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# BUDS AND BLOSSOMS,

AND

Friendly Greetings.

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

VOL. VIII.—No. 3.

MARCH, 1884.

WHOLE No. 87.

## Essence From The Temple Censer.

### A WORD TO OUR YOUNG CONVERTS.

**T**HE importance of a good beginning in a religious life can hardly be over-estimated. The first few years of your Christian life will determine your Christian character. Let your life be an active one from the start; cultivate the habit of Christian activity. Use the talents God gives you. This is the law of their increase. Speak and pray in the conference meeting. Speak to your friends of Christ. Cultivate a taste for such reading as will aid you in Christian work, *be an active Christian and you will be a happy one.*

Too many, when they unite with the church, are hardly heard from again. Make yourself useful to the church thus you make the church a help to you. Whenever called upon do the best you can. Make the interest of the church and Sunday-school your interest. Give regularly and cheerfully. Inform yourself respecting the great interests of missionary and other denominational and Christian enterprises. Develop a broad, sympathetic, large-minded Christian character. Don't be satisfied to be a mere member of the church. Make yourself with God's blessing an influence in the church. Remember that your Christian life is made up of many *little* things not a few *great* things. Hence have a conscience in these little duties and services, for fidelity in these things makes us worthy of greater responsibilities. "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much." The approval of God on the smallest service dignifies such a work and lifts it into greatness. Don't undertake too much, but do well whatever you attempt to do. Be a *thorough* Christian—this requires consistency, devotion and consecration. Be a Christian everywhere, not an obtrusive one, but a modest, manly or womanly one, but not a silent one. Let your life tell the world that you have been with Jesus and have learned of him. Be a devout reader and student of the Word of God. Make this your counsellor in all things, and habitually, by prayer, seek to know God's will. Cultivate a love for your church. If you are a Baptist be one because you can't be anything else. Beware of the so-called liberalism and false philosophy of the times. Have no fellowship with any teaching that would lessen the claims of Christ and his word upon the confidence of men. Have convictions and do not apologize to any one for them. Be thoroughly loyal to the truth, come from where it may. *All truth is one.* Look on the bright side of things,—*"If God be for you who can be against you?"* If doubts arise, try them on your

knees, at the bar of an open Bible. Help others and you will best help yourself.

The following letter was received a few days since, through a friend to whom it was enclosed, with a P. S. 'If Mr. Avery thinks well of letting his flock know that the good seed has taken effect in my case, he can do so.' Of course names are suppressed, and the letter is published with a desire to glorify God, and to magnify all sufficient grace and encourage others. Since receiving the letter, some one said, 'I have every faith in the writer, he has paid up his back debts; it is astonishing how he is getting along, and using his talent and Education.'

I received your welcome letter this morning, and hasten to answer it. I was very glad to hear your interesting account of the good work going on in Halifax in connection with the "Tabernacle," and pray the Lord will still further bless the efforts of His earnest and devoted servant—your zealous pastor, Rev. Mr. Avery. He has been, as you are aware, the means in the hand of a merciful Father of "turning me from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God," when steeped in Infidelity and Socialism; a sceptic of the deepest dye, who continually studied to perfect my unbelief, and root out the last promptings of a conscience almost extinguished by the degrading "Pleasures of Sin."

"My dear Friend.—The grace of God is sufficient for even such as I was, and the Power of His Love reached me through the barrier of Scepticism I had taken such pains to erect, cast the baseless fabric to the earth, and revealed my own miserable and dangerous condition. I was overwhelmed with a sense of my unworthiness and almost despaired. I determined to go no more to the "Tabernacle," and entertained very uncharitable feelings towards Mr. Avery for creating such unpleasant sensations. The Master in his love and mercy however overruled this resolution. I went to hear your dear pastor again, and through him, Christ spoke words of hope, and peace, and joy to my soul that Sabbath evening, which caused the angels of Heaven to rejoice, for the wretched Prodigal who had wandered so very far from God, has returned to His allegiance, and has known and proved the "unspeakable richness of His grace" ever since.

You may show this letter to my Revd. and dear Brother in Christ, as it may encourage him in his good work; ask him to send me "Buds & Blossoms" regularly, for which I enclose a year's subscription.

Letters have been received from the following absent members, who send gratifying reports of their remembrance of their spiritual home,—Mrs. Bennett, U. S., Miss McNeil, U. S., Mrs. Moland, U. S., William Pearce, U. S., Miss S. Glawson, N. S., Miss Grant, U. S.

## Work in the Regions Beyond, and nearer Home.



**S**ILENT PARTNERS have no place in the Christian church, since the Lord himself desires that the love he puts into a forgiven sinner's heart shall be ever testifying to other souls. —It is reported that openings for preaching the Gospel in Spain are presenting themselves in all directions. The inhabitants of towns and villages visited by colporteurs manifest a strong desire for the Word of God, and for evangelists to settle among them. But, unfortunately, the laborers are few, and cannot overtake the work which awaits them. Christians, should and must help. Help by prayer, help by considerate thoughtfulness, help by sending helpers, and help by the money power. Dare we hush our prayers! or relax our efforts? No! No! Because "Sin, misery, ignorance, have not failed to hold men in their dire grip. The heart of Christ has not failed to beat with holy compassion. His love has eyes as keen and clear as when they gave hope to the despairing long ago. His throne is tremorless. His purpose is unchanged. His command, 'Go; preach to every creature,' remains uncancelled." Our God is no respecter of persons.—(1) A terrible saying for all the ungodly among the great of the earth; (2) a soothing saying for all the devout among the lowly.

The Saviour taught nothing more pointedly than that men should prove by their doing the correctness of their believing. A close study of the New Testament will bring out for any one its constant and urgent instruction, that men are to be known by their fruits.

The four great Bible societies of this country and Great Britain issued, last year 4,980,240 copies of the Scriptures.

How much owest thou unto my Lord? Do you ever sing, "Love so amazing, so divine, demands my heart, my life, my all," and forget to pay your missionary contribution?

Six years ago, it was estimated that 2,000 missionaries were in the field, which is the world. The amount contributed to foreign missions \$6,000,000. To-day there are, 2,829 missionaries a gain of 829; and the foreign contribution \$8,967,500 a gain of nearly \$3,000,000.

Dr. Ashmore reports hatred to foreigners and unsettlement in mission work in consequence of recent war rumours.

It is resolved to increase the staff of the Congo mission to thirteen, and so strengthen. This shows great faith and zeal, for already death has claimed several workers as if jealous of their pushing into the heart of dark Africa.

Miss Ella Kyle in the United Presbyterian reports a revival in Egypt, amidst all the uneasiness of these troublous times.

THE RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY, LONDON has entered the eighty-fifth year of its existence. The income for 1882 was £ 215,000. Nearly £ 52,000 was expended for missionary purposes. Towards which £ 26,000 was paid from the profits of the business department.

As the Committee expressed it; "The messengers of truth sent forth by the Institution find their way to

many places which are altogether inaccessible to any agency. They have passed the wall of China, and have entered the palace of the "celestial emperor."

They have instructed the princes of Burmah, and opened the self-sealed lips of the devotee in India. The sons of Africa have received them in their bondage, and have learned the liberty of the Gospel. They have preached Christ crucified to the Jew, and also to the Greek; and they have made known to savage, as well as to civilized nations, the peaceful truths of the Gospel. During 1882, 809 new publications were issued, including 262 tracts. Its literature amongst the purest and best of the nineteenth century, is published, in 160 languages. Circulated during the year, (Tracts, Periodicals, Cards as well as books) 79,379,350, of which over 33,000,000 were tracts. The issues from foreign depots were over 14,000,000: making a total circulation of over 93,000,000. The circulation since the formation of the Society amounts to 2,192,589,870.

THE BRITISH AMERICAN BOOK AND TRACT SOCIETY was instituted in Halifax 1867. Since the formation of the Society, there has been received in Voluntary Contributions the sum of \$55,652. Of this amount 11,285, was received for capital, and is now invested in stock of books to carry on the work for which the Society is constituted, both by sale from the Depository, and also by Colportage. The remaining \$44,367, together with the profits arising from the sale of the books, has been applied to Colportage. Thus supported, our Colporteurs have performed labor equal to that of one man for one hundred and sixty two years.

The total sum paid for services and actual Expenses in Colportage alone has been \$72,789. Colportage is the great work of the Society. During the past sixteen years there have been 167 Colporteurs employed the aggregate time of their services being about 162 years. They travelled about 263,431 miles, and made 419,406 family visits, including 29,261 visits to Roman Catholic families. They found 1794 families destitute of the Scriptures and supplied them. They had personal religious conversation, reading of the Scriptures or prayer at 176,000 of the family visits made by them, and held or took part in 9194 prayer and other religious meetings. The sales from the Depository have been—of Periodicals, \$43,570, of Bibles and Religious books, 144,583, by Colportage, \$61,147, total sales, 405,959, gratuitous circulation by Colporteurs and from the Depository, upwards of \$18,300.

If this traffic is soul-ruining, how great and extensive is this ruin. Taking the statistics of the business in the United States, and comparing them with soul-saving instrumentalities, we find there is one minister for six rum-sellers; for one dollar given for the spread of the Gospel and Christian charities, there is more than thirteen spent for intoxicating drinks. There are six millions in the United States who regularly visit the soul-ruining drinking-shops, while there are not quite six millions of adult church-members. Sixty thousand drunkards die every year in the United States, and the ranks of the six hundred thousand drunkards are full as ever, while in an aggregate of 12,000 congregations, there was reported lately as the net increase for one year only a few over 7,000, not nearly one convert to each congregation.

Friendly and Earnest Words,  
or Gathered Pearls.



ASUALITIES are taking place constantly. We know not what will happen when riding with a friend for pleasure, or crossing the river in ferry-boat on business. Life is held by a brittle thread, and all its belongings are precarious. The Chicago *Tribune* counts up 125,000 human lives lost by earthquakes, tornadoes, shipwrecks, fires, mine disasters, and other accidents in 1883.

Reader, are you saved? Are your feet planted firmly upon the Rock of Salvation—Christ? If they are, “then shalt thou walk in thy way safely, and thy feet shall not stumble” (Prov. iii. 23), “for the Lord shall preserve thee from all evil; He shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in for evermore” (Psalm cxxi. 8).

But oh! if you are not saved, what tremendous responsibilities you have taken upon yourselves. Not saved! when your life is so uncertain and hangs upon a thread, which if snapped means eternal ruin for you. The day of grace ends with life.

Shall death come and find you unsaved?

“God commendeth His love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us” (Rom. v. 8). “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friend” (John xv. 13). The Saviour invites you to come to Him for salvation; the Holy Spirit strives with you; the Gospel is sent to you. “Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon” (Isaiah lv. 7).

“Now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation” (2. Cor. vi. 2). “Him that cometh to Me, I will in no wise cast out” (John vi. 37).

Come just as you are. Do not dream of preparation. There are no barriers round the cross of Christ except such as you raise by your own doubts. No burdened heart is hid from His all-pitying glance, no cares cast upon Him are denied His prompt sympathies.

*Salvation is of grace*—that is to say, God is wanting to give you it *all for nothing*, without a feeling in payment, without a prayer as the condition of it.

☞ *Thou wouldst be saved! Why not now?* Heed the invitations of divine love. “My son, give Me thine heart.” “Come, let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool” (Isaiah i. 18).

Will you be Christ's? Now, Satan whispers in your ear—“To-morrow.” Oh! man, heed him not; Oh! woman, beware. Oh! child, the Holy Ghost saith—“TO-DAY.” “To-day, if ye will hear my voice, harden not your hearts.”

Fifteen glasses of whiskey in fifteen minutes. A German made a wager to perform that feat in Cleveland recently. The exhibition took place on the Sabbath and quite as appropriately in a saloon. It was a success. It was impossible for it to be anything else. The German drank his whiskey, won his wager, and then died “as a fool dieth.”

The Study Table, New Books and  
Exchanges.

In this department we give short reviews of such New Books as publishers see fit to send us. In these reviews we seek to treat author and publisher satisfactorily and justly, and also to furnish our readers with such information as shall enable them to form an opinion of the desirability of a particular volume for personal use. It is our wish to notice the better class of books issuing from the press, and we invite publishers to favor us with their recent publications.

*Bible Pictures for little people*, illustrating New Test. scenes, by uncle Harry. Published by Sunday-School Union, London, price 1/6. Is well calculated to help mother, in satisfying the little ones, whose curiosity and interest will be awakened by the illustrations to know all about it. The letterpress is of the best, and the book does truly illustrate New Testament scenes. We hope it will be introduced, and find a ready sale.

*Scripture Puzzle-Poems*. From Alexander & Shepherd, London, E. C., England. We are glad to notice that the author has reached a second edition enlarged. Because, in a very enticing and attractive manner, he draws out scriptural knowledge, and often reveals ones ignorance of very simple Bible facts. A *Sermon to young men*, By a fellow-Student, Archibald S. Brown. It is full of racy and spiritual thought, the essence of gospel simplicity and sweetness.

*The Musical Herald*, Franklin Square Boston. This Magazine for the musical is gotten up in splendid style.

*Acadian Scientist*, Editor, A. J. Pineo, Wolfville, N. S. We welcome, and enjoy the notes, scientific though they be.

*The Presbyterian Witness*, Halifax, N. S. It is to us a new exchange, but not a new friend, it has often spoken very kindly of BUDS and BLOSSOMS. It is true and honestly christian and presbyterian. The Editor puts Christ first, and is loyal as every man should be to his own convictions.

