



# Buds and Blossoms

AND

## Friendly Greetings.

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

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{ WHOLE No. 113.



THE EARL OF ROSEBERY,

SECRETARY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS IN THE NEW LIBERAL CABINET

### It is Decided to Build the Tabernacle.

**T**our last quarterly church meeting it was stated the temporary roof which covers our basement had given out and during the summer something must be done to preserve our vestry. It was reported to effectually stop the leaks for another winter it would require a new roof, and as it covers the entire floor of the Tabernacle proper, the expense would be quite an item. As the voice of one, all agreed, "let us raise it higher, that is, let us build over the superstructure for which we have long hoped, worked and prayed."

Thus it will be seen there is a multiplying without extra visible recourses of my responsibilities. Nevertheless, thank God, faith rises in proportion, and we can say, yes we dare to attempt great things for God, because from Him our expectancy of help and grace sufficient.

We have not yet matured our plans, but we write, to awaken the sympathy and prayers of our many friends and readers, with the hope, that God will move many of them to say, every little helps, and we

will be among the many, who can thus make the burden light, and the undertaking a success.

My heart is cheered by the unanimity of feeling among the people. It has seemed as much as we could do to sustain the regular work, and not a few are giving to the full extent of their ability regularly and constantly, yet as the voice of one, all say, "let us do it, our God is able to supply our need in response to earnest united efforts; we will ask the Divine blessing on our plans and work."

Dear friends, we have no extravagant notions, we do not aspire to high steeples or gaudy showiness within or without. But simply to build an upper room, neat and substantial in its appointments, pleasing in its proportions, roomy and comfortable as to its lighting and ventilation.

This we feel is a justifiable desire and design, and no one can accuse us of undue haste in our purpose or vain ambition. It is speeding on to ten years since we went into the unfinished, unfurnished basement, and toiled unto success amidst the fears of friends and banter of foes. God made the cellar, so-called the birth place of many souls, and very Bethel of comfort to the saints. About three years since, the Lord led us to arise and finish the basement, so that now when the upper structure goes up, few of the King's houses in this City will have a more goodly or honored cellar than have we, or one more noted for its rich experiences and hallowed memories. Its rough stones, long before covered with plaster were witness to the tears and prayers, and the dedication of very many souls to God. Not a few are in glory now. Others are scattered far and near. Meet at the Tabernacle when you will—passing strangers not a few are generally there in the public assembly. Now lovingly we ask you to consider our case, spread it before the Lord and help us as he may prompt. Do not be ashamed to send because your gift is small, it will help us, and be thankfully received and acknowledged.

Somewhere in America a member of a church has been "withdrawn from" on the charge of "general cantankerousness." We have heard of some brethren in the churches this side of the Atlantic who have the same peculiarity of character. It would be well if they could have the advantage of similar discipline.

Some one asked Sam Jones, "Where is hell?" He replied, "I don't know, and, by the grace of God, I never will know." The man then asked, "Is there really genuine burning brimstone there?" Sam replied, "I am so afraid there is I am never going there to see." Can we go much beyond this?

To the Mayflower.

Emblem of Scotia! O beautiful flower,  
Lovely art thou in thy fair sylvan bower,  
Blowing so sweetly amid the cold snow,  
Cheering our path while we journey below.

Making us long to be faithful and pure,  
And sorrow and trials with patience endure,  
Soothing the weary and overwrought brain,  
Making less cruel some deeply wrought pain.

Making us wish when we gaze upon thee,  
Ever as free from all evil to be,  
Free from all bitterness though friends may slight  
And treat our fond love as some worthless mite.

Ah! yes, my own little innocent gem,  
Though we could suffer with gladness for them,  
They hardly know of and they do not care  
For the sad heart-aches they cause us to bear.

Thou dost not speak of the trials of life,  
Of this strange world with its tumult and strife,  
Of the great passions that torture the soul,  
And o'er the spirit like the mighty waves roll.

But pure and fresh from the fragrant green sod,  
Thou speakest only of mercy and God,  
Of lovely Eden where all was so fair,  
Ere sin's death-laden breath created despair.

Wee flower, we prize thee as Spring's fairest child,  
And watch for thy coming as zephyrs grow mild;  
Teach us sweet lessons of virtue and love  
And whisper glad tidings of mausions above.

Yes, Scotia's emblem, we welcome thee back,  
Summer and singing birds come in your track;  
Others may think there are flowers thy peer,  
But to the Scotian's heart thou art most dear.

—REV WINTON.

The Regions Beyond or Mission Notes.



