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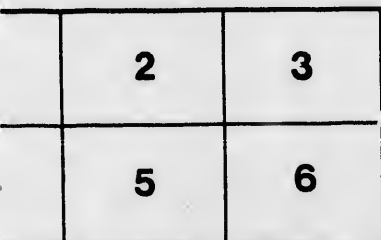
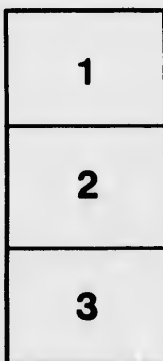
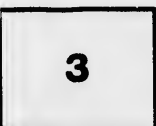
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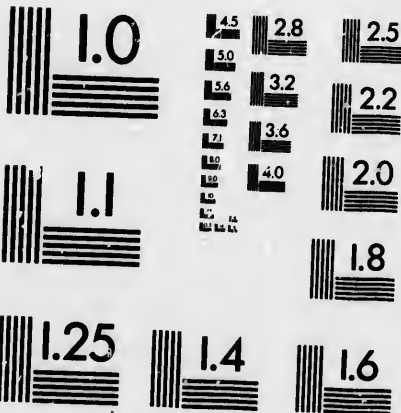
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I.—OLD HERBERT AND JENNY IN THE CHURCHYARD. Page 32.

II.—THE BURIAL PLACE OF LITTLE ALICE. Page 33.



OLD HERBERT

AND

LITTLE ALICE.



JAMES CAMPBELL AND SON,
TORONTO AND MONTREAL.

1866.



OLD HERBERT

AND

LITTLE ALICE.

CHAPTER I.

THE FLOWER AND THE SEED.

OLD HERBERT was a very old man, or at least he seemed so to me, as I stood behind the wild rose-bush, peeping out at him as he sat beneath the shade of the large elm near the roadside. His eyes were bent upon the earth, and his chin rested upon his folded hands, which were supported by a rude staff of oak. His head was uncovered, and his long white locks lay back from his temples, and fell in silken threads upon his coarse, dark coat. The expression of his face seemed to be sad, but very quiet.

I moved the branches of my rose-tree covert, in order to peep forth a little farther, when the sound I made attracted the quick ear of the old man ; and he turned his head suddenly and discovered my retreat.

I was a little creature, not six years old at that time,

and had stolen out from a gate in my father's garden, to look up and down the high-road and watch the passengers. I was often wont to spend an hour or two at a time in this way, sometimes with my book in my hand, but oftener I took my play-hours for this occupation.

As soon as I was discovered, I thought it best to retreat, and was creeping back to the gate, when the voice of the old man arrested my steps.

"Little child," he said, (and his voice was weak and tremulous,) "do not run away from me. I will not harm you. I love little children. Will you not come to me and let me look upon your smiling, angel face?"

I instinctively approached as he spoke, with some doubt and hesitation, and laid my hand upon his arm.

"Ah! little one," said he, "why are you afraid? You need not fear an old man—a very old man, like me. Look up in my face, and let me tell thee what Jesus said of little children."

I gained confidence as he went on, and nestled close to his side, and even leaned against his shoulder while he encircled me with his arm.

"I would not harm thee," said he, "though thou art small; for Jesus saith, 'Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones, for I say unto you that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father in heaven.'"

"Yes," I answered, looking earnestly up into his face, "I did not fear you would do me any harm, good old man; and the words Jesus said are beautiful, and I love to hear you speak them; but how came you here, sir? Tell little Jenny, please, sir. You should

come to my father's house, and he will give you food and shelter."

"I am on my way to my Father's house," said the old man, as he raised his eyes to heaven. "I need travel but a little farther on my journey."

"Your father's house!" said I, in astonishment. "Have you a father?—an old man like you! Why, how can that be? I thought that people—"

"Thought what, little Jenny?" said the old man. "What didst thou think?"

"I thought, sir, that people as old as you were grandfathers, and then—then they died, sir;" I continued, dropping my voice in sadness; but recollecting myself, I soon added, in a more cheerful tone, "I mean that then they went to heaven, and lived with God and all good people, sir."

"That is all true, my little girl, but the Father of whom I speak is my Father in heaven; and I am travelling on towards the home he has appointed for me in heaven. My journey is almost finished. Fourscore and ten years have I been upon the earth already. I have seen all I love pass away—pass away—" continued the old man, his voice sinking low, and I looked up and a tear trembled in his faded eye. I reached up my pinafore to brush it away, and laid my childish cheek against his weather-beaten face, and sobbed aloud. I do not know what made me weep, it was a strange sympathy. It ever seemed part of my nature to weep with those who weep.

"Dear little child," said the old man, "you cannot tell how many scenes you bring back to me. You are so like my little Alice—good, gentle, little Alice; your hair

has just such golden waves as her's—and your eyes, your cheeks, and your little loving mouth, just like her's—just like Alice."

"And who was Alice, old man?" said I. "Was she your little girl? and is she dead now?" I asked, in childish earnestness, not knowing what visions of past joy I was bringing up to his mind.

"Little Alice was my last little grandchild—the only one left me; and I trust she is an angel, now, in heaven: blessed be God."

"Blessed be God!" I almost unconsciously repeated, and folded my hands together.

"Yes, we should all bless God, little Jenny, when He sees fit to take one of us to become an angel."

"She died then," said I; "and was she six years old, sir?"

"No, not quite six years old when she was taken from me. She would have been six the next coming Christmas."

"Just as old as I am, sir," I said, "and she died; and do you really think she is an angel?"

"Yes, little one, I think she is. Dear Alice was my light and my joy, but God would not that I should love her too much. He took my lamb to his fold, and I am following her thither.

"Please to tell me about her, sir. I should like to hear about little Alice—how you loved her, and how she died and was made one of God's angels." And I put my little hand in his, as I stood looking in his face. "I can tell you about dear little Charlie, who, mother says, is an angel now; though his grave is in the churchyard."

"Then you, too, have known what sorrow is, little one," said the old man, gazing upon me with tearful eyes. "Who would have thought it—who would have thought it! A brother, a little playmate, I suppose," he continued to himself, "very dear to little Jenny no doubt. Ah me! And who was little Charlie, that you speak of, Jenny?"

"He was my little brother, sir, just two years old—very little, sir. He was sick in the spring, and when the first violets came, mother and I planted them upon a little mound, and mother said it was Charlie's grave, and we always keep them fresh there, sir. Would you like to go and see them some time?"

"How did you feel when Charlie died?"

"I did not know, sir. I was sick, and nurse says mother thought I would die instead of Charlie; but nurse says God was so kind to father and mother that he let me live."

"Did you not miss your little playmate, Jenny? And do not the hours often seem long to you?"