*The Watch Tower*, New York. Without decreasing the mental, spiritual or material worth of their paper, the publishers have reduced the price of this first class weekly to \$1.00.

*The Christian Visitor*, Edited by Rev. E. Hopper, D. D. and Rev. E. M. Saunders, D. D. Is as full of vigorous life and, determined energy as ever. Struggling with the manifold difficulties of a denominational organ to give Baptist news and Baptist views. See Advt. elsewhere.

*Canadian Baptist*, Toronto. Makes a special offer in BUDS and BLOSSOMS. Which shows they not only desire to increase their circulation, but have faith in the value and attractiveness of their paper.

*A trip Round the World*, by Coop-Exley. Published by H. C. Hall & Co., Cincinnati, U. S., \$1.50.

The book is in the form of a series of letters, written and mailed from various points of interest during a trip around the world, by the above named travellers, who as they journeyed, preached Christ, and considerably noted many things and facts, both interesting and curious, which makes the book useful and spicy reading. It is illustrated with twelve Albertype plates, which must have added very materially to the cost of publishing and curtails the amount of reading.

☞ Very cheering notices are given by the press, and our exchanges. We realize this is no small assistance in developing the circulation of “BUDS AND BLOSSOMS”; we would ask the kindly disposed still to

help, for our magazine needs, on account of its spirituality, a little forcing before it can root itself into the new ground, over which we, every month, scatter hundreds. Especially do we rely upon the prayers and assistance of those who love Jesus, asking them for His sake to introduce B. & B. to the notice of others. It will enlarge the field of opportunity, and by increasing the paying list, enable us to overtake the increasing demands.

The following in sending subscription, payed one dollar. The extra 25cts. for our free list; Mrs. Bennett, Mr James Hushman, Miss Davies, Mrs. McCabe, Mr. Silas Covey, Mr. Earls, Mr. Gervan, Mrs. Phillips, Mr. B. Fielding, Mr. Ed. Clay, junior, Mrs. C. Ehler, Miss Grant, Mrs. Richies.

### Our Ribbon of Blue or Temperance Items.

One of our young members writes, please send me a few pledge cards; I have just started a Sunday School, and a Ribbon of Blue meeting. It is calculated by Cannon Farrar that the English nation spend, for intoxicating drinks, £130,000,000 a year, indirectly as the result of drunkenness £100,000,000 more. A popular minister in the U. S. recently said:

Hon. Hiram Price, United States Indian Commissioner, in his annual report, says an Indian, in speaking to him in reference to whiskey among their people, said: "We don't make whiskey ourselves, and we tell our young men not to drink it, but we can't help it as long as white men sell it to them. We don't know how to make the white men take the whiskey away, but the great men at Washington do. We hope they will help us." The people must let their representatives know their mind by their votes. *Votes cum prohibet.* Let us show our colours, and be true to our blue.

It is not considered a breach of royal etiquette for the guests dining at Queen Victoria's table to decline to take wine.

There are now calculated to be thirty-six members of Parliament, and eighteen English mayors, who are advocates of Total Abstinence.

A story is told of a teetotal draper at Romsey who began life as a drunken journeyman tailor, but who rose to a position of wealth and influence after taking the pledge, and was a prime favourite with Lord Palmerston. On one occasion his lordship said, "Somers, you'll never have the Maine law." "I beg your pardon, my lord, we shall have the Maine law." "Very well, then, you must change public opinion. Her Majesty's ministers are the servants of the people, and what they demand the ministers must concede." "Yes, my lord, we understand that perfectly, and we are rapidly changing public opinion against the liquor traffic."

We are glad to report five of our deacons actively engaged in the School. Teachers rejoice in their scholars, conversion. The first Sunday in Feb., the actual S. S. attendance was 212. Collection \$7.85. Still faith cries and strives for a larger blessing. Pray for Sabbath-School workers. How much owest thou unto my Lord? What service art thou rendering? We must not live for ourselves alone. Every human being, whether in the depths of sorrow, shrouded by ignorance, or sinking in the sea of sin, has a claim upon us strong as had the dying thief on the dying Saviour.

The Spiritual interest at the Tabernacle is, we feel, deepening. The religious feeling in the meetings on the Sabbath and at the weekly prayer meetings has been growing for some months past. The Tabernacle never drew larger congregations than at present. The enthusiasm in its work was never greater, nor moved on with less friction or noise.

## Home Circle.

*Thankfully Received.* Mr. H. Taylor, \$1.25; Mrs. Richie, \$1.00, paid to extra chair account. Mr. Mughlig donated his bill for labor, \$3.50; Mr. Silas Hubley, \$1.00, omitted in a former list. We shall be glad if friends will help us to pay for the 100 extra chairs, just purchased, 25cts. will put your chair there for a friend. Mrs. Bennett kindly donated \$6.00 for "BUDS AND BLOSSOMS," and towards deficit in tract printing. Miss McNeil, one year's subscription to Sword and Trowel. For several years, we have thus been kindly supplied.

Baptisms at the "Tabernacle," Jan. 27th, should have been 4 instead of 3. Feb. 10th, 3. Feb. 17th, 2. By letter, 3.

### Olive Branches.

Jan. 30th. The wife of Captain A. J. Rhude, of a daughter.

### FADED LEAVES.

WOLFVILLE, Feb. 5.—The Rev. S. W. DeBlois, M. A., D. D., the honored and much beloved pastor of the Wolfville Baptist church, died at his residence, the parsonage. Though Dr. DeBlois had been laid up from active work for several months and was scarcely expected to resume his pulpit duties, his death was quite unexpected. Dr. DeBlois was born in Halifax in 1827. After the death of the Rev. Theodore S. Harding in 1855, Mr. DeBlois was invited to take charge of the Wolfville church. He responded to that call and began his important work in that village in Dec. 1855. He continued pastor of the Wolfville church till his death, a period of over twenty-eight years. Many doubtless mourn, as we do, the loss of such a good and useful man; and feel deep sympathy for those who are left behind. Nevertheless, knowing he rests from his labours, and is freed from all sorrow and pain, being for ever with the Lord; we bow our head and say, "even so Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight."

Who listeth—follow—to the field again;  
Justice with courage is a thousand men!

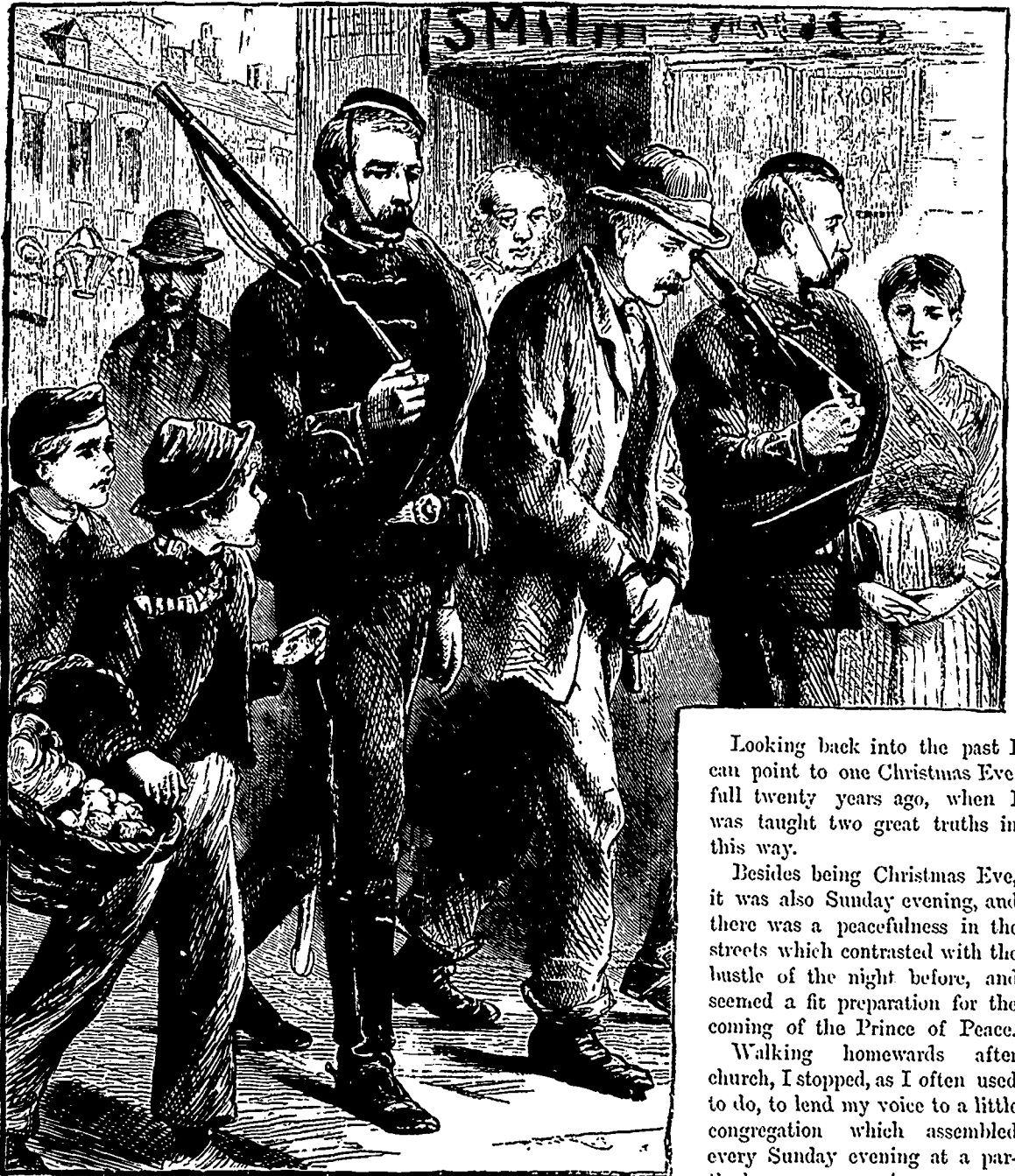
Mothers have laid wreaths upon the graves of soldier sons whose blood has flowed for glory, but

They are men who die for glory;  
'Twas a God who died for love.

Is there less of the hero in the minister whose life is given to Christ? Not on his grave, but on his brow the tribute rests; it is not flowers, but a crown, and it fade/h not away.

Abraham Crow died, Feb. 5th, aged 77. For many years, a pensioner in H. M. Dockyard. Spared until the grasshopper, had become a burden, and his natural force abated. He nevertheless maintained till the last his simple implicit trust in Christ and Him crucified.

# PEACE MAKING AND PEACE BREAKING, AND OTHER SKETCHES.



The Deserter.

**D**o you ever listen to all the remarks which you chanced to hear from people whom you passed in the course of a long walk, and try to patch them together afterwards? I have done it many a time, reader; and I assure you I have learnt many lessons from these arrows shot at a venture.

FRIENDLY GREETINGS. No. 182.

Looking back into the past I can point to one Christmas Eve, full twenty years ago, when I was taught two great truths in this way.

Besides being Christmas Eve, it was also Sunday evening, and there was a peacefulness in the streets which contrasted with the bustle of the night before, and seemed a fit preparation for the coming of the Prince of Peace.

Walking homewards after church, I stopped, as I often used to do, to lend my voice to a little congregation which assembled every Sunday evening at a particular corner. A man was preaching earnestly, touched, per-

haps, by the season which seems to open all hearts; he pleaded lovingly, eagerly, that we would take Jesus for our Saviour and our King.

Two girls stood near me, and after listening for a moment, one linked her arm in that of her companion, and tossing her head, exclaimed, "Oh yes, we've heard



all about that before." The two walked away with a laugh, and after joining in the hymn I followed. But the words seemed to haunt me. The old, old story had no charm for them, just because it was so old. What would they say when brought face to face with death and judgment?

They had not even the excuse of the poor heathen who have never heard of the Gospel; but their own lips condemn them, "they had heard all about that before," yet they turned a deaf ear to the Saviour's words!

I began to wonder whether I was at all like these poor girls. I had found peace and life in Jesus some time ago, but were His words as dear to me as when I was first converted? Was I as full of thankfulness for His great mercy?

I was roused from my thoughts by the shouting of some of those men who seem to delight in making darkness horrible by calling out so dreary news.

"Hulloa," said a gentleman who was passing, "I wonder whether that's true, or whether it's only a catch-penny. I hope it is true, for there's nothing I should enjoy more than giving those French fellows a thrashing. If we do have war, it will be a regular flare up this time."

We passed on, each in our separate paths, and he little thought what effect his remark had made upon me. Hitherto I had been one of those who thought war was glorious; but now, when I had been trying to realise the nearness of Christmas Day, and had been looking on towards the great day when Jesus should come again in glory, the thought of war seemed to jar upon me.

I sat in my arm-chair after supper, and one by one all the horrors of fighting came before me. The desolate homes, the widowed wives, the bereaved mothers, the awful battle-field, where shrieks of men and horses mingled with curses and prayers of the dying; and where men made in the image of God rushed at each other like wild beasts, not because they had any private cause for revenge, but simply because they were paid to fight, and dared not refuse.

Then I saw a poor deserter being led off to be shot, because he had run away in time of war. Near at hand stood his young wife, with hard, stony gaze, as if she did not realise what was going on. But as I looked she seemed to rouse from her stupor, and lifting her hands to heaven, she cried, "O God, how long shall this wickedness go on? How long will people call things by the wrong names? Oh, horrible war, when will it be at an end? and when will the men who promote

it be punished instead of the poor tools whom they employ?"

Starting in my chair, I found I had been asleep, and that the poor deserter was only a dream. Still, such a scene might often be witnessed, and the words which fell from the mouth of his wife were only too true.