HE wide, wide world, is the harvest-field for christian activity. Our Master, Jesus, has a strong claim upon our best service. Let the motto be, more work, and better work, for Him who loved us and gave Himself for us. How can I serve my God and do good to all men? is a question of serious import and worthy of consideration. Every awakened man needs to watch and pray, and cry, Lord, what wouldst thou have me to do? Every christian has some ability to contribute in cash or kind to the success of the great work of evangelizing the world for Christ. To give our share to the success of the church, both love and duty demand. Nothing but a full and unreserved dedication of all our powers to God, can meet the commands and demands of the Book of Life, which is the order book of the church, the rule of action to every true christian. Our first duty is to accept the Gospel ourselves, and then to present the unspeakable gift to the whole race of men. We have, all of us, our several spheres, in which we can labour for the Master. The kingdom of light of truth, has its origin above—God in Christ ruling the hearts of men, after having made them willing in the day of their strength. To every christian, his own heart is the central point of this Divine kingdom. Hence must shine forth the light, entering the hearts of others, thus realizing the Master's description, "Ye are the light of the world." Hence must go forth the truth to satisfy those who are perishing for lack

of it. Would it not be well to take a general view of our position, and work as members of Christ's Church? We are called and ordained to evangelize the world, and we must recognize our responsibility. Let us do our part as the true salvation army to bring the inhabitants of this world into allegiance to the Son of God. Remember the kingdom of Jesus Christ is not one to come, but one coming. Christianity is in the world, not by permission, but by the appointment of God. The kingdom of darkness, the government of evil, exists by the sufferance alone.

There is a loud call for self-denying benevolence. If we hug our wealth we shall find it true. No man ever put his trust in riches, but found them playing him false. Can it be that the liberality of the churches falls short of their zeal? Is not the generosity of those who have money equal to the self-sacrifice of men in giving themselves to the work? Let us imitate the zeal of those who count not their lives dear. We give the last words of one of our missionary brethren who just passed away in the very commencement of his life's services in Africa. God grant that his last word as told by his friend and fellow-missionary, Mr. Comber, may stir our faith and move our hearts to pray God bless the workers, and send more laborers Mr Comber writes:

"I said to him, 'Maynard, my dear fellow, you are going home.' He said calmly, 'It is well.' I asked him if there were any special messages he would like to leave, and he left several," such as: "Tell the boys and girls of the Orphanage (Mr. Spurgeon's) to seek Jesus," "Tell my two brothers to decide for Jesus. 'Dr. Swallow and his family, and Mr. and Mrs. Spurgeon, I do love them—how I do love them.' 'Tell the students to preach Christ and Christ only.' 'O, precious Jesus!' 'Oh, so happy!' 'May the Congo speedily be filled with the love of God.' We asked him, 'Maynard, are you sorry you came to the Congo?' 'Oh no,' he replied, 'very thankful.' My work's soon done, isn't it? There are many more of our men who will soon come.' 'For Jesus' sake.' 'I'll soon be home! I'll soon be home!' 'Work on, brethren; don't let the loss of your men hinder you. Never give up—hope always. O Jesus! soon be at home. This is the valley; I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me. 'Twill soon be over. Tell all our boys to seek the Saviour. Good-bye! I'll look for you; I'll wait for you. Faith can firmly trust him, come what may. Brethren, brethren, be of good cheer. Rock of Ages cleft for me!"

*Ed.* Will our friends canvass for new subscribers? We can supply back numbers from January. We like to do this, as it makes subscriptions full due at the commencement of the year, and more, the back numbers are scattered and our finance is helped. We ask the prayers of all for right guidance and success in this our work for Jesus. Also that many souls may be won for Christ by our efforts through the pulpit and press.

N. B.—A newspaper is like a human being. It must keep up in circulation or it will die.

Rev. J. Souper of Jersey City, U. S., writes:—"I cannot describe to you the gratitude I feel; these publications of yours are so well adapted for my very peculiar work at the Penitentiary and Alms House. I had previously distributed those you first sent, and the prisoners especially manifest so much interest in them. Next Lord's day I shall have the pleasure of distributing half of those now received. In a little while I plan to send you \$5 to help in your blessed work."

Payment from U. S. for B. and B. can be sent in 2c. U. S. post-ago stamps. Bills by registered letter come safely, where P. O. Orders are not easily obtained.

Tabernacle Flower Mission.

DEDICATED TO THE SERVICE AND GLORY OF HIM  
WHO IS THE ROSE OF SHARON AND THE  
LILY OF THE VALLEY.

Our motto and object, is to cheer and help the poor and suffering for Christ's sake. We write with a desire to enlist the sympathy and co operation of these who have flowers and opportunity to cultivate a supply for the Mission. By doing this, friends can help us to successfully enlarge our operations this coming season, and we desire to do so, for last year we had encouragement to go forward. The thankful looks, and grateful acknowledgments of the sick ones made our workers feel their labour was not in vain in the Lord.

Dear friend you can help and aid us in ministering to the comfort and pleasure of others by sending us flowers from week to week; they can be sent in bulk, in hampers or boxes. They will then be assorted and arranged into small bunches by our helpers and taken by loving hands to the sick and suffering.

If you have no flowers, you can greatly assist by writing or cutting out suitable scripture texts from lesson books and almanacks, and pasting them on white cardboard, ready to tie to the flowers, for we hope by the Word of God to reach and save souls.

Since 1881 when we commenced this branch of christian work a total of 6,972 bunches have been sent out. Last year alone 1,926 bunches were distributed. With more means and workers we see the way to greatly enlarge. Who will help?