"Miss him, sir! I am sure I do. I run for my top and my books and my dolls, and set them out, and think, now Charlie shall come, and then—and then—"

"And then, little Jenny, you should think of little Charlie as one of those about the throne and about the Lamb—as one of the harpers harping with his harp—as safe in God's arms."

"So I try to, sir; but then the little mound in the churchyard. Little Charlie is there. It is just as long as he is, and Mary Lee told me that when people died they put their bodies in boxes and buried them in the earth; and I cannot bear to think that Charlie is so.

When my little canary died, we buried him; but then that was different. He could not stand, nor fly, nor sing; but could it be so with Charlie, he was so full of life and laughter and played so pleasantly? When I ask mother about him, she weeps so sadly she cannot speak. Tell me about it, sir, if you can."

"Your little canary, you said, died, little Jenny. His life was gone, and as he was useless you could not care to keep him, would you?" He could give you no pleasure. He would never sing again, his presence reminded you of what he had been, and you were not sorry when you saw him laid in the ground. Could it not be the same with Charlie, if he could no more talk and play with you? Would you wish to have him put out of your sight, like the canary?"

"Oh, no, sir. Oh no!" I replied, "Never—never. There would be his lovely hair, that I have curled over my fingers so many times, and his dear eyes, and the little hands. No, sir, not while one of these was left should I wish to have him laid in the ground."

"But if his bright eyes were closed for ever, so as never to meet your own—if the voice was hushed, and the little hands were as lifeless as my staff here—"

"No, sir, no—no," I continued

"But could you bear to see all that you loved changed, so that you could not know it. Could you bear that?"

"Oh! I could not bear that," I sobbed; "that is what nurse said. But was it so? Please, sir, tell me, for I always wanted some one to tell me; but they all cried when I spoke to them: and I do not know."

"Yes, my dear little Jenny, the body, the form of your dear little brother was put away out of your sight,

because it was to be changed; but he will appear again in another and more beautiful body. You have a little garden of your own, have you not, Jenny," said he, changing his tone, "with shrubs and flowers in it? Do you never plant any seeds?"

"Oh yes, sir. You must see my morning-glories. I planted the seeds myself in the spring."

"And were they not small black seeds, very small and not at all pretty?" said the old man.

"Yes, sir,—yes, sir, little bits of brown seeds, not so big as peas."

"Well, you planted them in the ground, and what came up, Jenny?"

"Oh, sir, I watched them very closely every day. First appeared above the ground a little folded leaf, sir, with a brown cap on the top of it, which Robert said was part of the seed. Then leaf after leaf came up and opened; and it grew taller and taller, and now it has such flowers, sir—blue and purple and white, sometimes full twenty in one morning."

"Well, Jenny, were you not willing to lose the seed a little while that you might have such beautiful blue-bells?"

"Oh yes, sir," said I, in wonder.

"It is just so with little Charlie. He will at the last great day come forth a more perfect and glorious body. But you must not think of the body, Jenny. The body without the spirit is like a cast-off dress. Your canary had lost its voice, the spirit of life was gone, and its song had left it, so that it was as useless to you as this piece of a clod at my feet. But when God saw fit that the spirit of little Charlie should quit his body, he took him

to himself, and perhaps he clothed it in an angel's form. The body of your little brother, which, though most beautiful, was but perishing dust, lies in the churchyard, and there it will remain until God shall unite the soul to it, which He will do at the last great day, when they will become united and glorious together. So that the body is but laid aside as a garment. And this body of yours and of mine too, little Jenny, is but a garment, —an earthly house in which the spirit dwells."

"I do not know what it at all means," I said; "but when I get older I may know. I will think about it—that little Charlie is in heaven and his useless body is laid in the grave."

"I wish I could make you understand it, but I fear I cannot. Suppose you inhabited a house by yourself, you had the care of it, you opened the windows and doors, and admitted the fresh air, and you furnished it all very nicely, would you be the house any more for that?"

"No, sir," I answered, "I should still be Jenny, and the house would only be a house."

"Well, suppose your father wished you to leave the house, and go and dwell with him and your mother, and you would gladly go and leave the house, would not the house remain? And if no other person took it, and repaired it, and kept it in order, would it not soon fall to pieces? And even with the best care, would it not in a few years be so old and ruinous, that nobody could live in it? Just so with the soul and body of each of us. Our souls are placed in a house, perchance a very beautiful house, as was little Charlie's. Our Father in heaven called the soul to dwell with Him, and the

perishing body, without the soul, soon crumbles into dust."

"Well, sir, I think I understand better now, about the soul and the body. God called Charlie's soul to leave his body, and then his little body was put in the grave, to lie until—"

"Until," answered the old man, "until the soul shall need the body again. Then will it be made exceedingly glorious, and both soul and body will become the companion of angels."

"Well, sir, if Charlie is so happy, I should not think mother would cry so. Do you believe she knows all you now tell me?"

"Oh yes," said the old man, "but she misses her darling so every day, and has so much to remind her of him, it makes her weep. She knows that little Charlie is happy."

"Do you know my mother, sir?" I said.

"I knew her many years ago, Jenny, and she was so gentle and good then, that I feel she cannot be changed, now that she has had you and little Charlie to love."

"Well, that is strange, I thought you did not know anybody here. But you have not told me about Alice, sir—you promised to tell me all about her."

The word Alice seemed again to fill the heart of the old man with grief, and his eyes with tears. "The sun is going down now, Jenny. To-morrow, if you will come to this same spot, I will tell you all about little Alice. Oh, she was so much like you, God bless you, my little one!" and he laid his withered hands upon my head. "God bless you, Jenny! God bring you at last into his glorious kingdom!" The old man arose, and, taking

me by the hand, led me to the garden-gate—parted the branches of the rose-tree for me to go through, and, full of what I had heard and seen, I ran to ask of my mother to let me go and see the old man the next day.

“Why, my child, it is old Herbert,” said she, “good old man! Yes, my little daughter, and God grant that his teachings and his touching story may be of benefit to you!”

CHAPTER II.

LITTLE ALICE.

A LITTLE before the hour, the next day, I was at the gate of the garden, and peeping from behind the rose-bush, I saw the old man sitting, just as he was the day before, his head resting upon his folded hands. He did not hear my foot-steps, and I put my hand upon his furrowed cheek, before he looked up. He gave me a kind welcome, and drew me gently towards him. I sat upon his knee, with my head thrown back upon his shoulder, and my earnest eyes fixed on his face.

“Just like Alice!” said he, “Oh! just like my little Alice!” and he passed his hand over my head, and brushed back the hair from my temples. “Just such golden waves,” said he; “just such a sunny head!”

“Mother knows you,” said I, and—rather abruptly—“she says you are old Herbert; but it must be a great many years since you were here, for I am sure I never saw you before.”