Just then the Christmas bells rang out, and my thoughts turned again to the Prince of Peace, whose every word and look was love.

"Peace on earth," sang the angels at His birth; "Peace I leave with you," He said, just before His death; and His first blessing after His resurrection was "Peace."

We are Christians, then let us be Christ-like. Peace makers, not peace breakers. And let us resolve by God's help this Christmastide that, besides making peace in our own homes, we will lend our voices and any influence we may have, to stop war and fighting abroad. So shall every home and country remind us of the heavenly Jerusalem which we all hope to see, and whose very name is "Vision of Peace." E.M.W.

### HE TELLS THE TRUTH.

ONE dull and drizzling morning in February, an old man with a happy-looking face, thread-bare clothes, and a wooden leg, was busily engaged sweeping a crossing in a crowded street.

He moved rather awkwardly on his wooden leg, and touched his hat to the passers-by, some of whom returned his salutation by a "Good-morning," or a small coin, while others passed on unheeding.

"Look, nurse, at that poor old man," cried a dark-eyed little girl, as she stood for a moment on the kerbstone, waiting until the stream of vehicles should have somewhat lessened. "He has only one leg. I must speak to him." And looking straight in the old man's face, she asked, "Did you lose your leg in battle? My papa has been in Egypt, but he has come back quite safely, and is not hurt at all. Were you wounded in a great battle?"

"No, missey." The old man shook his head, and looked very grave and sad.

"Then *how* did you lose your leg?"

It was not by any means the first time he had been asked that question, but he had never felt less inclined to answer it truthfully.

The child was waiting for a reply, and a painful struggle passed in the old man's mind before he stammered, "I—I was crossing a road and was run over."

"In the dark?"

"No, in the day-time."

The little girl looked puzzled for a moment, then a new idea seemed to flash upon her. "Were you tipsy?" she asked suddenly, with childish directness.

"I'm sorry to say that I was," he confessed.

"Come away, Miss May," said the nurse, who had only heard the last few words. "He is not a good man, and you mustn't talk to him. We can cross now."

"He tells the truth though he has been naughty," said the child; and away they went. The old man looked after them and sighed. It was years since he had lost his leg, but he had never forgotten the day of his accident, when, in a careless drunken fit, he was knocked down and run over by a heavy waggon.

He lost his limb and his chance of earning a comfortable living then, but he gained something in the days that followed—something that he would not have lost, as he now declared, for the strongest limb and the best situation in the world.

For in the days succeeding his accident, when he lay in the hospital tossing uneasily in bed, unable to obtain the drink which had been at once his solace and his curse, he realised the fact that he was a weak helpless sinner, and needed a powerful friend to save and help him. And when he found that One was willing, nay, had even *died*, to save him, he accepted the Saviour and went away, not leaping, but rejoicing in heart.

He was poor, for sweeping a crossing is not a trade by which men often make their fortunes, yet always happy and cheerful, because, whatever might be the weather, or however small his takings, his heart was full of peace.

Still, he had a good many trials, and not the least of them were the inquiries that were frequently made as to the manner in which he had lost his leg. It required a good deal of courage to tell a kind benevolent-looking person the true details of his accident, and to see the kindness visible in the face gradually dying away and giving place to a stern, sad, or reproachful expression, while the listener turned on his heel at the close of the story with a cold reply. But the old man never hid the facts, though it always cost him a painful effort to relate them. It was the least he could do for his Master, he said, to tell of His great goodness, and how could he tell how much the Lord had done for him if he did not mention the "miry clay" out of which he had been brought and kept?

It would have astonished some of his questioners to know half the struggle that went on in the old man's breast when they made their careless or well-meant inquiries. Many of the people who passed him morning by morning looked at the old man's smiling face, and wondered what made one so poor in this world's goods appear so happy. They did not know the joy of an unburdened spirit, of a clear conscience, of a mind at rest, but went about bearing the burden of secret sins, which are heavy indeed.

There was the errand boy, who had kept back a small amount paid by a customer a week ago, and had been planning ever since how to keep the matter quiet.

A gaily dressed young wife passed by, and appeared to be quite occupied in picking her way across the road and protecting her skirts from the mud. She had no penny for the old crossing-sweeper, for her mind was full of the bill which she had run up without her husband's knowledge, and she was thinking if she could contrive to pay part of it with the money given her that

morning to pay the butcher's bill. Anything to keep the truth from her husband.

Then came a man who was gradually acquiring the habit of drinking secretly, and using every precaution that it should not be discovered by his employers and friends, but making no effort to break himself free from a fatal snare.

From the portly old gentleman, who was arranging more speculations to conceal the fact that he was insolvent, down to the little girl who was late for school through looking into the shop windows, and was trying to make a plausible excuse about not being sure of the time, the effort was to conceal the truth.

What wonder that the poor old man with the wooden leg and the shabby clothes looked brighter and happier than any of them! He had no longer anything to conceal, for the very darkest and blackest sins of his life had been confessed to Him before whom "all things are naked and open," and had been forgiven at once and for ever.

L. D.

### TRUE LIFE.

SIR THOMAS SMITH, Secretary of State in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, sent for his friends, the Bishops of Winchester and Worcester, a short time before his death. He entreated them to draw up from the Scriptures (which were then not within the reach of many) a plain and exact statement of Divine truth and the way of salvation, because "most men knew not to what end they were born into the world till they were about to go out of it."

The more celebrated Secretary Walsingham, in writing to Lord Burleigh, said: "We have lived long enough to our country, to our fortunes, and to our sovereign; it is high time that we began to live for ourselves and for God."

The learned and pious Donne, on his death-bed, in taking a solemn farewell of his friends, said: "I count all that part of my life lost which I spent not in communion with God, or in doing good."

The spirit of these anecdotes is expressed happily in the following lines of Cowper:—

"He lives who lives to God alone,  
And all are dead beside:  
For other source than God is none  
Whence life can be supplied.

To live to God is to requite  
His love as best we may;  
To make His precepts our delight,  
His promises our stay.

But life, within a narrow ring  
Of giddy joys comprised,  
Is falsely named, and no such thing,  
But rather death disguised.

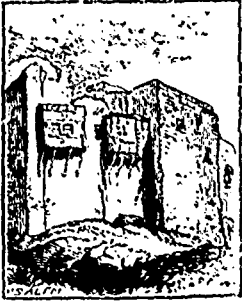
Can life in them deserve the name,  
Who only live to prove  
For what poor toys they can disclaim  
An endless life above?

Who, much diseased, yet nothing feel;  
Much menaced, nothing dread;  
Have wounds which only God can heal,  
Yet never ask His aid?"



THE FEEDING OF FIVE THOUSAND.

READ MATTHEW xiv. 13-21.



WHEN we are in sorrow, especially for the loss of a friend, we naturally wish for retirement. Jesus, as man, had all the feelings of the human heart, except sin. Probably it was partly because He wished to mourn in private for John that He now went apart into a desert place.

But it was also perhaps because His hour was not yet come, and He would not needlessly expose Himself to danger. The wicked king who had killed John, and who thought that Jesus was John risen from the dead, might now put forth his hand against our Lord; so Jesus withdrew Himself.

But it was not easy for Him to be in retirement. The people, hearing where He was, followed Him on foot from their homes. We should not have been surprised to read of Jesus telling them that He wished to be alone, and that this was no time for them to come to Him. A mere man, though a kind one, would very likely have done so. Grief is apt to be selfish. People in sorrow sometimes give way too much, wrap themselves in their grief, and shut themselves up from the claims of others on them. In this, as in all things, Jesus is a pattern for us. He went forth at once from His retirement; and when He saw the multitude, many of them bringing their sick to be healed, He "was moved with compassion toward them, and He healed their sick." It is always happiest, as well as best, to follow Christ. In times of depression and sorrow, to do something for others is often a great relief.

By this time the day was drawing to a close, and the people were far from home. How should their wants be supplied in such a place? Here we see the difference between man's compassion and God's. The disciples were not unkind toward the multitude, they did not wish them to suffer. Let them go into the neighbouring villages and buy themselves bread; this was what they proposed. When a case of distress is brought before us, are we not sometimes too ready to rid ourselves of the difficulty in the way that will give us least trouble? It was easy for the disciples to say, "Send the multitude away;" but that was but poor help. Not such the help which Jesus gave, or the compassion which He felt. "They need not depart," He said, "give ye them to eat." The disciples were for getting rid of them; Jesus would supply their need.

But how could He, in such a place as that? There was no difficulty with Him. Five loaves and two fishes, in His hands, proved sufficient to feed five thousand men. When we are in want or difficulty, let us not doubt that He is able to give us what we need. Though He does not now appear in the midst of us, and work outward miracles, yet all power is His still. Those who seek Him will still find their

wants supplied. No outward means may appear, yet He who is Lord of all will never be at a loss for means.

And if He both can and will supply our bodily wants, He will certainly not leave our souls unfed. We may be placed in the most unfavourable circumstances, in a very desert as to religious advantages, yet our Lord can feed us in the wilderness, and bless even the smallest means to the good of our souls.

Before He brake the loaves He looked up to heaven and gave thanks. Let us not eat of what God provides for us without first thanking Him for it. Every time the table is spread, though it be but with the plainest food, God gives us a fresh gift.

How abundant was the supply! "They did all eat, and were filled." All those five thousand, and their women and children too, not only ate, but ate enough. There was no hunger or want remaining. So complete is the work of Christ in all things! So full and bountiful is God's supply for the wants of both soul and body!

Yet must there be no waste. Though He was there, who could by His almighty power increase the provision without limit, yet the fragments must be gathered up, nothing must be lost. God gives enough, but He would have us waste nothing that He has given, not even a crust of bread. Much, it is to be feared, is wasted through carelessness. But see how carefully this broken bread was gathered up, and that by Christ's command. In like manner would He have us gather up the fragments, not only of bread and meat, but also of our *time* and opportunities.

How much came of this gathering! No less than twelve baskets full of fragments; far more than what there had been at first. This would go far towards feeding the multitude again. Before, they were fed by a miracle, now by means of thrift and care; but both times by the gift of Christ. Even so does God supply our wants variously; sometimes without any labour of ours, sometimes by means of our own care and pains. But however our food comes, let God be praised for it, for it comes from Him.

F. B.

TURN BACK A LITTLE WAY.

If thou hast passed an aching heart,  
Turn back a little way;  
Let not "thy giving" be a part  
To act another day.

Give, whilst the weary eye is dim;  
And if a tear should fall,  
'Twill be in gratitude to Him  
Who heard the mourner's call.

When thy "to-morrows" all have died,  
Kind actions will appear,  
Like angels waiting at thy side,  
To bless thee, and to cheer.

Then, in the charities of life  
This impulse still obey,  
And if thou passed an aching heart,  
Turn back a little way.

Charles Swain.



### THE FATAL SHOT.

**T**HE following story, told in his own words by a poacher, shows how easy it is to begin to follow evil ways, and proves the force of the words of the wise man, "My son, when sinners entice thee, consent thou not."

It's no matter how Dick and I persuaded James West to take to poaching. It is enough to say that we did so, and hard work we had to get the better of his scruples, for James was an honest lad, I will say that for him; and it's my belief that if the battoo system had not been brought into this parish, James West would never have become a poacher. But a poacher he did become, though never a very hearty one; he was always half ashamed of what he was doing, it seemed to me.

He had been out about half-a-dozen times with Dick and me, but only in the outlying coverts; we had never been able to get him into any of the home preserves, until one day, the fifteenth of December—

a day, never, never to be forgotten by me, or any that were with me. The gentlemen had been shooting Purrwood, with "beaters" of course, and James West was one of them.

After it was over, I joined West as he was going home, for Dick and I had determined to have a shy at Purrwood that very night, to see if we could pick up some of the wounded game, which was sure to be lying about in the wood, and we wanted to persuade James West to come with us, if we could manage it, for he knew the wood better than we did by a good deal; and besides, having been beating them all day, was sure to know whereabouts the wounded birds were likeliest to be.

As soon as I came up to him I saw that something was the matter; he looked red and angry, and answered my questions as to what sport they had had with an oath, and "he didn't know, nor didn't care."

I soon found out the cause of his anger. It seems that he had knocked a rabbit on the head whilst he

was beating, and had put it in his pocket, instead of carrying it in his hand, "to be out of his way," as he said, and not with any intention of stealing it, and I am quite sure he spoke the truth. But it seems Dodd, the under-keeper, who saw the legs of the rabbit sticking out of his pocket, didn't believe him, but taxed James with meaning to steal it, and threatened to tell the Squire; upon which West's blood got up, and high words passed between them.

The Squire hearing the dispute, inquired the cause, and he told West that he *hoped* what he said was true, but that he must say it was a very suspicious circumstance putting the rabbit in his pocket. Why didn't he carry it in his hand, as was usual?

"I made him no answer," said James to me; "but I might have said, 'Do you think I should have been such a fool as to leave the rabbit's legs dangling out of my pocket if I had been going to steal it?' I didn't want his rabbit. I can get a dozen of 'em any night I choose, or hares either, or pheasants, if I have a mind to it."

I have no doubt in my own mind that West spoke the truth about the rabbit; I am certain he had not the least idea of stealing it; as he said, it wasn't worth his while. No, the Squire was wrong there, and I am very sorry for it now, though at the time I was very glad.

In the present state of West's mind, I found little difficulty in persuading him to join Dick and me that night in beating up Purrwood for the wounded game. We knew that the keepers would be out at daybreak on the same errand, and so we thought we would just take the work off their hands for this time.