Could those who have flowers in abundance see how eagerly and with what glad surprise they are accepted, and the amount of pleasure afforded, I am sure that few flowers would be allowed to grow and bloom unappreciated, seeing that they can be made to minister comfort and cheer to not only the aged and sick, but to the poor and tired toilers who have no time or opportunity to grow and gather flowers, and thus, from their freshness and beauty, learn how God careth for and sustaineth even the flower of the field, which to-day is and to-morrow is cast into the oven. Will you gather of your abundance, and thus help us to prove that God is love, and that Jesus, who came to save the lost, is fairer and sweeter than Sharon's Rose.

Ribbon of Blue Notes.

During the month with voice and pen we have tried to stir the temperance sentiment of the people.

Perhaps by quoting the testimony of a dying child, as given in the *Christian Home*, we can with few words awaken some to a sense of responsibility.

"YOU DID IT."

Little Bessie was dying.

Her father had struck the child a blow on the spine while insane from the influence of rum, and confusion and terror overwhelm the frantic household, for little Bessie is beloved by all.

Among those of the neighbours who had gathered in amid the excitement was the rumseller who had dealt out the poison to that neighborhood for years. He drew near the death-bed, and heard a watcher, who was wiping the death damp from the child's beautiful face, say, "That blow has killed her."

Little Bessie caught the whisper, and, raising her eyes that were growing large in death, she fixed a dying gaze upon the rumseller, and said: "You did it!" and in a few minutes was dead.

That group never forgot the dying child's charge, and the rumseller says that it haunts him day and night; and yet he continues to deal out the fatal beverage to his victims. Every one of us who does not rise up and assist in crushing this brazen serpent is guilty before God, and the rumseller will say to us: "They who are not against us are for us;" and more than one "Little Bessie" will say to us, "You did it."

Yes! the wholesale murder of innocents will not cease until this traffic ceases, and to-day millions of voices are crying to us from the grave, "You did it."

Our Study Table and Review Notes.

Our advertising space is full and to show our appreciation of the kindness of the "Montreal Witness" in exchanging space, we give their ad. as a reading notice:

ANNIVERSARY PICTURES.

*The Weekly Witness*, the best family newspaper.— Though now in its forty-first year the reputation and value of the "Witness" stands higher than ever. The news of the world in most readable form; first-class stories of absorbing interest, information and advice from the best authorities on agricultural, medical, legal, veterinary, scientific, literary and general questions. Home department for the ladies, children's corner, and editorials of fearless independence in support of truth and honesty in politics, religion and temperance; these help to make the "Witness" the most valuable family paper in the Dominion.

N.B.— This fortieth anniversary is being signalized by the presentation of a splendid coloured picture to every subscriber to the "Witness." Subscription \$1.00.

NO SUNDAY-SCHOOL should be without the *Northern Messenger*. A new and greatly improved series has just begun. Send for samples (free) at once. Subscriptions 30 cents a year. Ten copies to one address, \$2.50; twenty-five copies, \$6.00; fifty copies, \$11.50; one hundred copies, \$22.00.

HOUSEHOLD EDITION of the *Northern Messenger*, with household advice in place of part of the Sunday school lessons, same price. The "Messenger" (fortnightly), is the cheapest illustrated paper published.

*Weekly Messenger*, with news, stories, etc., 50 cents a year.

Address John Dougall & Son, "Witness" Office, Montreal.

Repentance is the act of a Christian, but repining is the act of a carnal man.—*Secker*.

The Persians say of noisy, unreasonable talk, "I hear the sound of millstones, but I see no meal."

An aged Christian woman was asked, "Are you never troubled by the devil, that you are always so cheerful?" "Oh, yes, he often comes to my door, but I never bid him come in or give him a stool to sit on."

## Home Circle.

CHRIST said, "Follow me and I will make you fishers of men." And they left all and followed him. What did they lose? What do we lose by strict and prompt obedience to Christ? Has He not promised ample reward, both in the present and future? Read, mark, learn and inwardly digest. Consider: Is not Jesus well able to fulfil His promises—to honor His bonds? For of Him it is written, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." "Ask what ye will in my name." "My father is greater than I." Sometimes the flesh is weak even when the spirit is most willing, and the tired body, jaded and chafed with much serving, saith, "I really do not feel able. Who is sufficient for these things?" Church care bowed even the mighty Paul, and made him groan and pray many a time. But the Master's admonition and answer of love, "My grace is sufficient for thee," so effectually renewed and restored his spiritual manhood that he rises to his task like a giant refreshed with the new wine of the Kingdom. Peter, James and John went fishing, toiled all night and caught nothing. Doubtless Peter, worn with the labor and disappointment of the night, did not feel either anxious or fit in the morning to renew efforts apparently so profitless. But the Master's bidding was enough to spur him to a hopeless task. Somewhat dispiritedly he said, "We have toiled all the night and caught nothing." How grandly comes in the words which show his loyalty and confidence in the Master, "Nevertheless, at Thy word we will let down the net." The result—glad, grand surprise, so many great fishes, yet was not the net broken. So it often happens when we try to obey we forget our weariness, and renew our strength in the flush of unexpected success.