"Ah! but can you remember a great many years back? Five years are not a great many, and it is more than that since I was in this place, and it is five-and-twenty years next month since little Alice died, and your mother can hardly remember farther back than five-and-twenty years."

"And why, how strange!" I said, "twenty-five years is very old. Mother was twenty-five last summer, and I think mother is pretty old. You said, sir, you were fourscore and ten, how old is that, sir?"

"A score is twenty," said the old man, "and four score is eighty, and ten more are ninety: I am ninety years old."

"Ninety! why that is older than anybody is, is it not, sir? It is older than father and mother, and all of us together. And you said that little Alice was five years old when she died, twenty-five years ago?"

"Yes; and so she would be five years older than your mother, if she had lived."

"Please tell me about little Alice, sir. Did she live with you twenty-five years ago!"

"Yes, my child," said the old man, "little Alice lived with me. I had two children; and their names were Alice and William. They were both married. William, his wife, and their three little children all died. The husband of my daughter Alice died: and then she died, and all her children but one: and that is my little treasure of which I am to tell you." The old man put his hand to his head.

"All dead—all gone," I said, "but Alice. Poor old man!"

He proceeded more cheerfully, "Alice was a wee

thing when I took her to live with me—hardly two years old; and it seemed as though a light had broken in upon my darkness, and for three short years God permitted me to have her and to love her. I listened for her foot-fall, as for music. She lay in my bosom like a beautiful flower. How beautiful!—How frail! She was my all on earth. Life had no joy as it seemed to me, without her."

"Did you and little Alice live all alone?" said I, "Did you have no one in the house?"

"No one, Jenny, only Alice and me. The neighbours were employed sometimes to assist us a little; but we were very poor, and I had lived ten years alone before Alice came to me. Our house was but a humble place; our bed a very poor one, but I was happy. I sometimes feared Alice was not, but then God placed us so, and I think she must have been happy. As Alice grew older she could help me a great deal. She could do many little services of love."

"What was one thing she did, sir?" I asked.

"Oh! she could run upon errands for me; and she could sweep up the hearth, for I made her a little broom. She could make the room tidy, and she was almost able to help me to make baskets; for after Alice came to live with me, I made baskets to sell. And Alice's quick eyes and quicker hands would always find me the right kind of osier; and she would sit by me for hours, handing me first a stripe of blue, and then a stripe of green; for I painted them before I wove them, which made them much prettier. And when little Alice went with me to sell the baskets, her sunny face and gentle eye brought me in many a bright shilling. Those who

would not buy for the poor grandfather would buy for his little grand-daughter.

"We always went to church every Sunday. Dear little Alice!

"One day she came running in to me with a quicker step than usual, and cried out,

"'You will not let me go, dear grandfather; you will not let me go, will you? I had rather live with you here, than live with anybody in the world.'

"'What does my little Alice mean?' I said. 'Who can part you from me but God who gave you to me?'

"'The lady—the lady—she wished me to come and live with her, and be her little Alice. But do, grandfather—do keep me.'

"We were here interrupted by a slight knock at the door, which was followed by the entrance of a lady, at the sight of whom Alice clung the closer to me.

"'I met your little grandchild just now, sir; and I proposed to her that she should come and live with me: at which she seemed very much alarmed. I have lost my little Alice, who was just her age two years since; and my heart has yearned for some little one to take her place in my home. And I never have yet seen one whom I loved so almost instinctively as this little creature. Now if this little child were given to me, I will treat her as if she were my own: and you shall have no further anxiety about her. Has she no parents?'

"'Alas, no, ma'am,' I answered, 'she has not one to love her but me; and I—I have no one on the earth to love me but her. It is a hard thing, ma'am, but it seems to me, as if I ought not to refuse such an opportunity to give Alice a home with some one who cannot

but be kind to her and love her, for I shall soon be laid in my grave; and Alice will be alone in the world.'

"'No, no!'" cried little Alice, 'I cannot leave my dear grandfather. Let me live with him as long as he lives: and then, and—'

"'But, little Alice, if you come with me, I will give you nice clothes, and you shall ride in my carriage.'

"'My clothes are as good as grandfather's, ma'am; and I am to have a new dress when summer comes. And I love to run after grandfather, ma'am; my little feet are used to running. I never took a ride in my lifetime, ma'am. I had rather always live here.'

"'But if you will come and live with me,' persisted the lady; 'I will give you toys and picture books, and dolls and a canary bird, and flowers.'

"'But I can hear the robins sing, and they come and pick up crumbs at my feet; and I have flowers, ma'am—forget-me-nots and violets and roses. Grandfather has beautiful pictures in his Bible; and I have osiers and willows to play with. Oh! I am so happy with grandfather.'

"'If you will come with me little Alice,' said the lady; 'I will send you to school, and you shall learn all that any little girl should wish to learn. You shall be taught to sing and to sew, and to draw pictures for yourself, and, what is better than all this, I will teach you to love God and our dear Saviour. You shall go to church with me, and we will pray together night and morning, and read God's holy Word.'

"'That is better than all, ma'am,' said Alice, 'but grandfather tries to make me a good girl, and he says if I pray to God, and do as the Saviour tells me to do, I

shall have a clean heart, and God will love me then. We go to church, ma'am, every Sunday; and I sit by grandfather, and we both sing, ma'am; and grandfather talks to me about it when we get home, and he reads to me; and I am learning, and can almost read now, ma'am.'

"Dear child! I would not take you from your grandfather for all the world. I wish all little girls were as kind and as loving as you. I have offered her every inducement, sir,' said the lady, turning to me; but she declines them all, and I will urge her no farther. She loves her grandfather too dearly to be separated from him; but should you wish another home for her, send her to me.'

"And she then told me her name, and where she lived; said she was on a journey and was stopping but a few days in that village. She also gave me what seemed to me a large sum of money, and told me to keep it for Alice, and spend it for her. I told her I was able to get Alice all she needed, but she made me keep it, and it was many years before I entirely lost sight of her, she remembered Alice and myself in so many kind ways. I tell you this, my little Jenny, that you may know how dearly Alice loved me, though I was then but a feeble old man."

"I would have loved you too. I would have stayed with you. I would love you better than the lady; but Alice never went to live with her, did she?"