At one o'clock we agreed to meet in an old chalk-pit, just outside the wood; and, true to his appointment, James West made his appearance. There was a good moon overhead, but the sky was very cloudy, and a high wind blowing, so that the light of the moon was often obscured.

After a short consultation in the chalk-pit as to our plan of operations, we entered the wood, West leading the way up a broad green path that cut the wood in two. He took upon himself the task of bringing us to that part of the wood where most of the wounded birds were. Presently a white rabbit ran across the path; West aimed at it, but didn't fire; we each had a gun.

"There's a chap we can see to shoot, if we can't see nothing else," he said; "we'll have a white rabbit for supper, let come what will on it."

Poor fellow! little did he think what sort of a white rabbit he was destined to shoot. We had been in the wood about an hour and a half, and had picked up a good lot of wounded game of all sorts, besides knocking over a few hares and rabbits with our sticks, and smoking a brace or two of pheasants off their perch. We had not fired off a gun yet, indeed, we never did if we could help it; we took them more to defend ourselves from the keepers than for anything else. We were all three standing under a big beech packing our game into sacks, one for each, when I thought I heard the crackling of a branch.

"Whist!" I said; and we all three dropped work

instantly and listened. The snapping of the dead branches and the rustling of leaves was now plainly heard, and almost immediately a large black dog made its appearance amongst us. We knew him in a moment; he was the under-keeper's dog; the scent of our dead game had no doubt brought him.

It was plain enough that the keepers were out, and we were in a pretty fix. We tried to coax the dog to come to us, meaning to destroy him if we could catch hold of him, but he was too knowing for that, and only answered our coaxing with a low growl.

Presently a whistle was heard some way up the wood; the dog pricked his ears, and upon its being repeated, he ran swiftly off. This was a great relief to us, and, snatching up our sacks, we made for the opposite side of the wood to where the whistle seemed to come from, with every chance of effecting our escape.

We had nearly reached the edge of the wood, and had come to a halt, in order that one of us should go forward to see that the coast was clear, before we ventured into the open ground, when again the snapping of dried wood and the rustling of dead leaves was heard.

"There's that dog of Dodd's again," said West; "I'll shoot him if I can get a chance; see if I don't."

"Nonsense, let the dog alone," said I; "you'll be getting us all taken if you play the fool in that way."

At that moment the moon shone out bright, just upon the spot where the noise came from, and glanced upon something white.

"It ain't no dog; it's a white rabbit," cried West; "we haven't got *one* white rabbit this evening; but I'll have this one, let who will say nay; so here goes."

And though both Dick and I jumped forward to stop him, we were too late. Bang went the gun, and then we heard a noise in the bushes, and a gurgling, suffocating cry.

"Why, it's a hare you've shot, not a rabbit," said Dick; "don't you hear it cry like a child, as them hares always do? Come, look sharp and get it, Jim, and let's be off; we shall have them keepers upon us in no time; a great fool you was to fire."

Jim West dashed into the bushes, and I caught a glimpse of a figure rushing towards the same spot from the field, for we were just at the edge of the wood. In another instant, shriek upon shriek filled the air. I ran to the spot from whence the sound proceeded, burst through the bushes, and there I beheld a sight enough to freeze my blood. It was dreadful! I reeled back and leant against a tree, for I thought I should have fallen.

Jim West was standing opposite, his face convulsed with horror, his eyes fixed and his mouth open, but he neither moved nor spoke. On the ground lay his child, in the agonies of death; and leaning over the child, screaming and frantic with grief, was its mother.

I won't attempt to describe that scene; I could not if I would, for I was too terrified and bewildered to know or to mark what passed. All I know is, that the keepers surrounded us; they met with no resistance, and we were all taken; but I thought nothing of the poaching that night, nor for many another; the

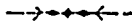
figure of that poor little child, and the horror-struck faces of its father and mother, long haunted me, ay, and they do so still.

May Heaven forgive me my share in it!

Mrs. West, having been informed that her husband was out poaching in Purwood, and that the keepers were on the look-out there also, determined to try and save him from being taken. Not liking to go quite alone, she took her daughter with her. It is supposed that she left the child for a few moments, whilst she went further on to try and find West. The rest is known.

I need only add that poor Mrs. West never held up her head after that fearful night; she pined away slowly but surely, and died some years after of a broken heart, which was called "consumption" by the doctors. James West is still alive—alive in the body, but dead in the mind; his reason has left him.

This is a sad tale indeed, and all this misery came from poaching! *only* poaching. Who can say, when he deliberately breaks the laws, how far he will go—where he will stop? Many a man has gone out a poacher, and come back a murderer. Let us each pray, "O Lord, keep me from the very appearance of evil."



### A WALL OF FIRE OR WALL OF SNOW.

**I**T was during the campaign which brought the allied armies to Paris, in 1814, that an aged woman and her grandson, who lived in a small village in Germany, were preparing for their nightly rest.

The peasants universally entertained a well-grounded terror of the marauding Cossacks, who formed the light cavalry of the Russian army, and who, penetrating the most obscure solitudes, swept away all on which the poor inhabitants depended for their subsistence. From the position of the advancing troops, these unwelcome visitants were at this time hourly expected in the village.

"Grandmother," said the child, when their simple supper was done, "what shall we do if the Cossacks come here?"

"We must put our confidence in God," she replied, "for He never forgets any who trust in Him. And now, my child, read the chapter, and let us ask our heavenly Father to take care of us."

The evening's portion was the second chapter of Zechariah, and the old woman called the boy's attention to the promise in the fifth verse: "I will be a wall of fire round about."

"But," said he, with the literal exactness of childhood, "will God really make a wall of fire round us to keep out the Cossacks?"

"I do not say that," replied the grandmother; "but He will certainly protect us in the best way; and if there were no other means of doing so but by fire, even that would not be wanting."

They went to bed and slept; the one in the carelessness of youth, the other in the calmness of faith. The night was quiet, and seemed unusually long, till the grandmother—though not a gleam of daylight

appeared—desired the child to rise and open the door.

On doing so, he found the entrance, as well as the window, blocked up with snow. As there were provisions enough in the house, they remained contented prisoners; and when, on the ensuing day, they contrived to liberate themselves, it appeared that during that very night the dreaded Cossacks had entered the village, and while the terrified inhabitants sought safety in flight, had destroyed some of their dwellings, and plundered all.

One cottage only, hidden by the drifting snow, escaped; and there, we may well believe, the aged Christian and young companion devoutly returned thanks to Him who had heard their prayers, and made a wall of snow no less effectual for their protection than one of fire.



### THE LITTLE WORD—NO.



**L**AST winter I spent a short time in a pleasant family. They were wealthy, and, so far as I could judge, a Christian family. The father held office in the church he had erected, and preserved through years of trial, that made him prematurely grey, the family altar. He was honourable and upright in business; courteous, kind, and forbearing in his intercourse with the world.

The mother, an estimable woman, professed herself willing to do and suffer for Christ, hoping to die and reign with Him. The only daughter was a lovely girl; but the sons—and here was a mystery. The eldest, a child of uncommon promise, entered at an early age upon a career of drinking and gambling, which ended in forgery, until he was cast out of the family circle as one unknown. The second, following in his footsteps, was awaiting in the county jail a trial that might sentence him for years to the State's prison. Children of prayer, of pious teaching and example, the fact was to me inexplicable. I expressed my wonder in the hearing of an old man who had long known them. Said he, "I can explain in a few words; it is from the father's want of power to say—No."

When they were children, and it needed but a word to guide them, he neglected to say No. As years rolled on, and he noticed the first steps in the way of wrong-doing, he excused them. And when they went too far he strove to curb them, but the boys had their own way, for it grieved him to say No. In after years when their souls were stained with crime—when, with all the yearnings of a father's heart, he took them again to his home, striving by gentleness to win them to the way of life, he dared not say No.

Christian parents, learn to pronounce at proper times the simple word, No. On it, under God, may depend the welfare and happiness of your children for time and eternity.



THE WATCHERS.

THE joy felt in heaven for the rescue of a single human soul is something much higher than we have any conception of. A faint idea of this was conveyed to me by a friend in Scotland, who had witnessed a deeply interesting scene in one of its bays.

On a dark and wild night a fishing-boat was expected back; there was no lighthouse to guide its course. The wind howled, the storm raged, and the surf dashed madly over the bar of the harbour. Gathered round the bay, on every available spot of ground from whence a glimpse of the boat might be obtained, were most of the inhabitants of the hamlet.

At first they seemed powerless, but quickly beacon fires were kindled on both sides of the harbour, which was very narrow at its entrance. Fresh fuel was placed on these occasionally; those who fed the fires never flagged, those who watched seemed never weary. An intense and almost breathless suspense held the assembled multitude, as out at sea might be seen at times a little black spot, now seen for a moment, now again hidden from view in the hollow of the waves.

The boat approached nearer and nearer the dangerous coast; there was little, very little chance of its escape. Expectation was strained to the utmost when the boat appeared on the crest of a wave almost in the harbour. One moment would decide the doom of the brave men who were toiling for life

in the midst of the danger, and in the presence of those they loved. It was agony.

At last the waves seemed to rise to an immense height; and the boat, which was but a plaything in their giant grasp, was hurled safely into harbour. A woman, whose nerves had been strained to the utmost was standing beside my friend. Now that all was safe she uttered the cry, "He is saved! he is saved!" and fainted away. It was a wife's cry.

We are but at best as the watchers on that bay; we may indeed light the fires, and give some intimation to those who are in danger of perishing where there is safety for them, even in the love of Jesus the Saviour. When, through our instrumentality, a soul is saved, the joy to us ought to be great; but it is far greater in heaven.

HOW TO FORGIVE.

A N officer, travelling through Bengal, stopped at the plantation of a European, and found him reading the Bible in the native language to an assembly of about seventy or eighty people, men, women, and children, who appeared to listen with the greatest attention.

The next day there were a hundred hearers, the greater number of whom had been converted to Christianity within two or three years by the simple reading of the Bible. The stranger conversed with them, and heard them joyfully testify their hope in Christ.

Having occasion afterwards to see the magistrate of the district, he questioned him concerning the conduct of these Christians. "There is something extraordinary about them," replied the magistrate. "The people of this country are so quarrelsome that they daily beset the courts with their complaints; but for some years past not one of these has had a quarrel with any one."

When you feel injustice gail you, and unkind words irritate you, and something within you cries, "An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth," pray, and turn to the Word of God. Learn, by the sight of all the offences which the Lord pardons in you, to forgive the far less grievous offences which your brother has committed against you.

When you have been reading your Bible on your knees before God, you will not return evil for evil, outrage for outrage. You will then know what it is to love your neighbour as yourself; you will compassionate not only his physical sufferings, like the philanthropists of the world, but his spiritual wretchedness: and, with mutual help among those like-minded, you will go forward with a joyful heart and firm step towards your heavenly home.

O for grace our hearts to soften!  
Teach us, Lord, at length to love:  
We, alas, forget too often  
What a Friend we have above;  
But when home our souls are brought,  
We will love Thee as we ought.

# THE UGLY SUCKER,

AND OTHER SKETCHES.



Four time ago there grew in a minister's garden a damask rose. The tree was small, but it used to produce large quantities of very beautiful flowers. The minister was fond of his tree, and many a time did he cut its rich red blossoms and send them to some sick person to adorn and perfume his room. When the cold winds of winter had passed away, and everything began to shoot

This long sucker is doing all the mischief, and the sooner it comes off the better.

and bud, this rose-tree was not behindhand, and its owner looked forward with great pleasure to seeing its richly coloured flowers again.

In process of time the buds began to form, but they were poor and small, and Mr. Graham began to think that his tree would not keep up its character, and that he would have no flowers. At last he observed how very high one shoot of the tree had grown; indeed, every day it forced itself more and more upon his observation, for it was rapidly becoming quite a long twig. Up, up it shot, and indeed, at a short distance, it looked as though it were quite a distinct plant from the humble little tree from which in truth it sprung.

Well, here, at any rate, was promise of something good. The minister was no gardener, so he did not know but that from this branch he should have plenty of flowers, and he looked to it to make up the deficiencies of the other branches; but he looked in vain; there were leaves and thorns in abundance, but nothing more.

At length Mr. Graham bethought himself of applying to a neighbouring gardener, and asking his advice. The gardener arrived, and in one moment saw how the matter stood.

"Why, sir," said he, "this long sucker is doing all the mischief; it has taken all the strength out of the plant, and the sooner it comes off the better." So saying, the gardener began to feel in his pocket for his knife.

Mr. Graham hesitated a little about having it cut down; he suggested that it might be pruned a little at the top, or something of the kind, but the gardener insisted that it must come right off; and with one cut of his knife he soon laid it low.

Even if the rose-bush gained no other advantage than getting rid of such an ill-proportioned shoot, that was something in itself, but it gained a great deal more; from the day that the gardener rid it of such an incumbrance, it commenced to thrive again. Some of the buds which appeared withering broke forth into beautiful flower, many of the drooping leaves looked fresh and strong once more, and the tree became itself again.

The truth was, this ugly sucker had for a long time been doing it the greatest mischief; it had taken away the nourishment from every other portion of the plant, and there was not a bud or leaf that did not feel its exhausting drain. And while it was thus proudly exalting itself, and making a magnificent show, and taking away nourishment from everything within its reach, it was quite good for nothing; and if it had been allowed to remain, must have done great harm to the plant of which it was so unseemly a part. The gardener's knife seemed a quick, sharp remedy, much quicker than Mr. Graham liked at first; but the whole tree reaped the benefit of the application of its sharp edge, and now that the ugly sucker is gone, it is as good as it was in its brightest days.