**Our Social Tea and Fancy Sale.**—It was a day of pleasure and wearying excitement, but at its close one could but exclaim, Thank God; God bless our people; it is just like them. By their united, hearty and loving co-operation, they not only raised the interest money, which, thank God, like the pastor's salary, has never run behind, or been unpaid; but the result will be quite a nice little help towards clearing the lot, and thus aiding in the erection of the new Church. Our treasurer took home over one hundred and twenty-one dollars that same evening. From the various tables, etc. the sum total will be considerably swelled when all the ticket money comes in.

One special cause of pleasure was to note the evidences of development of our resources, and the evident growth of talent and artistic taste among our own young people. In fancy work, we had designs, original and imitative, evidencing that many fingers had been moved and prompted by loving hearts and skillful inventive brains. Tokens were not lacking that outsiders had kindly feelings towards us, and we saw their handiwork on the tables, and know that not a little of their cash made a merry jingle in the money basins of those who served. We should like to thank all personally, but fear to specify because we could not give a complete list; but should like to do so at our effort when we shall plan to gather the offerings of our friends towards the superstructure, and hope this will be a sufficient hint to commence to fill in all the spare moments. Provisions were not lacking, and, best of all, nothing was wasted. The kindness and liberality of the donors all wed us to gather up and sell of the unbroken fragments over nine dollars' worth; so that nothing was lost. We feel that much of our success has always depended upon the careful avoidance of leakage and wasteful expenditures. Mr. W. G. P. writes: "I wish your trials may always end in triumphs. I send the accompanying volume to be sold to aid the work."

The Ladies' Fancy Table sold \$42.50; Mrs. Avery's Bible Class Table, \$31.26; Door, \$8.10; Sale of provisions, \$10; Refreshments, \$5.11; The Little Girls' Table, \$2.50; Mrs. Byers' S. S. Class Fancy and Refreshment Tables, \$30.05, to be credited to clearing lot. The total proceeds, as far as known, will be a hundred and seventy dollars.

**Donations towards clearing Lot.**—Deacon W. Davies, Y M. B. Class, third donation, \$10, for two lots; Mrs. Estano, per Miss Spry, one lot, \$5; Part proceeds of Lantern Lecture, less expenses, \$18; Mrs. Avery's Class, another lot, \$5.

**Our Home Mission Work.**—Sent out 268 copies, equal to 10720 pages, of Buds and Blossoms. Besides, we have distributed during the month 6,450 pages of tracts and other papers; total, 17,170 pages. Received donation for printing paper from Mr. A. F. Gurney, \$5 several papers from Mr. Templeton, Mrs. G. Hiltz, Miss McEachren. Also, a splendidly-assorted bundle of tracts and booklets, per Miss Weatherby, from the British-American Book and Tract Society. They are especially suitable for our work. Capt. J. Arnold gave as a donation 50c. towards the work. Mrs. G. M. Peck, \$1 and some papers. Bigheart, a widow's mite, 60c. Mrs. Burgess sends hat for our own baby boy.

**Members received during the year.**—Since Jan. 1st. By Baptism, 20; Letter, 9. The special work of grace goes on

Our books show not a few delinquents for B. and B. previous to the present year 1886, over a hundred and fifty, repre-

sented more than \$160, which cash, if we had it, would very materially assist us. Some may find it hard to pay up promptly, and we always consider this; but we are persuaded in some cases it is worse than neglect and inability. We cannot in justice drop such bad debts, of which we have not a few. We hope every reader will honestly consider this matter. Drop a post card, and we are always willing to wait any reasonable time, and to have consideration of changing circumstances. Please do not act meanly. In our faith-work we simply tell Jesus, and those who would wrong us must settle with our Master.

The following in remitting have cheered us by sending \$1, and we credit the 25c. on all subs. for this year to our free-list account: Mr. Bookaw, 50c.; J. L. Korr, 25c.; Mrs. J. Holmes, 25c.; Mrs. Taylor, 25c.; Mr. Alex. Molniss, 25c.; Jos. Thomas, 25c.; Z. Hubloy, 50c.; Seymour Burges, 25c.; John Ehler, 25c.; Darius Durgin, 25c.; Rev. Potter, 25c.; Rev. Hayward, 25c.; Mrs. E. Sutherland, 25c.; Mrs. W. A. Nichols, 25c.; Mr. Looner, 25c.; Mrs. Oxner, 50c.; Allon Spidle, 25c.; Louis Griffin, 25c.; John Dixon, 50c.