"No, no, Jenny, little Alice lived upon earth but a short time; and then God took her to himself. It was in June when the lady saw little Alice and offered to take her for her little daughter; and it seemed to me as

if each day, through the whole summer, she became more dear to me. Her little loving ways, her noble heart, beamed up with such love and gentleness all the time. We often took long walks to obtain the materials necessary for my baskets, and Alice would seem never to tire. Her little feet would follow my slow footsteps through the woods and through the fields. She would sing like the lark her little pretty songs, or repeat over to me some text or verses of hymns which I had taught her. Hour by hour would she sit and talk with me about heaven and the angels of God, and I would teach her all I could; tell her of her own heart, sinful by nature, and how Christ came to redeem us, even the least and the worst among us. I talked to her of the love of the Saviour to little children, and she never was weary. I spoke to her of the Babe of Bethlehem—of Christ going about doing good—of his death upon the cross—of the risen Lord; and she never wished me to speak to her on any other subject. Dear little Alice! It seems as if I were the humble instrument sent to prepare her heart for the great change which awaited her?"

CHAPTER III.

THE CROSS AND THE CROWN.

THE old man paused. I looked up in his face, and his eyes were raised to heaven, as if in prayer. I dared not interrupt him, but soon he recovered himself; and recommenced his narrative.

"Little Alice was five years old when she first sickened,

and would have been six in the winter had she lived in this world till then. She lives still, however, and I trust will live for ever, in God's glorious kingdom. You remember what we said, Jenny, about the soul and the body?"

"Oh! yes," I answered; "she lives in heaven with God; and not in this world, as you say."

"Yes, yes," he answered quickly; "I shall go to her before long. Little Alice became sick in the spring. I hardly knew what her disease was. She seemed frail and weak, and tired all the time. Her will seemed strong; she wished to do as she had always done, but her little hands would tremble, and her limbs fail her."

"The neighbours all loved little Alice, and all were kind to her, and would come in and sit with her, and talk with her, and take her out to ride in their waggons, and bring her all the little delicacies they could; but it was of no avail. She became weaker and weaker, day by day."

"She seemed to love to have no one to assist her so well as myself, and she would take the most nauseous medicine from me with a smile; for she was 'pleasing grandfather,' as she said. She would sit in the old arm-chair, her little head pillowed upon the back, and watch me at my work by the hour. And now and then, when a tear would spring into my eyes, as I looked upon her, she would seem so grieved, and would tell me not to cry, for she felt no pain. But she never said to me, 'I shall be well again, grandfather; and then I will help you.' She seemed to know, from the beginning, that her young life must soon pass away from me. Her favourite time was when my daily labour was done, and

I would sit in the window of our little house, in the arm-chair, with Alice in my arms: her little head against my shoulder, her earnest eyes looking up in my face, while I was trying to prepare her for the inheritance of the saints in light.

“ ‘God is very good to me,’ said she one of these evenings, ‘because he gives me so many blessings; such a dear, good grandfather who can teach me the way to heaven. You must remember little Alice was always most happy with you, dear grandfather; but then who can tell how happy the angels in heaven are, that are about the throne of God and the Lamb!’

“ ‘Your little Alice will soon leave you,’ she would say again. ‘You will miss me, dear grandfather; you will hear no little foot-fall, no merry laugh. You will see no little pale and dying child, no little Alice; but then I feel that Christ has forgiven me all my sins, and washed my soul in his most precious blood: and I fear nothing, grandfather, but leaving you alone in the world.’

“ One day she said to me, after thinking a great while, ‘Grandfather, I have often done very wicked things. I have often thought things that seem to me now very fearful. I remember once I did not love God. I felt as if God was not always kind. I thought it was not kind in God to let you be so poor, and have to work so hard; and have all your friends to die so: and so many wicked people live on and be happy. I thought you were so good, grandfather, you ought to be richer and happier. Was it not wicked in me to think that?’

“ ‘It is never right in us,’ I answered, ‘to doubt God’s kindness to each of us. He would not be a Father

to us, if he were not kind; but, Alice, whenever such thoughts come into your head, you should immediately compare the lot of the poorest and meanest among us with that of Him who said in his deep poverty: Foxes have holes, the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head. And when you think of what I have passed through, and have yet to pass through,' I added, as I pressed my gentle treasure closer to my heart, 'think of Him who bore all our griefs, and carried all our sorrows—who was a man of sorrows! Oh! Alice, Alice: the cross is heavy, but the crown—the crown!'"

I looked up in old Herbert's face. His eyes were turned towards heaven with such a look of holy peace and joy. "Tell me more of little Alice, please sir," I said. "Did she go to heaven?"

"If the blood of Christ cleanses from all sin, Alice is in heaven. I never doubted that, blessed be God! not one doubt did I have of that."

"What did she say when she was sick and knew she was to die? Did she not want to live? I think I should be very sorry to die; it is so beautiful to live."

"Ah! but is it not more beautiful to be where sin and sorrow never enter; where the blessed Jesus shall wipe away all tears of grief? I often talked to Alice about dying, that it might become familiar to her. I knew she could never recover, and I did not wish to deceive her. I called heaven her home, where she would meet her father and mother, and others who had gone before her; and where I soon should join her. I taught her a great many texts from Scripture, and she would apply them to herself in a touching manner; and many friends

who came in to see her wondered at her: she seemed like one so much older than she was.

“ ‘Little Alice,’ I said, one day, ‘do you think you are good enough to go to heaven, to be one of God’s angels?’

“ ‘Good enough! grandfather,’ she said. ‘Good enough! Oh no; not good enough, but Christ is good enough, and he is my Saviour. What could I ever have done to deserve to go to heaven? God gives it to me, grandfather. He loves me! Oh how much he must love me to give me heaven! You were very kind to me once, dear, dear grandfather, when my father and my mother died. I did not deserve that you should take me and take care of me; but you loved me, because I was little and poor and feeble, and could not take care of myself. And God loves me in the same way, and will take me to dwell with him, with the same love. Jesus is most kind to me,’ she said; ‘I used to fear to die, and when little Johnny Burns died I thought it was very hard; but now all is so blessed, God is so good.’

“ ‘Is there nothing you wish for, Alice?’ I once said, ‘no comfort I can give you? Can you not think of something?’

“ ‘Oh! no,’ she answered, ‘the Lord my is shepherd, I cannot want. You do not know what green pastures I shall roam in, and beside what still waters I shall wander.’”

“ ‘Was little Alice sick very long?’ I asked.

“ ‘Yes, my dear, for four months she lay in utter helplessness, but her mind was bright and active. The last day of her life, shall I ever forget it! It was just at this season, little Jenny, twenty-five years ago—a beautiful summer’s day; she lay upon her little bed

with the window open, and with some flowers in her hand, with which she was trying to weave a chaplet. Her eye shone brightly, and her beautiful hair lay about her, like golden thread. One by one the flowers dropped from her tiny fingers; and she looked on me with very sad eyes, and then their expression changed, and a light divine seemed to break from them.

“ ‘I was thinking, grandfather,’ said she, faintly, ‘of the flowers that never fade—of the crown of righteousness. And as I took up these roses, one by one, they seemed to fall from my fingers all withered. Grandfather, I feel as if I soon shall be with Jesus. He has been, oh! so kind to me; he hath forgiven all my sins, and I feel so happy. Take me up, grandfather—but no, let me lie here while you read to me what it says about the new Jerusalem, in the last part of the Bible. I am never tired of hearing that.’