But why have we taken so much trouble in chroni-

cling the progress, the mischief, and the end of this ugly sucker? Certainly not for its own sake, but for that of our readers, to whom it teaches one or two wholesome lessons.

Sometimes a very ugly sucker springs up in the heart, and does great damage there. We sometimes see many beautiful flowers in a life, such as kindness and gentleness of disposition, and diligence and denial of self, until up springs something that injures them all, and they begin to languish and die.

*Selfishness is an ugly sucker.* It will make everything else languish, it will take a prominent place, no doubt, alas! only too prominent; it will suck from everything else to feed itself; and when it has grown and thriven, what has it to show? Nothing but what is disproportioned, without beauty or use. Avoid selfishness, there are few uglier and more mischievous suckers than that.

*Pride is another ugly sucker.* How high it starts up! what a figure it makes! how much it strives to outtop all around! how little does it concern itself about detracting from its neighbour, provided only it can feed itself! It must needs concentrate all attention upon itself. But a haughty spirit goes before a fall, and if anything is to be done to avert the threatened ruin, the knife must be produced—this pride must be cut down. It will not do to prune it a little at the top, to hope that it will come to good, or anything of the kind; it must be severed altogether and cast away.

*Idleness is another very ugly sucker.* One which, I am sorry to say, is by no means uncommon, and runs very high. Idleness seems to wither a multitude of good feelings which otherwise might have produced beautiful blossoms. It is hard to be idle without being vicious; and idleness, if it have nothing else to feed upon, will live on a man's soul, and then everything is in the fair way, not only to languish, but to die.

Let each one try his own heart, and see whether he has anything springing up there at all like this ugly sucker, if so, cut it down at once. So long as you allow it to remain, it will dwarf and starve everything that is good. Pray, too, for the Holy Spirit of God to assist you in this blessed work.

—♦—♦—♦—

### WISE MAXIMS.

**K**EEP good company or none. Never be idle. If your hands cannot be usefully employed, attend to the cultivation of your mind. Always speak the truth. When you speak to a person, look him in the face. Never listen to loose and infidel conversation. If any one speaks evil of you, let your life be so virtuous that none will believe him. When you retire to bed, think over what you have been doing during the day. Never speak lightly of religion. Abhor sin if you would be happy. The shortest and surest way to live with honour in the world is to be in reality what we appear to be.

I AM ALMOST HOME.

"I AM almost home," said a dying Christian to a young friend, to whom she was much attached, and who, at her earnest request, had come to pay her a farewell visit; "I'm almost home." She was indeed. The labouring breath, the emaciated frame, all told her days on earth were numbered; but the bright eye, through which the passing soul still shone bright, spoke of a hope beyond the grave.

For many years a faithful servant to an earthly master, she had yet more faithfully served her Master in heaven, and lived a consistent Christian life; she could say, "I am almost home."

Looking up eagerly to her friend, she asked, "But, my dear, you think I'm safe?"

"Yes," said her friend; "for 'he that believeth on Him shall not be ashamed;' and you have believed."

"Yes," she said, closing her eyes, while an expression of the most entire trust passed over the worn face, "I have. I have hated sin with a perfect hatred, and desired above all things to serve Him."

Not another doubt clouded her dying hours. A little more suffering, and she was with Him whom her soul loved—her sorrow over. She had been sorely tried the last few years of her life, and now He who had never failed her in times of trouble on earth took her home. Her last words, when the power of speaking was almost gone, was a message to her husband. She could not see him, for he was dangerously ill in the next room. "Tell him," she said, "I am going to heaven where we shall meet—where we shall meet to part no more." They have met now; in a few weeks he also was laid to rest beside her.

One word of inquiry to the reader. If you were dying could you say, "I am almost home?" When all of earth is fading from you, when you are leaving all you love below, when you are going to stand before God, will you feel "I am almost home?" Is heaven anything to you now? Will it be then a home you have looked and longed for?

Do you know the way thither? "Jesus can make a dying bed feel soft as downy pillows are;" it is Jesus who takes away the fear of death, it is His love in the soul which lightens the dark valley, and chases from the ransomed spirit even the shadow of a cloud.

Is this love precious to you? Have you looked to Jesus? Look and live is God's promise. "I came to seek and to save that which was lost," are the Saviour's words. We are all lost in ourselves; do not wait till you come to die to find that out; do not leave the great work of repenting and believing till the last few days or hours of your life.

When the body is full of pain and weariness, it is not the time to begin to think about the saving of your soul. Then you want something to rest on, something to comfort you, some one to be with you; and if you would have all this you should go to Jesus now, ask Him for pardon, peace, and strength to serve Him as long as He pleases you shall live here. Ask for His Spirit to renew your heart, to prepare you for heaven; and then, when for you time is changing to eternity, when the lamp of life is flickering, soon to

be put out for ever, then with you too it shall be well. You too will be going home, and as your freed spirit enters the pearly gate, you shall hear 'he entrancing words—"Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." You shall join the throng of those who have "washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb;" and from His presence shall you go out no more.



THE UNSEEN BATTLE-FIELD.

THERE is an unseen battle-field  
In every human breast,  
Where two opposing forces meet,  
But where they seldom rest.

That field is veiled from mortal sight,  
'Tis only seen by One,  
Who knows alone where victory lies,  
When each day's fight is done.

One army clusters strong and fierce,  
Their chief of demon form;  
His brow is like the thunder-cloud,  
His voice, the bursting storm.

His captains, Pride, and Lust, and Hate,  
Whose troops watch night and day,  
Swift to detect the weakest point,  
And thirsting for the fray.

Contending with this mighty force  
Is but a little band;  
Yet there, with an unquailing front,  
Those warriors firmly stand.

Their leader is of God-like form,  
Of countenance serene;  
And glowing on His naked breast  
A simple cross is seen.

His captains, Faith, and Hope, and Love  
Point to that wondrous sign,  
And gazing on it, all receive  
Strength from a source divine.

They feel it speaks a glorious truth,  
A truth as great as sure,  
That to be victors, they must learn  
To love, confide, endure.

That faith sublime, in wildest strife,  
Imparts a holy calm;  
For every deadly blow a shield,  
For every wound a balm.

And when they win that battle-field,  
Past toil is all forgot;  
The plain where carnage once had reigned  
Becomes a hallowed spot.

A spot where flowers of joy and peace  
Spring from the fertile sod,  
And breathe the perfume of their praise  
On every breeze to God.



## QUEEN LOUISA AND NAPOLEON.

**I**n the opening years of the present century Europe was like a vast prairie on fire. The man who made the earth to tremble had gone forth, and Germany lay in chains at Napoleon's feet. Prussia was at his mercy; its army defeated, almost destroyed; Berlin, the capital, was garrisoned by French troops, and the royal family was driven to the frontier. Adding insult to injury, the conqueror had stooped to defame the character of the queen. Finally, on the raft of Tilsit, the French and Russian emperors met to map out Europe to their liking, and the unfortunate King of Prussia, stripped of his power, attended to hear his fate.

During all these trials Queen Louisa maintained her



faith. When all was lost she wrote to her father: "I am sustained by the belief that we are not the sport of blind chance, but are in God's hands and led by His providence, even through darkness into light, for He is light."

One evening a courier brought her a letter from the king her husband. When she had opened it she said, "A great sacrifice is required of me. I trust I shall have strength to perform it. The king wishes me to go to Tilsit to see the emperor." And she went, like Queen Esther, to plead the cause of her people.

Arrived at Tilsit, Napoleon sent a magnificent state carriage, drawn by eight horses and surrounded by

dragoons to escort her. We can imagine how her heart sank within her at the sight of this mocking splendour. But she forgot her own feelings in her anxiety to support her husband in this hour of trial. The king was calm, reserved, proud. "Stiff," Napoleon savagely declared, "stiff as an unbroken horse."

The conqueror himself felt awkward. He carried a riding-whip in his hand, which he kept on switching, and alternated between courtliness and rudeness. At first he tried a compliment, but it was quietly rejected. Then he roughly asked, How the king could venture to begin a war with him after he had conquered more powerful nations? The pride of the monarch and of the emperor were only increasing the irritation of each other.

The queen, with a prayer to God for help and guidance, interposed, and tried by gentleness to overcome the anger of the victorious soldier. "A soft answer turneth away wrath." Gradually she led the conversation away from politics, and spoke to him of his wife and other subjects likely to interest him. The emperor gradually forgot his irritation, and it is said that he promised the queen, at her intercession, that he would grant her request and restore Silesia to her husband.

Three years afterwards she died of a disease of the heart, aggravated, if not brought on by this and other trials.

She did not live to see the answer to her prayers or the reward of her efforts; but she never ceased to look for it. The time came at last. The invader was finally driven from Germany; and King Frederick William—having first returned thanks to the righteous Judge of all the earth—repaired to Charlottenburg, where she was buried, and laid his laurel wreath on Queen Louisa's tomb, as if to say it was hers, who had been the crown of his life and the glory of his reign.

There can be no doubt that it was to her example and words of faith that Prussia owed much of the spirit which resulted in the war of freedom. With the death of his much-loved consort, the light and joy of the king's life departed.

King Frederick died in 1840, and was buried by the side of his queen whom he loved while she lived, and of whose death he said, "This was the blow heaviest of all to bear." In the character of Queen Louisa, as has been remarked, "Germany saw its best self personified: love of liberty and country, pleasure in domestic and family life, taste for poetry, deep and pious gratitude for all the gifts of God." This may account for the high veneration in which her name and memory are still held throughout the Fatherland.



## THE MIDNIGHT SUMMONS.

It was on the last evening of the old year, that a happy social party was assembled in the drawing-room of a Christian gentleman residing in the country, to enjoy the pleasures of intelligent Christian intercourse.

Within that circle was one whose presence seemed to give it a peculiar charm. Even a stranger must have been struck with the tall and elegant form of that lovely girl. Her glossy black hair shaded as fine a forehead as ever belonged to woman-kind, and contrasted well with the rosy tints of health that bloomed upon her cheeks. Her fine dark eyes, which beamed with intelligence, were shaded by long black eye-lashes, and

lessons of heavenly wisdom in that school where such lessons are best learned. Her heavenly Father had put the cup of sorrow to her lips, and bid her drink it even to the dregs; but He had sweetened that bitter cup with love; and while she drank it in obedience to His command, He graciously smiled upon His dear child, and by His grace enabled her in sweet submission to exclaim, "Not my will, but Thine, be done."

The peculiar nature of her heaviest trial may be gathered from the following extract from her papers: "With what a strange diversity of feelings do I hail this day. I cannot witness its return without sorrow; but I thank my God that it is a sorrow mingled with thankfulness. With a melancholy, though I trust with a grateful, heart do I retrace the events of this



the whole expression of her countenance indicated deep chastened thoughtfulness and much sweetness of temper. In addition to all these personal charms, this young lady was highly educated and accomplished; and although naturally rather of a silent disposition, especially when the conversation was of a frivolous kind, yet when she did speak, it was soon perceived that her remarks were listened to with that respectful deference and attention which are generally only accorded to those of riper years.

On the occasion alluded to, several friends noticed the animation with which she entered upon the various topics of conversation, and were especially struck with her earnestness when the subject assumed a deeply religious tone. This young Christian had been taught

day twelvemonth. Then with a heart elate with pleasure did I bend my steps towards the house of God. There did I listen to the voice of one who vowed an unalterable affection for me. Little did my unsuspecting heart imagine that those vows were but to deceive.

"But what has the lapse of a few short months taught me? Alas! alas! the melancholy truth that those vows are forgotten, that faith forsworn. But though one to whom I was sincerely and tenderly attached has forsaken me, yet, blessed be God, there is One who will never leave nor forsake His people. May I find Him to be 'that Friend that loveth at all times,' that 'Brother born for adversity.' Sweet is the thought that, though the tenderest ties of an

earthly attachment have been dissolved, yet the love of Jesus knows no change nor shadow of turning. Grant me, Lord, an interest in Thy love, and enable me with faith to exclaim, 'Lord, whom have I in heaven but Thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire in comparison of Thee. Amen and amen.'

But to return to the incidents of that memorable night. At the usual hour the bell was rung for family worship.

After singing a hymn, the 90th Psalm was read, as being peculiarly suited to that solemn season.

Oh! how little did any one present imagine that his or her days were already numbered, that at that very moment the angel of death had already strung his bow and taken his arrow from the quiver, and that, with unerring aim, it would, ere the new year should dawn, pierce the heart of the "noblest, brightest, loveliest," amid that little company.

An earnest prayer was then offered up, at the conclusion of which our dear young friend, after receiving the heartfelt good wishes of the season from all present, and returning the same in her usual warm affectionate manner, retired to her own room, to spend the remaining portion of the expiring year in secret communion with her own soul and with her God.

On the morrow the servant knocked as usual at her door, but received no answer; again and again the knock was repeated, till at last her alarmed friends were roused; and when the door was opened, they found that the angel of death had entered that chamber! Her body, indeed, was there; there was the same composed and peaceful face, but the spirit had fled to the God who gave it. A fit of apoplexy had terminated her existence at the early age of twenty-three years.

From the posture in which she was found at her bed-side, it was evident that she had fallen while on her knees engaged in prayer. On her table lay her open well-worn Bible, and near it several little parcels, each containing a little note just written, with some appropriate present, ready to be presented as New Year's gifts to her friends in the morning. The candle had burnt out in the socket, and other circumstances combined to prove that it must have been at the last hour, and almost the last minute of the year that she expired.