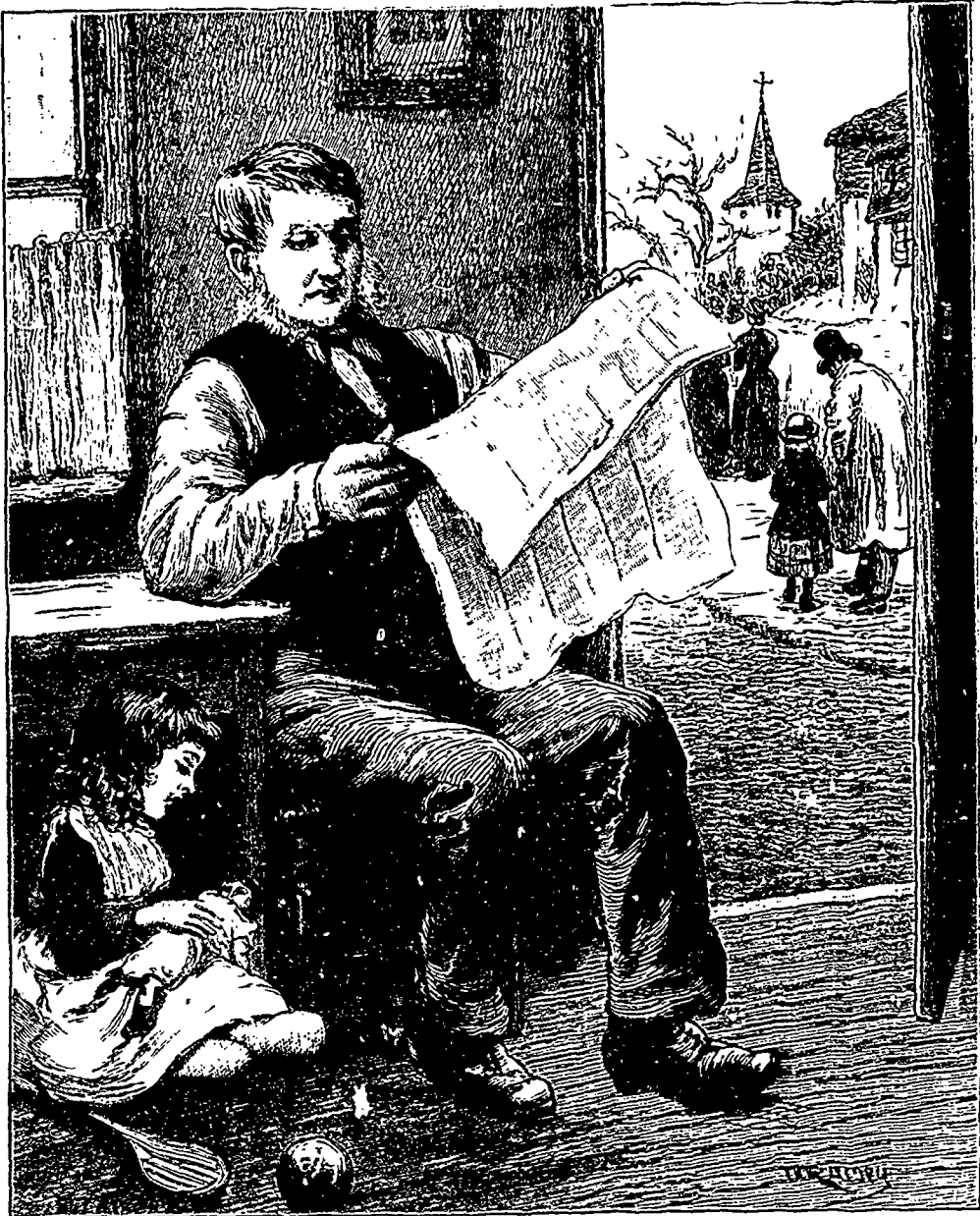
**Personal Notes.**—This is, in part, a draft of a letter written to an enquiring friend, and may be interesting to others. We make extracts:—"To many it is little known the keenness of the conflict I have had in trying to stand to the front, fighting for the King, and preaching to the poor the Gospel. My income has always been from the weekly free-will offerings, everyone giving as he wills. To reach further in my work, I started B. and B. in faith, and you know something of the manner of the work and its growth. Much of my time, means and strength have been thrown into my work, looking for the rewards, as Abraham, prospective. So far the way has often been toilsome, but greatly cheered by the Master's smile. I continue to this day with enlarging plans and responsibilities. Your kind words and help in the past have cheered me beyond measure, for it is from the Lord's weak ones, rich in faith, that I have so far received my strength and help; and it has been to me a special source of pleasure, out of weakness to be made strong. Lately, the Loan has thrust larger service upon me, to the testing of my faith. For a long time I have been anxious to conserve my time, and enlarge my work by employing some one to aid me in some of the minor details of it, so as to give me more time and opportunity to enlarge in other and more spiritual directions. With the New Year I resolved I would take to my home and board a young sister in the Lord. She is, I believe, heartily in sympathy with the work. I assumed the entire responsibility, and asked no aid of the church, knowing the kindness of their heart toward me in all my enlargement of service for Christ, and the 'it is only limited by the present demands made to arise and build the Tabernacle wherein to worship and work for Jesus who gave Himself for us. Some time ago I built in faith a barn, feeling my body must have easement, or I could not continue to overtake the rapidly enlarging work. For nearly twelve months I have waited to see if the Lord approved and would send me a horse, feeling, unless He indicated, my income would not allow the extra expense. To my surprise, a fortnight after I engaged the young sister, a pony was brought to my stable and left. I always said I should not make known my want other than build a stable. About a month since, one of the young men of the Bible Class sent up a pony. It had through rough usage a shaggy coat, and evidenced a need of kindly care. Nevertheless we received the best of character, from several witnesses, that there were more good qualities done up in a rough and small parcel than can generally be found in the same quantity of horseflesh. So the little stranger was installed. It was soon evidenced that no un-casiness need be felt as to other expenditures, the matter being of the Lord, the great Provider.