“I opened my old Bible and read, ‘And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away: and there was no more sea. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things have passed away. And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it; and the city hath no need of the sun, neither

of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And he showed me a pure river of water of life clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him: and they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.'

"And I am going there, grandfather," she said, "to that beautiful city, the new Jerusalem. I was thinking this morning, if I should be one of those who stood on mount Sion."

"And then I read where it says, 'I looked, and lo, a Lamb stood on mount Sion: and with him a hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads. And I heard a voice as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps, and they sung as it were a new song.'"

"Oh! grandfather, I trust I shall sing that new song to-day; and that, being redeemed from among men, I may follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. That is all so beautiful to me now, grandfather! I shall be there to-day, I feel it here:" and she laid her hand upon her head. "Shall I not be happy, dear—dear grandfather, before the throne and the Lamb?"

"Oh! yes, happy, most happy, dear Alice. A frail, perishing mortal to-day; a glorified spirit to-morrow! Most happy, little Alice."

" 'Will you not take me up, dear grandfather,' she said, 'and let me lie in your arms once more; and look out on the beautiful summer evening.'

" 'I took her up at her request, and held her in my arms as I sat in my old chair. I parted her hair from her face; and she smiled sweetly.

" 'How very pleasant it is, dear grandfather! God is good to let me die on such a lovely day, for it will seem better for you; and heaven will seem more glorious. God loves you, dear grandfather, and he loves me; and he will take us both to heaven. Does it not say in the chapter—And the Spirit and the Bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely. Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus. Yes! grandfather, Jesus has sent to take your little Alice, the Jesus who loved me; and has washed me from my sins in his own blood.'

" 'You have no fear then, Alice,' I said. 'You do not dread the dark valley?'

" 'Dark valley!' said she, 'there is no dark valley to me, grandfather. It is all full of light, God's light, the light of the Lord God and of the Lamb, dear grandfather. And the angels are coming for me. I see them, grandfather. Look—look, do you not see them?' She flung her arm about my neck and pressed her cheek to mine, and with her hand pointed towards heaven. 'Jesus sends them to call me to his arms. Even so, come, Lord Jesus; come quickly—quickly!'

" 'I looked earnestly at Alice as the light of life left her and could not believe that those dear eyes would never meet mine again; but it was even so! The little

arm around my neck relaxed its hold; the hand, that was raised to heaven to show me the angels, dropped at her side, and my little Alice was released from life's many sorrows; and her purified spirit had gone on the wings of angels to its Father in heaven. I laid the beautiful but now lifeless form upon our humble bed, and kneeled, and prayed that I might bless the name of the Lord who gave her, and who took her away. I arose from my knees strengthened, and stood for a moment gazing upon the perfect casket from which the jewel had been removed. I closed the loving eyes, I smoothed the golden hair, I folded the little hands upon the quiet breast; I wrapped her in her snowy shroud, I laid fresh flowers about her, and I loved to look upon her; but I soon had to lay her away in the churchyard, where I had laid many loved ones before. And there little Alice still quietly sleeps, in her grassy bed, waiting until the general resurrection of the last great day, when the earth and sea shall give up their dead; and the corruptible bodies of those who sleep in Christ shall be changed and made like unto his glorious body, according to the working of him who is able to subdue all things unto himself. But yet when I first saw your loving little face peeping out from behind the rose-bush, and heard your voice, I thought of my Alice, as if she had come back to me. And the thought came quickly into my head, that the last twenty-five years of my life was but a dream—a sad troubled dream, and little Alice was yet alive to bless and comfort me."

"I am so glad I know about little Alice," I said, "Oh! I wish to die and be happy, as she was. I should not fear then."

"You must live as she did if you would die as she died, little Jenny. She feared the Lord, and prayed daily that Christ would take from her the heart which was within her, sinful by nature, and give her a pure heart. But there are few such as little Alice was, in all the world. She had been born and brought up in the lap of sorrow, and it had given her mind a peculiar bent, and had helped to purify her heart and life. Oh! my Alice—my little lovely Alice!" continued the old man with eagerness, "thy life was sweet and gentle—thy death blessed and peaceful! Shall I be deemed worthy to enter that heaven where thou art gone? My hope is through Christ; nothing without that blessed Jesus who loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood. But, little Jenny, will not your mother fear for you? You are absent so long, the sun casts long shadows. I must see you again, my little friend. You promised to show me where little Charlie sleeps, and to-morrow, (if your mother will permit you to go with me,) we will meet here again at the same hour."

"I will ask mother," I answered. "I know she will let me come; but please talk to me a little more, sir, before I go. Mother has gone away and will not be back till the evening, and she will let me stay, I am very sure. I want you to tell me, sir, how you lived when Alice was taken from you, and if you still made baskets in your little house."

"No, ah no! I could not remain there. I returned, after we laid her in the grave, to my lonely and deserted house; but I could not, no! I fear I could never have been contented to live there again. I packed up all the little treasures I had: my scanty wardrobe, my old Bible

from which I had so often read to her, and a few toys that belonged to her, and I took my stout stick in my hand, and walked forth from the village, and for twenty-five years I have been a wanderer—I could make baskets and sell them to obtain bread and a shelter—a weary, weary wanderer, Jenny,—and I have come back now, to lay my worn-out frame beside my little Alice. I longed to die here, and God has granted me my wish.”

“And was this the village where you and Alice lived?”

I said. “And does Alice rest in our graveyard?”

“Yes, my child, little Alice lived and died here in this village; but all about here is sadly altered, and I can hardly find any old land-mark. That large house stands upon the spot where our little cottage once stood, and I should be sorely puzzled now to know where to go for osiers and willow-twigs, if I had to work at my baskets again. But good-bye now, little Jenny. Come again to-morrow, and you shall show me where little Charlie sleeps, and I will show you Alice’s resting-place.”

I slipped from his knee, and he held me a moment to his heart, and kissed me tenderly, and I felt a tear upon my cheek. I dared not trust myself to speak, but walked quietly away. The rose-tree branches half hid him from my sight, but I saw that his eye was upon me, as he murmured,

“So like my Alice! So like my little, loving Alice!”

CHAPTER IV.

THE CHURCHYARD.

