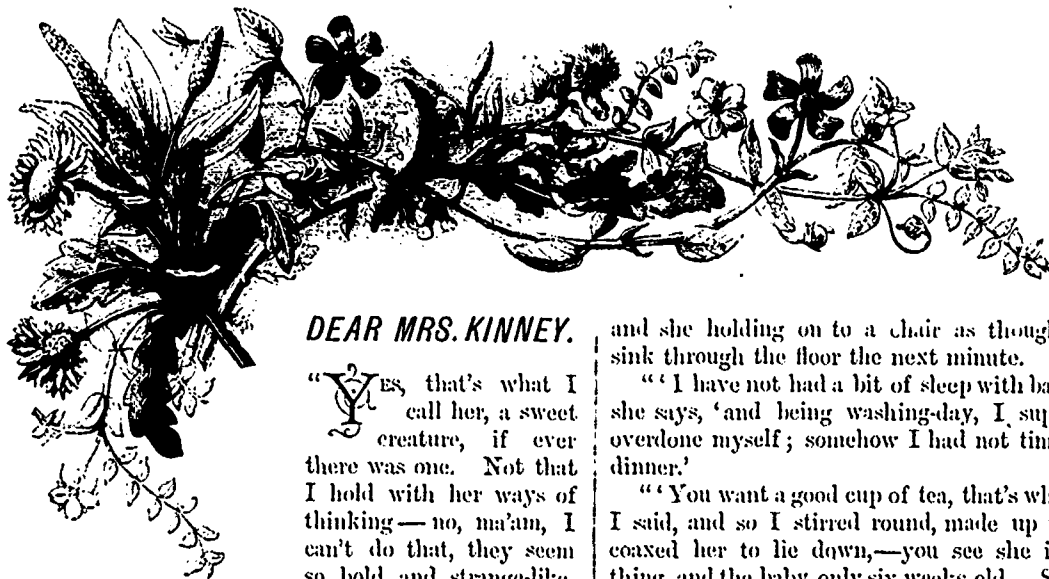
"'Thank God!' I replied, and began to cry. He stooped down and kissed the tears away.

"After a little while had passed in talking, Jack said, 'Mother, can't I do something for you? It's a damp day for you to go out; do you want any shopping seen to? If so, I'll go for you.'

"I thanked him, and told him I should be glad if he would fetch me six penny-worth of pork to make his father a pudding for supper. I had a two-shilling piece and one sixpence in my purse. Some feeling I cannot account for kept me from giving him the two shillings; I handed him the sixpence. He went away, and I've never seen him since, and it's at least five weeks ago. Do you wonder, Mrs. Stone, that my poor mother's heart is well-nigh broken?"

"It is indeed a sad story, my friend. Still, I would bid you pray and wait patiently. All things are possible to God. Drink hardens men's natures, and makes them cruel to those who are nearest and dearest to them. Many of us are treating God much worse than your Jack treats you, and yet our Father bears with us and wins us back to Himself by love, for God is love. Do not cast Jack off, and if you find it hard to forget and forgive his wrong-doing, turn to Isaiah xlix. 15: 'Can a woman forget her sucking child? . . . yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee.' Oh, the wondrous love of God in Jesus Christ! Who can measure the length or breadth of that love?"

"Now let us pray together, and plead that the Holy Spirit may break your son's heart of stone, and lead him to Jesus his Saviour."



DEAR MRS. KINNEY.

“YES, that’s what I call her, a sweet creature, if ever there was one. Not that I hold with her ways of thinking—no, ma’am, I can’t do that, they seem so bold and strange-like.

But they are not bold in her; I would not lay a mite of blame on her, ma’am. She comes and looks at me with her big blue eyes as innocent as her own baby’s, and says:

‘I tell the Lord everything just as it comes, Mrs. Bean, and He always helps me through. There’s nothing too little, nor yet too big. I pray over the toothache just as quick as I do when Robert is out in a storm.’ Robert is her husband, ma’am, and mate on a steamer.”

Mrs. Bean belonged to the clothing club of which I was one of the collectors, and she told me all this in answer to my inquiries about her next-door neighbour. I saw that she was at leisure and inclined for a chat, so I took the chair she offered, and asked what she found so strange in Mrs. Kinney’s religion.

“It isn’t the religion,” said Mrs. Bean, catching up a stocking and beginning to knit, “but her way of taking it. I pray to the Lord for grace and pardon, and to supply all my needs, but I don’t go into particulars, and I don’t think I am going to float through life on a wave of glory either. But she does; and when she breaks down she says it is her own fault too.

“We had some very straight words about it the other day. We walked home from church together on Sunday, and there had been a fine sermon about ‘Rejoice in the Lord,’ and Mrs. Kinney she was quite set up with it.

“‘That is the sort of life that’s worth living!’ she said, with her eyes sparkling and her cheeks pink. ‘There is goodness enough in God to keep us singing hallelujah all the time. Why, there is not a minute passes without bringing something to praise Him for.’

“Well, of course I agreed with her. It’s true enough; at the same time, we are but sinners, struggling through a hard world, and there is plenty to cry for as well as sing about.

“The very next day I went in to give Mrs. Kinney some yarn I had got for her, and there she was as white as a bit of paper, the baby lying on the bed,

and she holding on to a chair as though she would sink through the floor the next minute.

“‘I have not had a bit of sleep with baby all night,’ she says, ‘and being washing-day, I suppose I have overdone myself; somehow I had not time to get any dinner.’

“‘You want a good cup of tea, that’s what you want,’ I said, and so I stirred round, made up the fire, and coaxed her to lie down,—you see she is a slip of a thing, and the baby only six weeks old. So I got her a good cup of tea, and when she had taken about half of it, and looked a sight better, I said, ‘It seems to me there’s other things beside religion needed; there wasn’t much hallelujah about you just now, Mrs. Kinney.’

“She put down her spoon and gave me such a look—a sort of surprised, grieved look. ‘Why, no,’ she said, with a choky sort of sigh, ‘there wasn’t a scrap, not one little mite. I’ve been all night trying to bear with baby, and then get my wash done, and felt worse and worse the more I tried. I never took my weakness to Jesus, so how could He lift it off me? I tried to bear it all myself,’ she said, and two big tears stood in her eyes. ‘No wonder I broke down.’”

“And how have things gone on since?” I asked, as Mrs. Bean came to a pause.

“She has been as bright as a bee, ma’am, although the baby has taxed her a good deal, and she says I helped her to it. That when she turns faint and weary like, and feels discouraged, my voice speaks up again—‘Well, there isn’t much hallelujah about you,’ and then she just takes her trouble, whatever it is, to Jesus, and leaves it with Him. She says that’s the secret—to leave it—and then the song of praise comes into her heart directly.”

“She must have a very childlike spirit,” I said.

“That she has, ma’am. It is her gift, I tell her; but she won’t have it so at all. ‘It is every one’s gift to trust our Father in heaven,’ she says. ‘We are all His children—why should we not be happy and rest in His love?’”

“I am afraid it is because we do not believe His word,” I said, for Mrs. Bean’s account of her young neighbour had gone to my heart. “I wish I were more like your Mrs. Kinney.”

Mrs. Bean looked down. “I wish so too when I hear her talk; but yet it does seem rather strange, now doesn’t it?”

Yes, it did seem strange, and yet is it not written that the life of a Christian is “Giving thanks always for all things?”