First came the halter, brush, curry-comb, harness, oil, etc., the donation of the good brother who was instrumental in introducing Dolly into missionary service at Mizpah. He and the other young men of the Bible Class propose to have a feed-box in their class, wherefrom can be drawn a supply of provender. The pony came harnessed. The same evening a friend came in and put a lock on the stable door. Another sent some Condition Powders. Mr. Margeson put on the shoes, and all seemed desirous to give Dolly a fair start. A friend sent \$5; another, \$3.50; Mrs. Bennett sent from the United States \$5 for herself, and \$10 from a friend who is over eighty years of age, with the hope that the carriage would soon come. Thank God, the way has been opened. Mr. Thomas Spry, Senr., having a carriage, said, "It is a suitable one for the pony, and I will give it if you like to have it properly repaired and done up." So we feel of good cheer that in due time all needed for this service will be supplied, and begin to wonder why so much strength, which could have been utilized, has so long been wasted. The legs of a horse may be a vain thing to trust in, but they certainly can be made useful in God's service, as we have here no small proof, by kindly help rendered in the past by Bro. Wm. Davies. Mr. Jamieson, since we wrote the above, has sent word that he is good for \$15 towards the expense.

**Kind Words from the Editor of the Maple Leaf.**—"Buds and Blossoms for April is a splendid number, and the publication is so pure in tone and so full of valuable reading that every home should receive its regular visit. Send 75 cents to Rev. J. F. Avery, Halifax, and try it a year."

# HAVE FAITH IN GOD,

AND OTHER SKETCHES.



"I have frequently read the newspaper all day on Sundays."

**T**HE command, "Have faith in God," was given by Him who is truly the Friend of sinners. Every human being possesses a never-dying soul, exposed to the fearful penalty of eternal death, and therefore needs to take heed of the Saviour's counsel, and to possess this Divine grace of faith; for without faith it is impossible to please God. By faith we

may know God, through Jesus Christ, to be our Father and Friend, a just God, and yet a Saviour.

"Oh, sir," said a poor man, "I have been one of the vilest of wretches. I tremble even now as I think of my past life, and I thought, if I told you what a guilty sinner I had been, you would only be angry with me, and tell me there was no hope for

one so vile. But when I told you of my sins, you told me of a Saviour who died even for the chief of sinners, and I now see that all my troubles were sent in mercy to my soul; for if God had pleased, He might long ago have cut me off and cast me into hell; but He has spared me. I can trust in Jesus now, and I do hope I shall praise Him throughout eternity." "Have faith in God," trembling soul; believe the record He hath given of His Son; go to Jesus like the poor leper, and you too shall be made whole.

One to whom instruction was useful, after he had lived for years in a backsliding state, said, "Before you came to see me, I was the most miserable of all men. I have frequently taken the newspaper and read it all day on Sundays; but my conscience reproached me, and the agony of my mind was often dreadful. I can only describe the feeling of my soul as being like sharp knives continually running into my body. Truly," he continued, "the Lord hath done great things for me; and if one ransomed sinner sings a louder song of praise than another in heaven, it ought to be I, who will have had most forgiven."

Careless soul, "have faith in God." He desires your happiness. He tells you, in mercy to your soul, that "the wages of sin is death;" that except you repent you must perish. He stretches out His hand to you. He remonstrates with you in your folly, and says, "Turn ye, turn ye; for why will ye die?" He invites you: "Come now, and let us reason together saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow." Oh, turn not a deaf ear to His warnings, His remonstrances, His invitations, lest the sentence should go forth, "Thy soul is required of thee."

Carrie Felton, a gay and thoughtless girl, a lover of pleasure more than a lover of God, on a Saturday was quite well, and her last act that night was to prepare a very gay dress in order to go to the tea-gardens on the following day. At six o'clock on Sunday morning she was taken ill with brain-fever, and died in less than forty-eight hours. Little did she think that the dress prepared for pleasure was so soon to be laid aside for the shroud; and the tea-gardens give place to the grave.