I was earlier than usual the next day, having obtained my mother's permission to go to the graveyard with Old Herbert, and the stone was unoccupied when I passed out from the garden-gate; and, with my straw hat in my hand, I placed myself upon the rude seat to wait my old friend's coming. Soon I saw his feeble form approaching. The afternoon was warm, and he had taken off his hat, and the light breeze was playing with his thin silvery locks. I ran to meet him. He seemed glad to see me; and when I held up my childish face for a kiss, he bent over me, and called me "Alice." Dear old man! how I loved him. Though but an acquaintance of a few days, I put my little hand in his, ran along, full of life, and very young life—and he—his span almost finished—feeble and weary with protracted wanderings; I, full of glee, and the childish hope of a happy to-morrow—he, infirm and walking slowly, but with a life before him of which I could not dream, a hope of a glorious immortality. Happy, happy child! but most happy, most blessed old man!

We conversed together till we approached the graveyard. My step lost its lightness, and my voice was very low and soft, and soon we ceased to speak. The village graveyard was a lovely spot. It was in a sheltered dell, very quiet and shady, approachable only by a footpath—for the strong man and the infant, just born to die, were alike borne to their quiet home here,

upon the bier, and by the villagers themselves. There were many large trees casting their dark shadow upon the long grass and flowers. Many of the stones were moss-covered, and almost illegible were the inscriptions upon them: but the graveyard was well fenced, and the careful villagers "never kept their kine in holy ground." The rustic gate opened readily to Old Herbert's touch, and we passed in. As I wound my way among the turf-covered beds, leading my infirm companion, he watched me with great interest.

"You never tread upon the graves, I see, Jenny," said he.

"No, sir: no, I hope I don't. I could not bear that any one should tread upon Charlie's grave, and I suppose that every one loves their dead as I and mother love Charlie. Here is the spot, sir. Here is a seat father had made on purpose for mother and me, under the tree, so that mother may rest here and tell me of what Charlie is now, sir." So saying, I led the old man to a rustic bench; and he sat upon it, while I stood beside him. For a few moments not one word was uttered.

"The violets are fresh, sir," I said; "the rose-buds are just opening, and the forget-me-nots love to grow here, mother says." And I stepped from his side and culled flowers from my little brother's grave and placed them in his hand. He looked at them with great interest, and said—

"You will remember, Jenny, what I told you about the flowers; of the seed, which, when placed in the ground, dies, and comes forth above the dark earth in a beautified form, bearing flowers and fruit in turn."

"Ah yes, sir;" I said, "and little Charlie lies here

that he may come forth again when God pleases to call him."

"And when will that be, my little Jenny?"

"In the last great day, sir, when the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised," I answered.

"Mother told me that. It is a very little grave, sir," I said, "and Charlie was a very little child, and could only say a few words. I shall be very glad, sir, when God lets you go to heaven," I said. "You must want so to be with God and his angels, because Alice is with them; and then I shall not see you any more, but I will come and plant violets on your grave, if I know where you sleep, and on little Alice's grave too. Will you not show me where Alice's grave is? You said she was buried here."

"He arose and took me by the hand, and we walked the length of the grave-yard; and close to the wall, on the farthest side, lay a long row of sunken graves, some with head-stones, and some without anything to mark the spot as a grave.

But a few rods apart from the rest was a little grave, very short and narrow, the turf fresh upon it, and flowers blooming and newly watered, and a small white tombstone, with the simple word

ALICE;

and beneath that,

SHE HATH GONE UNTO HIM WHO HATH LOVED HER.

"So many graves," I said, "and little Alice, too!" and I sobbed aloud.

The old man seated himself upon a moss-grown stone, and clasped me with his arm, and we wept together.

"There are all mine," he said; "all my own household there whom I loved, each and all so dearly. Yes, there are many graves; and as I look at each, thoughts of what these silent tenants were in life rush into my mind—the young, the manly, the gentle, the timid, the loving, the pious, and the thoughtless—all, all come up to me. God only knows how many of those that sleep here shall rise to the life everlasting. You said you would plant flowers upon my grave, Jenny: I shall not forget that."

"And on Alice's, too," I said. "I will keep it fresh."

"Ah, I shall be so glad when I think of that, Jenny; to feel that there is one little one who loves me, and who will come and visit the spot where my dust lies; but you must plant the fairest flowers on Alice's grave, and see that the forget-me-nots are always blooming there. It will be a pleasure to me to know that the graves are to be so attended, and by one so like Alice. But, Jenny, you must not think of us as sleeping here—you must think of us, as my Alice said, before the Throne and the Lamb; as being cleansed from all pollution in the fountain of Christ's love, and coming forth clothed in white robes, and following the Lamb whithersoever he goeth."

"Yes, sir; yes, sir," I quickly answered; "and soon mother, and father, and their little Jenny will come to heaven, and God will let us see you and little Alice."

We sat in this quiet manner for some time, the old man talking of the blessings of the redeemed, and when we arose to go, the setting sun threw a rich glory over the scene. The graveyard seemed to me like a home for the weary, a pleasant sleeping-place; and as we paused a moment at little Alice's headstone, I looked

up, and the old man's hands were clasped in earnest supplication—his lips were moving, and I only caught the words, "not as I will, but as Thou wilt."

We proceeded on our way in silence for a while, and at length Old Herbert said—

"Little Jenny, perhaps we never shall meet again in life. I feel that the hour is fast approaching when I must lay aside my earthly house of this tabernacle—but you will not forget me, Jenny, and you will not forget my little Alice; and that you may be happy here and hereafter, be sure that you make Christ your friend and Saviour."

We approached the garden gate, and the old man rested once more upon the stone, under the shadow of the large tree—once more I sat upon his knee, and laid my head against the shoulder of his rough coarse coat—once more with his feeble hand he parted back the hair from my forehead, and looked earnestly in my eyes, and then folding me to his heart, he kissed me gently, and put me from his knee.

"Let me bless you before we part, to meet no more in life, little Jenny," he said.

I dropped upon my knees, and raised my eyes to his, as he laid his trembling hands upon my head, and prayed that I might be blessed and protected by Him who suffered the little children to come unto Him, and forbadeth them not; who took them up in His arms, who put His hands upon them, and blessed them. I rose quickly, and once more embracing my old friend, we parted, never again to meet upon earth!

CHAPTER V.

OLD HERBERT.

I NEVER saw my old friend again. The next day I went to the same place, at the same hour, and sat and waited long and anxiously, but no one came, and I went home sad and weeping. But hope revived with the morning light, and the next day again I went there, and, with my little Bible in my hand, sat reading about what Jesus said of little children, but the good old man appeared not.

Some time afterwards my mother proposed that we should visit Charlie's grave.

"It is many days since we have been there, little Jenny," said she, "and the evening is very beautiful."

"I was there once with Old Herbert, mother, you remember."

"Yes, my dear, and you shall tell me more of Old Herbert and his little Alice, as we walk along."

We lingered around Charlie's grave, and I brought water from a little brook, and refreshed the flowers, which had drooped in the hot sun—and we talked of heaven and of Charlie, and of little Alice.