Let the reader of this narrative remember that this young lady was in the prime of youth and health. Oh! if she had postponed the preparation for eternity until she should have been laid upon her sick or dying bed, where would have been her hope? How awful would have been her condition on that solemn night! But trained by pious parents, she had early given her heart to God.

The young lady was the eldest of a large family, to whom she set a bright example of all that was lovely and of good report; ever showing dutiful obedience to her parents, whom she delighted to honour; and ever diligently striving, by earnest perseverance and unwearied gentleness, to guide the infant steps of her younger brothers and sisters to that gracious

Saviour, at whose feet she had long loved to sit, and whose words were life, and light, and joy to her soul.

Truly she was watching for her Master's coming; and "blessed are those servants whom their Lord when He cometh shall find so doing." May we, like her, be found with our lamps trimmed, and with oil in our vessels, and so be ready to go in with our Lord to the marriage before the door be shut. When He shutteth none can open.



### WHOM TO TRUST, AND WHEN TO TRUST HIM.



WHEN I came home the other evening, tired and disappointed at not getting the situation I had expected, I took up my Bible to comfort me, and turned to the 146th Psalm. It always cheers me up to come to a bit of hearty praise; and nothing makes me so ashamed of fretting. I read on till I came to the words, "Put not your trust in princes." Well, thought I, I'm not likely to do that; I have nothing to say to princes, and I don't suppose I ever shall have.

Then, for fear (as I had no temptation to do that) I might think I was safe altogether, the verse goes on to say, "nor in the son of man." Any son of man—any one at all. And why? It tells us that too, for it says, "in whom there is no hope." If I did not get the message I wanted at first, I certainly got it now—I was so apt to trust people; to look for help from this one, and then, when he failed, to that one, and then to be disappointed again.

Now, do not mistake me; I do not mean that no one has ever done me a kind turn, or lent me a helping hand. Often and often they have, and I thank them for it. But I don't think that that's what the verse means when it says, "Put not your trust—in any son of man." I think the trust there means like leaning your whole weight on a person—putting all your dependence on them. And when we do that to any human being, be he prince or be he peasant, he'll as surely fail us as a weak stick is sure to break if we lean our whole weight upon it.

Yet we're always needing help; so that if the psalm ended there we'd be badly off indeed; and if princes with all their power and riches cannot help us, what are we to do? Well, take heart, for there's such a blessed answer to that question that I'd just like to sing it out so loud that the whole world might hear me. Listen, while I tell you what it says: "Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope (or trust) is in the Lord his God."

Happy indeed, and no wonder, when we see God's power and love. Listen again, while I tell you: "Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the Lord his God, which made heaven and earth, the sea and all that therein is—

which keepeth truth for ever—which executeth judgment for the oppressed—which giveth food to the hungry. The Lord looseth the prisoners—the Lord openeth the eyes of the blind—the Lord raiseth them that are bowed down—the Lord loveth the righteous—the Lord preserveth the strangers; He relieveth the fatherless and the widow; but the way of the wicked He turneth upside down. The Lord shall reign for ever; thy God, O Zion, unto all generations. Praise ye the Lord.”

It nearly took away my breath as I read one thing after another done by Him in whom we are to trust; in whom you and I are to trust. No wonder we are told not to trust in princes, or in any one else, when we may trust in the God who made heaven and earth, the sea and all that therein is, and yet who is not too grand nor too great to feed the hungry, and to look after the fatherless and the widow, and to take care of the stranger; to love the righteous!

That one word is enough; for surely if the Lord of heaven and earth loves us, we need not fear to trust Him to take care of us; to trust Him with our souls and with our bodies; to trust Him for the pardon of all our sins, and to trust Him for our daily bread; to trust Him to be with us in the hour of death, and in the little trials and troubles of every-day life; to trust Him as our Guide, our Counsellor, our Friend, our Saviour, and our God.

If only we did this—if, instead of trusting in this one or that one for help, we trusted in the Lord, how strong we should be; as another psalm says: “They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever.” We wouldn’t be tossed about and be disappointed, as we so often are now; for the Lord is strong enough to bear us, and all our troubles, and cares, and crosses, however heavy they may be. We are so apt to look all round first, and see who we can get to help us, and then, when they fail, to turn to the Lord. But the happy man is he who goes first to the Lord, and then waits to see how He will help. For though help can’t come from a man, it can come through him; just as a rich man might send me ten pounds by a little child; the money would come through that little child, yet it is not the little child who gives it; she is only the messenger. And God has many messengers. There is nothing too little or too common for Him to use for the good of those who trust in Him.

But don’t take it on what I say; don’t take it on anything but God’s own word. Look through the Bible, and find out why you’re to trust Him, and what you’re to trust Him about; and then put Him to the proof, and you will find that “it is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in princes;” and “better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man.” Do this, and you will be a happy man, and will be able with a glad and thankful heart to sing the first verses of the psalm about which we have been talking, “Praise the Lord, O my soul; while I live will I praise the Lord: I will sing praises unto my God while I have any being. Praise ye the Lord!”

## THE PEACEFULNESS OF FAITH.

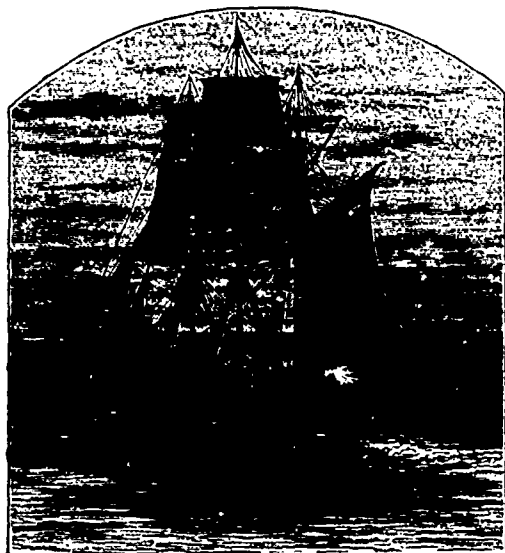
ROBERT LEIGHTON, who was Archbishop of Glasgow in the reign of Charles II., was a deeply pious man, and a calm trust in God pervaded his whole life, which formed the ground of his entire experience. It was not in one incident now and then only, that this holy habit revealed itself, but in the even tenor of his daily walk. He had found reconciliation with God through faith in the one Mediator who unites fallen men to their offended Maker.

God in Christ—God reconciling the world unto Himself by the death of His Son—God sending, through the mediation of Christ, His Holy Spirit on a mission of comfort to His Church, was alike the theme of Leighton’s ministry and the life of his soul. Amidst the troubles of his day a simple trust in God sustained and strengthened him. This trustfulness was eminently apparent on two occasions.

During the civil wars, when the Royalist army was lying in Scotland, Leighton was anxious to visit his brother, who bore arms in the king’s service. On his way to the camp he was benighted in a vast wild thicket, and having lost his path, sought in vain for an outlet. Overcome by fatigue and hunger, nature was ready to despair, but grace sustained him in the trying extremity; and spreading out his cloak upon the ground, under the green trees, he knelt down to pray, resigning his soul to God, and entreating Divine guidance. Then remounting and throwing the reins on his horse, he left the animal to choose its own path, and was forthwith conducted through the mazes of the wood into the way he had himself sought in vain.

At another time he took a boat on the Thames, with his brother and friends, from the stairs of the old Savoy, on their way to Lambeth; when, through some mismanagement, the bark was in danger of being sunk. The rest of the party were pale with terror, and lost all self-possession; while Leighton, retaining his usual serenity, said, in reply to their expressions of astonishment at his calmness, “Why, what harm would it have been if we had been all safely landed on the other side?”

He looked on eternity only as *the other side* of this world. He felt that God was his Guardian in life and death; that there really could be nothing worth the name of peril while under His protection, and therefore whatever betided him it could not disconcert his tranquil self-possession. Self-renunciation and Divine reliance are efficacious medicines for the cure of care and the healing of sorrow. Men’s perplexity and darkness, their fear and terror, their capture by spiritual enemies, the wounds of their consciences, their great weakness, their strange wanderings, are all because they have “forgotten their resting place.” Let a man sail towards that port, and keep his eye upon that star which so brightly beams over it, and he need fear no shipwreck or loss, for an invisible hand shall be over him to the last.



DEATH OR DEEP WATER.

**A** VESSEL was once approaching Liverpool. Night was drawing near, the sky was cloudy, and there were tokens of a gathering storm. The captain did not seem to understand his business, and managed to get his vessel away down on the banks, where it was in imminent danger of being wrecked. A pilot started out to board the ship. He would have been glad to have avoided the job, but it was his turn, and he must go where duty called. The pilot-boat came alongside, and the pilot sprang on deck, and said to the captain, "What have you brought your ship down here for? Call all hands aft." They came, and he said, "Now, boys, it's death or deep water! Hoist the mainsail!" The men saw at once there was work to be done, and a pilot on board who knew his business. They sprang to their places with a will, and by putting forth their best exertions they saved the ship.

Are there not too many Christians who are out of the channel and drifting on to the shoals of worldliness and pride and indifference, who need to hear the faithful pilot's voice crying out, "Now, boys, it is death or deep water?" A mere theoretical knowledge of Divine things will never avail when the night of wrath and the storms of judgment gather on the world. A dead faith will not save us from shipwreck. If we are to make the heavenly port, we must find safer sailing than can be found among the shoals and quicksands of empty profession and religious formalism.

Let us heed the Pilot's voice, and endeavour, by God's grace assisting us, to launch forth into deep water, and make sure work both for time and eternity. "Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure."

HASTE TO THE REFUGE.

**H**ASTE, traveller, haste! the night comes on,  
And many a shining hour is gone;  
The storm is gathering in the west,  
And thou art far from home and rest:  
Haste, traveller, haste!

Oh, far from home thy footsteps stray;  
Christ is the Life and Christ the Way;  
And Christ the Light, thy setting Sun,  
Sinks ere thy morning is begun:  
Haste, traveller, haste!

Awake, awake! pursue thy way  
With steady course, while yet 'tis day;  
While thou art sleeping on the ground,  
Danger and darkness gather round:  
Haste, traveller, haste!

The rising tempest sweeps the sky;  
The rains descend, the winds are high;  
The waters swell, and death and fear  
Beset thy path, nor refuge near:  
Haste, traveller, haste!

Oh yes! a shelter you may gain,  
A covert from the wind and rain,  
A hiding-place, a rest, a home  
A refuge from the wrath to come:  
Haste, traveller, haste!

Then linger not in all the plain,  
Flee for thy life, the mountain gain;  
Look not behind, make no delay,  
Oh, speed thee, speed thee on thy way:  
Haste, traveller, haste!

Poor, lost, benighted soul, art thou  
Willing to find salvation now?  
There yet is hope; hear mercy's call;  
Truth! Life! Light! Way! in Christ is all:  
Haste, to Him haste!

W. B. Collyer.



# THE MESSAGE OF THE BELLS, AND OTHER SKETCHES.



“THE old year, the old year is gone; you can’t get it back again—days and hours, summer, spring, and autumn never any more. Spring will come again, but not *that* spring; flowers will bloom

afresh, but not *those* flowers. Never any more. Never, never, never.”

This was what the bells said as they rang out the last night of the year. At least, this was what nurse

told the children in the nursery, when they woke up at half-past eleven and asked what the bells were ringing for.

But it was curious too, for how could they know anything about it? Was it that the old man who pulled one of the bells was thinking such thoughts, and then they passed somehow down through his fingers into the bell? The others were all young men, and all they had to do was to ring as loud as ever they could, and then folks might make what they could of it; it was no business of theirs what the bells said.

Now it was just upon twelve o'clock, the bells were silent; there was a pause. Lights were burning in the houses which lay beneath the old church tower, the village was all awake, for was it not the last night of the year? Yes, the bells said quite true there, and people were thinking their own thoughts about it in those different homes. Some were very merry, as if they were making a good joke out of the fact that they had one year less to live, and some were sad and weeping sorrowful tears because of somebody or something which they had loved very much, and which the year had taken away from them. Perhaps both were wrong; at any rate, the bells said as much when they began again.

It was very still, and there seemed a solemn hush upon the air as the old year passed away. The clock struck one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven, TWELVE. In a moment came the clash of the bells—the same bells; and yet they sounded different, for what they had to do now was not to toll for the past, but to welcome in the future. It was rather fickle, certainly, but it is the way of bells, as well as the way of the world.

"Welcome—welcome to the new year—never mind the past; there's a good time coming—flowers and spring and sunshine—life is bright and happy—good people, look before you—fathers, mothers, little ones, take it and be glad—happy, happy, happy New Year to you all."

So again said the nurse to the children when they asked why the bells had begun afresh. I suppose it was the young men's turn now, and that they had put their spirit into the bells. But the work was done now, the ringers clambered down from the belfry and went home to bed, the lights were put out in the houses, and everybody—nurse and children and bells and all—went to sleep.

But they were at it again in the morning; the sun rose brightly out of respect for the New Year, and a little after eight the ringers came to give another peal and rouse up the people who were not awake already. For was it not the new year? True, every day is the last day of one year and the beginning of another, but it is only once a year that we think much about it; and so the bells have to improve the occasion. I think they did this time, for this is what they said. Nurse told it to the children as she was dressing them:—

"Time is fleeting fast—use it while you have it—here's a New Year for you—let it be a better one—let it be a wise one—happy only then—happy New Year to all."

A little later the belfry door was open once more.