Richard Wells made no secret of his infidel principles. He made a jest of sacred things, and religious persons were, in his estimation, either fools or hypocrites. He was frequently reasoned with; but he answered with ridicule, not argument. This was while he was in perfect health; but from this state he was suddenly called to lie on a dying bed. He quarrelled with a grown-up son, and blows followed words. The father was much injured internally in the scuffle; he was conveyed to his bed, and shortly after mortification of the injured part ensued. On being visited, he, with an agonised countenance, said—

"Oh, sir, though I have often spoken against the Bible, I find I never believed what I said. Is there mercy for such a wretch as I have been?"

The way of salvation was pointed out to him, and he was directed to Jesus as able to save to the

utmost all who come unto God by Him. But, alas! Death was even now grasping his prey. His eyes became glassy and heavy, stupor followed, and in a short time he entered the eternal world.

Contrast this death with that of a devoted servant of God, the Rev. W. Leechman, who, when on his dying bed, thus addressed one who visited him: "You see the situation I am in. I have not many days to live. I am glad you have the opportunity of witnessing the tranquillity of my last moments; but it is not tranquillity alone; it is joy and triumph, it is complete exultation. And whence does this exultation spring? From that book" (pointing to a Bible), "from that book—too much neglected, indeed, but which contains invaluable treasures; treasures of joy and rejoicing; for it makes us certain that this mortal shall put on immortality."

In conclusion, reader, whatever may be your name, character, or circumstances, may the Lord the Spirit work faith in your heart. May that precious grace which works by love and purifies the heart, cheer you in life, and illumine the valley of the shadow of death.

MR. WESLEY AND MR. SIMEON.

THE following conversation between Mr. Wesley and Mr. Simeon is related by Dr. Dealtry in his sermon on the occasion of the death of the latter:—

"Pray, sir, do you feel yourself a depraved creature, so depraved that you would never have thought of turning to God, if God had not first put it into your heart?"

"Yes," said the veteran Wesley, "I do, indeed."

"And do you utterly despair of recommending yourself to God by anything that you can do, and look for salvation solely through the blood and righteousness of Christ?"

"Yes, solely through Christ."

"But, sir, supposing you were first saved by Christ, are you not somehow or other to save yourself afterwards by your own works?"

"No; I must be saved by Christ from first to last."

"Allowing, then, that you were first turned by the grace of God, are you not in some way or other to keep yourself by your own power?"

"No."

"What, then, are you to be upheld every hour and every moment by God, as much as an infant in its mother's arms?"

"Yes, altogether."

"And is all your hope in the grace and mercy of God to preserve you unto His heavenly kingdom?"

"Yes, I have no hope but in Him."

"Then, sir, with your leave, I will put up my dagger again; for this is all my Calvinism; this is my election, my justification by faith, my final perseverance; it is, in substance, all that I hold, and as I hold it."

SOUND AND SIGHT.

How often it has happened that two people hear and see so differently. While musical sounds touch the heart of one, the other feels quite indifferent. Some people appear to have "eyes, but see not"; they pass through some of the most beautiful country and wonder why the faces of their companions show such pleasure, when they feel quite insensible to the charms around. One has a love of the beautiful, for which he should be thankful; the sooner the other cultivates it the better.

The earth abounds with sounds that awaken feelings of pleasure. The singing of birds, laughter of merry childhood, chime of sweet bells, and the greeting of friends.

We know there are painful sounds, such as angry voices, songs that do no one any good to listen to, and discontented remarks; these we will not dwell upon.

One speaks who would draw all men to Him saying, "Come unto Me." It is the voice of Jesus, the Friend of sinners.

Sabbath after Sabbath His servants proclaim the good tidings, warn and woo men to accept the only remedy for true peace.

Discipline here day by day may be sharp, temptations strong, but once trust yourself to the Saviour, the light of the world, and all will be well, for He will give His Holy Spirit to teach and guide you till you reach your Father's home.

Henceforth my inmost heart shall praise  
The grace that set me free.

H. W. P.

THE ACCIDENT AT THE MILL.

IT seems such a queer name, 'Patience.'

"It was mother's name, and she was a good woman. I've always thought if I should have a little lass I would call her after mother."

So spoke James Kershaw as he looked in the face of his firstborn, a baby girl, that had just been placed in his arms, and with a colour, as the father laughingly remarked, "A'most like a boiled lobster."

The mother rejoiced, as mothers do, in that ruddy colour, as a pledge of present health and future beauty, and replied, "The darkest babies always go fairest afterwards."

"Well, I don't mind much about looks, if she turns out a good one."

The mother assented, and then came the question of a name, an important matter, with all the long list of names as yet untouched. But James Kershaw had one in his mind already. "A queer one," his wife called it; but dear to her husband, because linked with the memory of a good mother. "Let's call her Patience," he said. "You never knew my mother, Lizzie; but that name fitted her exactly."

"Have your own way, James. Call the little thing Patience, and pray God she may never be as sorely tried as your mother was."

And the mother, with her living treasure at her breast, rocked herself to and fro, feeling, oh! so rich in the possession of this little child, her first, after six years of married life.