"And now, mother, I will show you Alice's grave, if you will go with me."

And I led my mother round to where the old man's household had found a resting-place—but, behold, there was another, a new grave made, close by little Alice's, the fresh green turf neatly laid and freshly watered, and a coarse plain stone placed at the head and foot, and the name of—

WILLIAM HERBERT,
AGED 90 YEARS.

"Old Herbert rests at last," said my mother.

"Oh, mother, mot' er," I said, "I did not know he was dead. Did you know it?"

"Yes, my dear. I was with him when he died, and he talked of you and of little Alice, and said I must not tell you that he was dead until his grave was made, and his tombstone up. His body is here, but his soul is with God."

I sobbed as if my heart would break.

"Dear, kind, good old man. Oh, he was so good, and is so happy now with Alice. When did he die, mother?"

"He died very soon after you saw him last. He was staying with old Margaret, and she sent for me just after you had gone to bed, and I was with Old Herbert until his eyes were closed in death, and his spirit had gone to God who gave it. He said that my little Jenny promised to plant flowers upon his grave, and on the grave of his little Alice, and I have had Robert bring some roots and water here, Jenny, and we will see what we can do to make the old man's grave a pleasant spot."

So saying, my mother pointed to a basket which I had not noticed before, fragrant with blooming plants and rich earth, and my dear mother helped me to water the roots and plant them firmly beneath the green sod, and we watered them, and it was a spot very fair to see—a pleasant grave.

On our return, my mother and I rested a while upon the same moss-green stone upon which Old Herbert had so often sat with me.

"Jenny," said my mother gently to me, "I trust you will never forget what Old Herbert said to you—that you will always remember his little Alice, and in early life try to fix your love upon the Saviour, and your thoughts upon the unseen glories of heaven."

"I shall love to think of heaven more and more every day, mother, now that not only our little blessed Charlie, but that good old man and Alice are there. I shall come very often, mother, shall I not, to this graveyard, and tend and water these flowers? What a little grave it is that Alice sleeps in, and how short by the side of Old Herbert. But they are both angels now, and what a happy thought that is, mother."

"God grant, my dear child, that you and I and all whom we love, may be among those who have a part in the first resurrection, for over them the second death can have no power. Blessed and holy indeed shall we be when God's work of grace is completed, and we are admitted to dwell in his glorious and happy presence."

MANY, many years have passed since Old Herbert entered upon his rest—yet still does the memory of his conversations with me remain fresh upon my mind, as in my early childhood. Of course the words are not the same, but the impression of what he said is perfectly fresh and clear.

Among the many little ones who throng about my knee, to claim a kiss and a blessing, is one whose hair falls in rich curls upon her snowy shoulders, and whose

eye is as blue as the violet's cup. It is my little ALICE. I look upon her with all a mother's love, and trust she will become one of those whom the Good Shepherd loves to take in his arms and carry in his bosom. There is something about her, which tells me she will not long be with me here. I may be wrong, and my fears may be needless—but should my little Alice be taken from me, I shall bear in mind Old Herbert's Alice, and trust that mine, like his, will be before the Throne and the Lamb. God give me grace to bring them all up in his nurture and admonition, and may I be the instrument employed by him to lead them to the fountain of living waters.

Oftentimes I gather my little flock about me, at the still hour of Sabbath-even, and tell many stories which delight their young hearts, but there is none which seems to satisfy them half so much, or which I have to repeat to them half so often, as that of little Alice and Old Herbert.

THE SEXTON'S HYMN.

I've laid the turf above the child
Whose life was but a summer's day;
I knew that God, in mercy mild,
Had called his infant soul away.
Then wherefore weep
O'er those who sleep?
Their precious dust the Lord will keep,
Till He appear
In glory here,
The harvest of the world to reap.

I've laid the turf above the youth
Whose early years to God were given;

Whose peaceful death proclaimed the truth,
None die too soon who live for Heaven.
Then wherefore weep
O'er those who sleep?
Their precious dust the Lord will keep,
Till He appear
In glory here,
The harvest of the world to reap.

I've laid the turf o'er reverend age,
Whose hoary hairs were glory's crown;
The saint had closed his pilgrimage,
And gently laid life's burden down.
Then wherefore weep
O'er those who sleep?
Their precious dust the Lord will keep,
Till He appear
In glory here,
The harvest of the world to reap.

And soon the grave will close o'er me,
Yet wherefore mourn my life's decline?
Lord, ransomed, pardoned, saved by Thee,
Sleeping or waking, I am Thine!
Oh! wherefore sigh
For those who die
In Christ? The forms that mouldering lie
Shall burst the sod,
To meet their God,
And mount with seraph wings on high.





THE LITTLE MISSIONARY.

"I **SHOULD** like to be a missionary, aunt Mary," said little Ellen, "just like uncle William; do you think he would take me with him?"

"And leave mamma?" said a kind voice behind her.

"Oh, no, mamma, I had quite forgotten that; I never could leave you; but still, I *do* wish I were a missionary."

"And if my little girl had her wish granted, what would she do?"

"I would tell the little children about 'gentle Jesus,' mamma, and how he loves them; and I would try to get them to love him, that they might go to heaven."

"Well, Ellen, I am willing you should be a missionary; but can you not begin at home? You can set a good example to your brother; for if you are dutiful and affectionate, he will try to imitate you; and as he cannot read yet, you can teach him your texts and hymns, and tell him the Bible stories you are so fond of."

"Oh, thank you, mamma, I *can* do that; and now, will you give me a nice little verse to teach Willie?"

"Will this do, Nelly? 'Little children, love one another.'"

Ellen looked very grave, for she remembered that often, when her little brother teased her, she was apt to get angry, and forget altogether that there was such a verse in the Bible. However, she went to look for Willie; and when she had found him, they sat down together, and

she taught him the text ; and then in her own simple way tried to explain it.

Poor Ellen ! the day so well begun was not to end without a trial of her love. When she went to play with Willie after dinner, he was sitting on the nursery floor, tearing out leaf after leaf from her pretty " Bible Story-Book." " Oh, Willie, Willie, you naughty, wicked boy ! " she cried, " how *could* you spoil my book ? " " Little children, love one another," whispered conscience ; but Ellen was not ready to listen to it. But when she saw how grieved her mamma looked, and heard her say, " Ellen, is *that* a missionary spirit ? " she was very, *very* sorry, and ran away weeping bitterly.