But the young men were not there, they were not wanted; for it was not the eight bells pealing with all their might, but the one single bell sounding to call people to the house of God, that there, on this New Year's morning they might thank God for all the mercies of the past, and seek His blessing on the future. The old man pulled the bell, and this was what the bell said:—

"Come—come—come, rest—rest—rest, peace—peace—peace."

And these were the old man's thoughts meanwhile: "It don't matter if the years *do* go by fast when there's a home at the end of the journey. Ah! it's a many years I've seen come and go, and a many times I've helped ring the bells, but, somehow, I like the church-bell best; it's better than all the clatter, and it's so quiet like, and it says, '*Come.*' Yes, it is a-saying it clear as clear can be, '*Come.*' Come and be saved—come and be happy—come this year if you have not come before. For I mind me there's One who says, '*Come unto Me, and I will give you rest.*'"

The little children peeped in to watch the old man pulling the bell, but they did not know what he was thinking about. Yet the bell echoed his thoughts, for it went on saying, "Come—rest—peace." And this was a good message, was it not? because it was an invitation to come to Jesus, and that—for the old year and the New Year—for time and for eternity—is the best of all.

### WALK WORTHY.

JUST below my window is a long stretch of sea and shore. Although it is a very quiet place, with not many people passing to and fro, there always seems something to catch the eye and interest the thoughts. This evening I noticed a girl going down over the sloping beach, swinging a bucket carelessly in her hand, and getting all the amusement she could on her way to the edge of the sea; the bucket was empty, so it did not make any difference whether it was turned upside down or not.

When she reached the narrow strip of sand, which was being fast covered by the incoming tide, she stooped down and filled her bucket with the salt water. It would have made a pretty picture, for she was the only figure to be seen on this solitary beach, and a bright coloured dress she wore, and a white apron fluttering in the wind, showed well against the grey and cloudy sky. As I have said, she had run lightly down to the water's edge, but it was a very different matter when she turned to come back again. The bucket that had been empty before was now full, and any unguarded movement might have spill its contents far and wide. She walked steadily now, for she did not want to do her work all over again.

Do you remember St. Paul's words in the letter he wrote to his friends at Ephesus? "Walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long suffering, forbearing one another in love;" and if you look through his letters you will see that again and again he reminds them that they must leave the old, careless way of walking altogether.

Have you not often noticed that it is the people who live nearest to God and get their hearts full of His grace, who are the most particular about little things; who try to do their every day life as unto the Lord, not unto men? You who have not found out their secret may wonder at this, and call them "over-particular," and "fussy about trifles." You do not know the reason, but they do.

God gives His gifts; yes, but a certain responsibility always goes with them, and His children know this by instinct. They have been filling their hearts at the boundless ocean of His love, and so therefore they feel obliged as it were to honour Him by a careful and consistent life. "Obliged" is a cold word! They long after holiness, and dread nothing so much as a fall or a false step. Not because it brings dishonour to them, but dishonour to their Master.

"This is very odd," some one may say; "I had no idea Christians felt like this. I am sure I never did!"

Are you then quite sure that you have ever received of this fulness?

We cannot lose what we have not got. The inner and the outer life always go together. Get that empty heart of yours full, "ask, and ye shall receive," and then—but not till then—will you find how changed, how earnest, how purposeful your life has become.

H. C. G.

—♦♦♦—  
**LIGHT IN THE BAR.**

**Y**OU see, master, as how it can't be no other-wise; my poor husband is very ill, and cos' it's consumption he can't live long. I has to go out a-selling to get us a living, and he is miserable all by hisself. Now, though I says it myself, he is werry much respected by the landlord and all as uses this house, and he always enjoys hisself here. So they have put the two large barrels at each side of the little one, and before I goes out I takes him and puts him down comfortable, as in an arm-chair, and then his pals gives him sups of rum, and that sort of thing, and it does him lots of good—and he shan't be without his enjoyments for the like of you."

The latter part of this speech was delivered in a defiant tone. The speaker was the wife of a costermonger who lived in a neighbouring court.

The person addressed was the missionary of the district, who had by a kind touch of the arm and a cheerful "How are you to-day?" arrested their rather hurried entrance into a gin palace.

The man was about thirty years of age, and as he leaned against the marble pillars of the "palace," supporting himself upon his stick, he presented a pitiable sight. The loose-fitting jacket, the sunken eyes, the hectic flush upon the cheek, and hard breathing, indicated his near approach to the grave. A few words of gentle reproof and concern for his spiritual safety only provoked a movement by which the sufferer was partly supported and partly pushed into the bar.

The court in which these persons lived was within

his district, and it was the duty of the missionary to seek the salvation of that man. As he passed on, he thus reasoned within himself—"If I make no effort for his good, he must be lost; but what can I do? When I called in at his room last evening, he was stupefied with liquor, and it will be the same to-night. He is sober now; why should I not visit him in the bar, and deal faithfully with him?"

After prayerfully pondering the matter, he turned back and timidly entered the "palace." The woman had left, but the man was there in the position described by her. The small barrel was so placed between the two large ones as to form a comfortable seat, while his back was supported by a pair of steps.

The sick man was evidently startled by the appearance of the visitor, who set him at ease by observing, "You must have plenty of time for reading, so I thought I would call and give you interesting little books which I intended to have left in your room."

Several were then handed to him, and accepted with the remark, "I can't read much, but I'll ask the chaps what reads the papers to read them to me."

The men who were standing round asked for tracts, and then listened with deep interest while the missionary repeated the parable of the builders.

Only a few remarks were made upon it, when the landlord in an angry tone assured the visitor that "they were not natural fools to believe a set of lies made up by the Jews."

"The words I have repeated," was the calm reply, "were uttered by the Saviour of the world in mercy to sinners. Believe them, and your soul shall live."

By this time the customers had gathered from the other compartments, attracted by the novelty of religious teaching in such a place. The landlord spoke quietly to several men who were standing near the bar, and immediately after one of them made his way towards the missionary, and tearing the leaves of a tract formed them into paper lights. He lit his own pipe with one of them, observing in derision, "These here are useful things, guv'ner, to light up with; give us some more."

A general laugh was suppressed by the prompt answer, "Of course I will, as they are useful things. I have given enough already to light you all up—that is, in the right way; and I'll give you some more, and tell you what I mean. Now, there are some people who are always in the dark, because they are blind; and there are some people who are always dark in their souls. They don't see with their minds the beautiful things that are in the Bible, so they live badly, just as if there was no God. That's a miserable way of living, and when they are taken ill they are afraid to die, because the grave is a dark place. Now, if a man reads these tracts, and thinks about what he reads, he will light up his soul. At the end of this tract there is a little bit out of the Bible which would do it for all of you, 'Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners.' When a man believes that, he becomes sorry for his sins, and asks God for pardon because Jesus died upon the cross for him. He is then forgiven, and by the Holy Spirit of God made good and happy. He has then



no fear of death, because he is certain of being in heaven with his Saviour for ever."

Further remarks were prevented by the landlord, who, forcing his way through the crowd of eager listeners, seized the speaker by the arm, and with an oath thrust him into the street. And thus ended the missionary's first visit to public-houses.

A few days after, the wife of the costermonger came up to the missionary, who was passing the court, and said, "Please, master, my poor husband wants to be religious; he says that he is all dark, and he wants to hear some reading, and I've got no learning; and he has not been in the bar, as he thought may be that you would call."

"I will see him at once," was the reply, and the Christian visitor stepped with her into the room. Before a word of greeting could be uttered, the poor man exclaimed, with all the eagerness of one in spiritual distress, "Sir, I have been dreadful wicked in my time, and it's dreadful to be ill, and I don't know what prayers to say."

The visitor looked with pity into the careworn, pallid face of the all but dying man, and, taking a seat by his side, told him in simple words the wondrous and soothing story of a Saviour's love, and before leaving taught him a few sentences of prayer.

Such visits were repeated daily, as the increasing weakness of the sufferer showed that the time for instructing him in the way of salvation was short indeed.

Upon the last of these visits he listened with absorbing interest to the narrative of the Lord's ascension, and then, with a smile of peace, exclaimed, "He died for poor me, and He has made it all light now, and I shall go up to Him." That night he passed away; and it was for some time the talk of the court that he died happy because he was made a Christian in the public-house.

*J. M. Weyland.*



### THE BIBLE ON TENTER-HOOKS.



In a village in Yorkshire lived two men who were cloth manufacturers. One was named Walsh, the other Stetson. Walsh was an unbeliever; it was a favourite opinion of his that the Bible was "all made up." He could never believe that it was written where it professed to be, and by the men who are said to have written it. But Stetson was an earnest Christian.

Walsh was part owner of a factory, and one year he had set his heart on making a very large and fine piece of cloth. He took great pains with the carding, spinning, dyeing, weaving, and finishing of it. In the process of manufacture it was one day stretched on tenter-hooks to dry. It made a fine show, and he felt very proud of it. The next morning he arose early to work at it: to his amazement it was gone; some one had stolen it during the night.

After weeks of anxiety and expense, a piece of cloth answering the description was stopped at Manchester, awaiting the owner and proof. Away to Manchester went Walsh, as fast as he could. There to his great surprise he found many rolls of cloth which had been stolen; they were very much alike. He selected one which he felt satisfied was his, but how could he prove it? In doubt and perplexity he called on Stetson.

"Friend Stetson," said he, "I have found a piece of cloth which I am sure is the one which was stolen from me. But how to prove it is the question. Can you tell me how?"

"You don't want it unless it is really yours?"

"Certainly not."

"And you want proof that is plain, simple, and such as will satisfy yourself and everybody?"

"Precisely so."

"Well, then, take Bible proof."

"Bible proof! pray what is that?"

"Take your cloth to the tenter-hooks on which it was stretched, and if it be yours every hook will just fit the hole through which it was passed before being taken down. If the hooks and the holes just come together right, no other proof will be wanted that the cloth is yours."

"True! Why didn't I think of this before?"

Away he went, and sure enough every hook came to its little hole, and the cloth was proved to be his. The tenter-hooks were the very best evidence that could be had.

Some days after this Walsh met his friend again.

"I say, Stetson," said he, "what did you mean the other day by calling the tenter-hooks 'Bible proofs?' I'm sure if I had as good evidence for the Bible as I had for my cloth, I never should doubt it again."

"You have the same, only better, for the Bible."

"How so?"

"Put it on the tenter-hooks. Take the Bible and travel with it; go to the place where it was made. There you will find the Red Sea, the Jordan, the Lake of Galilee, Mounts Lebanon, Hermon, Carmel, Tabor, and Gerizim, there you will find the cities of Damascus, Hebron, Tyre, Sidon, and Jerusalem. Every mountain, every river, every sheet of water mentioned in the Bible is there just as the Bible speaks of it. Sinai and the desert and the Dead Sea are there. The holes and the hooks come together exactly. The best guide-book through that country is the Bible. That land is the mould in which the Bible is cast, and when you bring the land and the book together they fit to perfection."

Walsh felt the force of this argument, and he gave up his infidelity, and began to read the Bible with an interest he never had felt in it before.

How well thy blessed truths agree!

How wise and holy thy commands!

Thy promises, how firm they be!

How firm our hope and comfort stands!

Should all the forms that men devise

Assault my faith with treacherous art

I'd call them vanity and lies,

And bind the gospel to my heart.

A BAD START.

MARY OLDREY and Jane Hamer were both surprised and pleased when they went at the May term to their new places to find that they were in the same family. When they were children they had been neighbours, schoolfellows, playmates, and besides, special friends. For six years, however, they had not seen one another, Mary Oldrey's father and mother having left Leeds to live at Stanningly, a village about seven miles off. They were very sorry to part, but there was no help for it.

There is time in six years for people to alter a good deal, especially in the six years between fourteen and twenty; and at first, when the two girls met in the house of Mrs. Clayton, their new mistress, they hardly knew one another. They had parted as children, and now they were well-grown, good-looking young women. Very soon, however, each recognised the other, and exclaimed in wonder, "Why, it's Mary Oldrey!" "Surely, Jane, that cannot be you!" They both said how nice it would be for them to live together.

Mary, it may be stated, was nurse, whilst Jane was the second housemaid.

There is time in six years for great changes to take place in people's characters as well as in their looks; and certainly a great change had passed over Mary Oldrey since she and Jane had parted. She had been brought under good influences. Her mistress was a kind, Christian lady, who took a great interest in the religious welfare of her servants; and her example and that of her husband were such as to commend their religion to all about them. Then, too, the minister, whose church they attended, was an earnest, faithful man; and through God's blessing his word had gone home to Mary's heart, and she had become a true Christian.

Mrs. Grafton was sorry to part with Mary, but her children having grown up, she needed a nursemaid no longer. She had recommended her, however, so strongly to Mrs. Clayton, that that lady was delighted to secure her services.

We should have been glad if we could have given a similar account of Jane Hamer, but we cannot. She had some good points about her, and she was a clever servant; but she was thoughtless, and fond of dress and company. Whilst Mary Oldrey had been in only one place all the time she had been a servant, Jane had changed frequently.

Of course, her successive mistresses were always in fault; that is, if you took Jane's account of them. If a girl changes often, however, and reports badly of all her mistresses, there is too much reason to fear that she herself must, in some way or other, have been much in fault. There is an old proverb too, which applies to servants as well as other people—"Rolling stones gather no moss."

It was one of the conditions on which Mrs. Clayton hired her servants that they should attend the same place of worship she did, unless they were members of some other church. To that condition Jane offered no objection. In regard to Mary, it fell in with both

her wishes and her custom; for it was the very place she had attended whilst she was with Mrs. Grafton.