When her mamma had quieted Willie, and told him how wrong it was to destroy his sister's things, she went to look for Ellen. Where do you think she found her ? She was kneeling by the side of her little bed and praying that Jesus would forgive her naughty temper, and help her to overcome it. And that kind Saviour, who listens to the little ones when they pray, heard her, and granted her request ; for after that time, though harsh words sometimes came to her lips, she tried earnestly to check them, and she almost always succeeded. Day after day, too, she continued her " missionary " work, and talked to Willie, and prayed with him, and taught him to pray for himself ; for she knew that if all the good people in the world were to pray for us ever so much, we must pray for ourselves also.

It was not long before Ellen's cheeks began to grow pale, and she became weak and ill. For a short time she was able to go out as usual, but at last she could not even leave her room or her crib. Her little friends

and kind relatives came to visit her; and few of them left without giving her a book, or a text, or a kind invitation to love the Saviour.

At length a day came when Ellen must leave her mamma. She stood by her bedside, and papa and aunt Mary were there; but they could not ease her pain, or go with her through the valley of the shadow of death. "Mamma, papa," she said, "what are you crying for! I am not afraid. 'He shall carry the lambs in his bosom.' I am one of His lambs, and I want to go to him; won't you let me?" They could not answer her, and she went on, "Sing for me, dear mamma; sing 'Bright glory.'" Her poor mamma tried, but sobs choked her voice, and she could not. "Papa, will you sing? Aunt, will you? Nurse, will you sing 'Joyful' for me?" All tried, but all failed; so little Ellen raised herself and sung:—

"Little children will be *there*,
Who have sought the Lord by prayer,
And trusted in his grace.
Oh, that will be joyful, joyful, joyful, joyful!
Oh, that will be joyful! when we meet—"

The little head fell back upon the pillow, and the song begun on earth was finished in "bright glory," for little Ellen was dead.





THE SETTING SUN.

"MAMMA," said a little girl, "why do you go always to the flower-garden just now, after tea, before we go to bed? Why do you stand still so long, looking always to the same place in the sky?"

"Do you not know why?"

"I think I can guess,—because it is *so pretty*. I often notice how the clouds that had been so dark and *common*-looking all day, get all purple and orange then, like the colours in your Indian shawl. Is that the reason, mamma?"

"It is one reason, my dear. I like to look at pretty things, as well as you and Harry do. But this evening you shall sit up half an hour later; and put on your warm cloak, and come with me to the garden."

It is evening, and Mary and her mother are alone in the flower-garden.

"Now, my child, look towards the hills in the west, and tell me what you see."

"O mamma, it is beautiful! The sun has quite *fallen down*, almost touching the hills, instead of being above our heads in the sky! And those *bits of gold cloud*, just above, are so lovely!—Look! I can bear to look at the sun now, though it is still so very bright! And how it is *moving*, and quite *round*, like the moon!"

"Is it quite round now, Mary?"

"No; a bit of the mountain has got above it, and

cut off a part, and it is getting less and less, and yet moving still."

"Where is our favourite Schihallion now?"

"I cannot see it; it is all hidden with the brightness."

"Yes; but in a few minutes the sun will have gone down quite behind Schihallion, and then the mountain will appear again, dark against the sky."

"You are right, mamma;—there, the pretty gold sun is getting less and less; and now it is quite gone; and there is Schihallion again. Oh! how beautiful! Do you see this every evening?"

"Always something beautiful, but not often so clear and bright as this. And now, can my little girl tell me what it makes me *think about*?"

"I do not know, mamma. What is it?"

"It makes me think about *dying*; the day of life being over, and the time which the pretty hymn speaks of for falling "*asleep in Jesus*" being come. And I think I should like to die *like that sun*,—to go down as calmly and brightly into the grave, and leave a *golden memory* behind me."

"Mamma," said Mary, looking very grave, "you often speak about dying; but does it not *make you very sad* to think of leaving all this pretty world, and lying down in the dark grave we saw open last week in the church-yard?"

"Why should it, my love? Does it make you sad to see the sun go down as it did just now?"

"Oh! no; there is nothing melancholy in that."

"Why not? It will soon be quite dark and cold, and we could not see the flowers any more, and you must go out of the garden, and go to bed in the dark nursery."

"Ah! but you know, mamma, I shall sleep quite soundly; and then when I awake in the morning, the sun will be up again above the trees as bright as ever."

"Yes, that is true. But if you thought the sun were never to get up again, then you would feel sad to see it go down."

"Oh! yes, indeed."

"And are those who *know* and *love Jesus* always to remain in the dark grave?"

"No, mamma. The Bible says that they shall all rise bright and beautiful again, on the resurrection morning."

"Then why should the thought of dying be sad to *them*, my dear Mary? Did I ever tell you of a pretty picture which I saw last winter in the Exhibition? It was that of a beautiful lady lying on a bed. At first she seemed just sleeping softly; but when you looked nearer, she was so pale and calm, you saw she was dead. The window of the room was open, and through it you saw a bright golden evening sky, the sun going down as it did just now. I could have looked at that picture for an hour, it was all so peaceful and beautiful. And below it there was a verse from the Bible written: 'Thy sun shall no more go down, neither shall thy moon withdraw itself; for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended.'"

"Oh! mamma, what a beautiful verse! May I learn it for you to-morrow morning?"

"Yes, my dear; you will find it in Isaiah. And now it is time for you to go to bed; but we shall come back here some other evening, and speak of these things again."



LITTLE LUCY,

AND THE SONG SHE SANG.

I.

A LITTLE child, six summers old,
So thoughtful and so fair,
There seemed about her pleasant ways
A more than childish air,
Was sitting on a summer eve
Beneath a spreading tree,
Intent upon an ancient book
Which lay upon her knee.

She turned each page with careful hand,
And strained her sight to see,
Until the drowsy shadows slept
Upon the grassy lee;
Then closed the book, and upward looked,
And straight began to sing
A simple verse of hopeful love—
This very childish thing:
“While here below, how sweet to know
His wondrous love and story;
And then, through grace, to see His face,
And live with Him in glory!”

II.

That little child, one dreary night
Of winter wind and storm,
Was tossing on a weary couch
Her weak and wasted form;
And in her pain, and in its pause,
But clasped her hands in prayer—
(Strange that we had no thoughts of heaven,
While hers were only there)—

Until she said, "O mother dear,
How sad you seem to be!
Have you forgotten that He said,
'Let children come to me?'
Dear mother, bring the blessed Book;
Come, mother, let us sing."
And then again, with faltering tongue,
She sung—that childish thing:
"While here below, how sweet to know
His wondrous love and story;
And then, through grace, to see His face,
And live with Him in glory!"

III.

Underneath a spreading tree
A narrow mound is seen,
Which first was covered by the snow,
Then blossomed into green:
Here first I heard that childish voice
That sings on earth no more;—
In heaven it hath a richer tone,
And sweeter than before:
For those who know His love below—
So runs the wondrous story—
In heaven, through grace, shall see His face,
And dwell with Him in glory.



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