For a few Sundays Jane went to the hillside church as she had engaged to do; but one Sunday evening she went out directly after tea, saying she had promised to meet a friend, and she never appeared at church. She was half an hour behind her time too in reaching home.

The two girls occupied the same bedroom, and when they reached it Mary said, "Jane, were you sitting somewhere else in the church? You were not in our pew, and I did not see you anywhere."



"No," replied Jane, "I was not there; and I don't mean to be bound any longer in any such way. If a girl does her work, neither her mistress nor anybody else has any business to say what she shall do with herself when it is her Sunday out."

"Did you say that to Mrs. Clayton when you hired yourself?" asked Mary, quietly.

"Of course I did not," replied Jane; "but she never expected me to keep to it always."

"I rather think she did," said Mary. "Besides, a promise is a promise, and if you don't intend to do as you said you would, don't you think you ought to tell Mrs. Clayton so?"

But Jane did not see that; and from that time she regularly absented herself from church on the Sunday evenings. On account of the state of her health, Mrs. Clayton was not able to go to church in the evening, so that she was not aware of her absence; nor did Mary think it her duty to inform her mistress.

The fact was there was "a young man" in the way, and he never went either to church or chapel. So instead of going to church Jane went wandering with him in the country.

Mary remonstrated very kindly, but it was of no use. Jane was bent on having her own way.

Of course Jane had a great deal to say about her "young man," to all of which Mary listened very kindly. One day, however, in reply to some plain question, Jane confessed that she knew scarcely anything about him but what he himself had told her; that he had, perhaps, not been quite as steady as he might have been, but that he had resolved to be sober and good if only she would help him; and that she had not told her father and mother.

"Your father and mother ought to know about it," said Mary; "and just tell me if the reason you don't tell them is that you doubt whether they would approve of it? At any rate, they might make inquiries about him such as you cannot."

To this Jane made no reply.

"Then," continued Mary, "I am afraid you are beginning badly. John Aston persuades you to neglect church, though he can hardly help knowing that in doing so you are breaking your word to Mrs. Clayton. And is it true that last Sunday evening you were sitting with him in the Chained Bull at Adel; and that before you left he had taken more than was good for him?"

"Who told you that?" asked Jane, angrily.

"Never mind who told me, Jane," said Mary, "is it true?"

And Jane could not deny it. A shower had come on as they were walking, and they went in for shelter; and they could not sit there without taking something, and John was a little bit merry and noisy when they got out. But it should not occur again; and John had made her a faithful promise, not, indeed, to give up the drink entirely, but to be very temperate.

Mary besought Jane very earnestly to keep her promise to her mistress about going to church on the Sunday evenings; but all she could get from her was, "I'll see."

Which meant that she would take her own way. And she did so to her cost.

At length Mrs. Clayton heard that Jane was absenting herself from church, and there were some other things about which she had reason to complain. Jane was very independent, and gave notice to leave, saying, pertly, that there were places where she would not be so bound.

She found another place, and another after that, and then John Aston and she got married.

They married with a house not half furnished, and they began in debt; for neither of them had saved anything, and it was very little help their friends could give them. Children came, and poor Jane had

a hard life of it; harder for this, that John found the public-house a great deal more attractive than his own fireside, and spent there no small amount of his wages.

Mary showed Jane much kindness after her foolish marriage. In the course of a year or two she herself got married, and one day Jane went, by her kind invitation, to see her.

She had married a working-man in the same shop as John Aston; but he was a steady man and a true Christian. One day, as Jane looked round her friend's nicely-furnished dwelling, and saw how happy she was, she said very sadly, "Ah, Mary, if I had only taken your advice, I might just now have been as happy as you."

Mary tried to cheer her, but it was hard work.

### EVERY LITTLE HELPS.

So we thought the other day at a mothers' meeting in one of the poorest districts of London.

Here were gathered together four or five hundred poor pale-faced women, who had come out of those close courts and alleys of the great city, about which country people hear so much but seldom see for themselves. A few boys from an Orphanage had come with their bells to cheer up these poor folks while their needles were at work patching and darning their tattered clothes. And it would have done your heart good to see their faces brighten up at the sound of a familiar strain, and how they looked at each other with a smile when "Home, sweet Home," was played. Although we are afraid that in most cases it has been many a long year since they knew what it was to have a happy home.

But at the end of the room was a long table strewn with fruits, chiefly apples, pears, and cheap grapes, and these gifts the poor women had brought in little quantities for their poor brothers and sisters in the hospital close by. Some had just managed to buy one pear or a couple of small apples, and it was so touching to hear one poor woman with a little pale quiet-looking child on her arm tell the ladies that "the little one had carried the bunch of grapes all the way, and never asked for one." God bless the dear little creature! He who sees everybody's gift will not forget the tiny hand which carried those few grapes bought by her poor mother for the sick ones.

Yes, as we said at the beginning, every little helps. The self-sacrifice of these pinched and weary women in each giving their little and as much as they could, made that nice and abundant show of fruit for others. This is just what the Lord Jesus Christ teaches us to do. He asks from us not more than we are able to give, and He expects no less. And when everything is known it will be seen how much the poor have helped the poor. The rich men cast their gold into the treasury, and the disciples wondered very much that Christ did not commend them; but He rather chose to notice the poor widow who cast in her two mites, which make a farthing.

Now the question is, what are we doing for each other? and how many people in this world are the better and happier for our living in it? "Ah, it's all very well," says somebody, "but we must look to number one." Indeed, where should you have been, dear friend, if others had acted thus selfishly towards you? In your childhood's days your parents thought nothing of themselves in taking care of you; in your sickness your friends have nursed you tenderly; but above all, has not God in His mercy been very kind to you? If you must begin with number one, then take your poor selfish heart to Jesus, and ask Him to cast out of it these wretched and narrow thoughts, and help you to think for others now.

But what can I do? Well, if you set about doing your duty, the Lord will soon find you employment. Don't say you cannot afford to be kind—just read this story. During the cotton famine in Lancashire, when so many were reduced to starvation by the stopping of the mills, a poor spinner, who was a Methodist class leader, thought he would go out and call upon some of his distressed members. He opened the cottage door of a widow, and found her sitting by the bare table, her two daughters by her side, slowly starving to death. Another moment and he had run to the baker's shop over the way, and bought a twopenny loaf, which he placed before them, not waiting for their tearful thanks. A few days afterwards a gentleman was talking to these poor women, and they told him the story, adding with touching point, "It was very good of him, sir, and it saved us from death, for we were well nigh 'clemmed;' but we wouldna ha' taken it if we had known what came out afterwards, that it was his last twopenny, and he had tasted no food for two days."

Now, what do you think of that? I tell you it makes my eyes fill with tears as I write it, and depend upon it, when the Lord makes up His jewels, and His saints are received into the glory of His presence, this poor cotton spinner will find a high place. Let us do what we can for one another, whether it be in money, or kindness and sympathy (which are very precious); and bear in mind that the best and kindest act we can ever do is to bring poor sinners to the feet of Him who "though He was rich, for our sakes became poor, that we through His poverty might become rich." The Lord loves a cheerful giver, and to all who come to Him He cheerfully and lovingly gives a new heart, a right spirit, and a happy life of service for Him.

Jesse Page.

PRECEPT—PROMISE—PRAYER.

**PRECEPT.**—Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.

Philippians ii. 2.

**PROMISE.**—He that hath My commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me: and he that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him, and will manifest Myself to him.

John xiv. 21.

**PRAYER.**—O continue Thy loving-kindness unto them that know Thee; and Thy righteousness to the upright in heart.

Psalms xxxvi. 10.

A SPRING FOR LIFE.



GREAT events from little causes spring. Once, over a steep and precipitous cliff rising from the River Wye, a passing bird flew by; and it dropped a seed upon the brow of the rock. The seed took root, and became a plant. And years went past, bringing summers and winters, and golden suns and fresh breezes to the little seedling; and God who causeth it "to rain on the earth where no man is, on the wilderness wherein there is no man, to satisfy the desolate and waste ground, and to cause the bud of the tender herb to spring forth," made it grow and flourish so that its young vigorous shoot began to spread around, while the winds and storms of winter only served to strengthen its root in the earth.

And many years after, two young men walked at the bottom of the steep cliffs; and one related to his friend how there was a story handed down among the country folk of a man who had gained the summit of the height by a perilous ascent from the spot whereon they stood.

"It doesn't look so very great an achievement," said his companion; "I think I could climb it."

"You had better not attempt it," replied his friend; and after a time they separated.

But a spirit of daring had been aroused in the heart of the younger of the two; and at first, merely as a kind of experiment, and then, as he grew keener in the adventure, with more ardour, he began the ascent.

But, after a time, and as his strength became somewhat less, the rocks proved steeper and the shrubs grew farther apart, and the young man asked himself whether it would not be better that he should even then try to return. But, no! that return would be attended with great difficulty.

And that descent would be perilous. Already his knees were beginning to knock together, and his breath was beginning to fail; while above his head the cliff took an overhanging form, and the steep rock sides afforded neither slender shrub nor foot-hole for his aid.

With a violent effort he planted his foot upon the spot where a single projecting spur of rock offered a last momentary stay. There was room for one foot only, and for that one a bare possibility of support. He looked down, and shuddered at the depth from which he had blindly mounted.

He looked up; and the frowning rock bending over him seemed to menace him for having so audaciously attempted to scale its brow. Then he thought of home and his mother, and of what might soon meet her eyes and ears. And then his trembling knees began to fail, and he knew that he could barely support himself for another minute, and that when that minute should come to a close all would be over.

Once more he looked up. A slender bough from a tree-plant on the edge of the cliff quivered in the

breeze at some distance beyond his reach. Should he with one spring endeavour to catch hold of it? And if he should succeed, would it bear his weight? And if it should be strong enough to bear his weight, had he sufficient remaining strength to swing himself by its aid to the summit of the cliff?

He looked up at the overhanging bough, then he looked higher still—higher than the deep blue sky that was outspread above serene and clear—high up to Him who giveth power to the faint, and who to them that have no might increaseth strength; and with one last effort of strength, and one spring for life or death, he seized hold of the friendly branch of the seedling planted beside the rock, swung himself on

if conscious of sin and the punishment of sin which is your due, obtain salvation and pardon, and enter into the region of peace with God through our Lord Jesus!

First, believe. Think over the history of His love of His pity, of His death in your stead, and that He might bear your punishment and heal you by His stripes and not only with a vague general assent to the doctrine that Christ died for sinners, but with an intelligent, clear understanding that He died for you, and to bear your deserts in your place, accept adoringly the testimony to this wondrous love.

And then cast your whole soul on this great work of Christ. Tell Him that you are a sinner, and a

## OUR HEARTS.

### Our Hearts are naturally—

Evil . . . . .	Hebrews iii. 12.
Desperately Wicked . . . . .	Jeremiah xvii. 9.
Weak . . . . .	Ezekiel xvi. 30.
Deceitful . . . . .	Jeremiah xvii. 9.
Deceived . . . . .	Isaiah xlii. 20.
Double . . . . .	Psalms lii. 2.
Impenitent . . . . .	Romans ii. 5.
Rebellious . . . . .	Jeremiah v. 23.
Hard . . . . .	Ezekiel iii. 7.
Stony . . . . .	Ezekiel xi. 19.
Froward . . . . .	Proverbs xvii. 20.
Despightful . . . . .	Ezekiel xiv. 15.
Stout . . . . .	Isaiah x. 12.
Haughty . . . . .	Proverbs xviii. 12.
Proud . . . . .	Proverbs xxi. 4.
Perverse . . . . .	Proverbs xii. 3.
Foolish . . . . .	Romans i. 21.

### God can make them—

Clean . . . . .	Psalms li. 10.
Good . . . . .	Luke viii. 15.
Fixed . . . . .	Psalms cxvii. 7.
Faithful . . . . .	Schemiah ix. 8.
Understanding . . . . .	1 Kings iii. 9.
Honest . . . . .	Luke viii. 15.
Contrite . . . . .	Psalms li. 17.
True . . . . .	Hebrews x. 22.
Soft . . . . .	Job xliii. 16.
New . . . . .	Ezekiel xviii. 31.
Sound . . . . .	Psalms cxix. 59.
Glad . . . . .	Psalms xvi. 9.
Established . . . . .	Psalms cxlii. 3.
Tender . . . . .	Ephesians iv. 32.
Pure . . . . .	Matthew v. 8.
Perfect . . . . .	1 Chronicles xlix. 9.
Wise . . . . .	Proverbs xi. 29.

Frances Ridley Havergal.

to the edge of the rock, and there lay for hours, exhausted, nearly unconscious, but SAFE.

A great many people—and think whether you are of that number—seem to live on contentedly with the gospel within their reach, but not taken hold of. They go to church, they say, and live very respectable lives, and now and then read their Bibles, and on the whole are worthy, and amiable, and perhaps more so than many who make greater profession. If they have nothing more than this, they are not saved. Salvation, eternal life, the covenant, God's strength, are held out before them, but they have not laid hold upon them.

And how may we thus lay hold? How may you, reading these pages, when you have laid them down,

grievous sinner, but that you find that His blood earned a receipt in full for all the chastisement that was yours by right, that by His cry of "It is finished," which rang forth from the cross, you claim His salvation, and must be saved from wrath through Him. Kneel at His feet over and over again, without, as it were, giving Him rest until you seem to hear Him say, "Thy sins are forgiven thee." Don't be satisfied with only hoping that you are safe, with only a vague desire for salvation. There is no real peace in this half comfort. Determine that you will not give sleep to your eyes nor slumber to your eyelids until your soul is a place for the Lord, and your redeemed body a habitation for your God.