James Kershaw was engineer at McKinley's mill, with a salary of thirty-five shillings a week; but though very comfortably placed, they had not as yet saved anything. Childless until now, he had yet cared for a family—that of his widowed sister; and Lizzie, feeling for her husband's kindred, had cheerfully denied herself for their sakes. Then Lizzie's own health had not been good; but now she was stronger, and there seemed a prospect of saving something.

As Lizzie looked at the little Patience it seemed that her face gained new brightness, and her eyes a new light. James, always "a home bird," as he told his mates, was now fonder of home than ever. "Let me have my little woman," were always his first words on coming home, and in a minute, if a val, she would be lifted in his strong arms and tenderly caressed.

As she grew older there were grand romps, the child laughing, crowing, and making wild dashes at the father's hair as she was tossed above his head.

Lizzie's face would beam with pleasure, and afterwards she would point, half proudly, half ruefully, to the soiled frock and pinafore of her baby, saying, "I can't keep her clean, James. You will toss her about with your mill clothes on, instead of tidying yourself first."

James only laughed at soiled pinafores, and Lizzie, proud of his deep love for the child, made no trouble of a little extra washing.

Patience might well thrive. For the sake of her health, and that of his wife, James took a cottage much farther from the busy part of the city, never minding the longer walk in going to work.

As soon as Patience could walk, her first tottering steps were directed to the door when "father" was expected home, and the sight of her round cheeks, ruddy with health, more than repaid the parents for any sacrifice made for her sake.

For seven years all went well with the Kershaws: the wife stronger than of old, the husband as loving, steady, and industrious; the child, darling of both, but not the spoiled darling.

Saturday afternoon was always the holiday of the week with the Kershaws. In Manchester the mills cease working at two o'clock, and James could join his wife and little one soon afterwards. Lizzie always did her marketings on the Friday, and on Saturday, house, mother, and child were all clean and bright-looking, fit to welcome father home.

"We must keep the roses in bloom," James would say, as he patted the child's cheek; "so we'll give her an extra taste of fresh air. Dunham Park will be grand now, and, if Saturday is fine, we'll have a trip there."

How delighted was Patience to watch the packing of the little basket with its parcels of tea, sugar, bread, and butter, and to dance backwards and forwards looking for father, and all full of anxiety lest he should be too late.



Little Patience had been many times on the look-out, and at last her mother glanced at the clock and said, "Father should be here by this time. If we miss this next train, there will not be another for an hour and a half."

She knew that would take a large slice out of an autumn half-holiday, and she went herself to see if her husband were in sight. Within a few steps of the door she saw, not James, but the book-keeper from McKinley's mill.

"Good-day, Mrs. Kershaw," he said; "I have brought you a message from James."

"We've been looking for him this long while.

"I will tell you all about it; but we'd better go inside," said Mr. Wrigley.

They entered the cottage, and Mrs. Kershaw stood leaning on the back of a chair while the book-keeper told the rest. James was hurt by a falling shaft, and, with two others less injured, had been conveyed to the Infirmary.

The wife's face went white as ashes, and at first she stood motionless. But the sound of little footsteps was heard on the path, and the mother whispered, "We must not frighten Patience. She dotes on her father."

The book-keeper had children at home, so, to spare little Patience the sight of her mother's white face, he met her on the threshold, and, giving her some coppers, bade her fetch some sugar-candy from a little shop a few doors off.

By the time Patience returned her mother was able to speak to her quietly. "Father's engine has broken down," she said; "and we can't go to Dunham to-day, love."

The child knew that her parents never willingly disappointed her, and she made no murmur. Seeing traces of tears on her mother's face, she kissed it lovingly, and said, "Never mind, mother. I will be real Patience to-day, though I am a bit disappointed. We can go another Saturday, when father's engine is all right again."

It was hard work to bear up, knowing what she did; but the mother returned her child's kiss, and answered, "As father can't come home, I must go to him, and you must stay with Mrs. Cheetham till I come back. Mary Cheetham will play with you, and you shall make tea in the little cups that father bought you."

The little teaset was the favourite toy—not in every-day use, but allowed as a reward on special occasions. So in the delight of using it the child was comforted for the loss of her holiday, and talked of the trip to Dunham as a pleasure in store for a future Saturday, when father could be home in time.

Meanwhile Mrs. Kershaw put on her bonnet, and with trembling steps and sinking heart set out to see her husband.

"They'll let me stay with James, won't they?" she asked.

"I cannot say that they will, for you know if every patient's friends were to stay, there would be too many."

"What shall I do?" she moaned out.

"Cast thy burden upon the Lord; it is in time of trouble He is nearest," was the reply of her companion, an earnest Christian man, who felt deeply for his poor friends in this hour of trial.

"Sir, I do try. But oh, it is hard! I think there never was a better husband and father than James; and if we were to lose him it would take the light out of our lives."

[The result of the accident, and how Patience became her mother's little comforter, is beautifully told in a shilling book just published, entitled "Poor Patience," by Mrs. Ruth Lamb.]



"Let me have my little woman!"

Patience is just wild about it, for we were going to Dunham Park."

"I'm sorry the little woman will be disappointed; but we've had a misfortune at the mill."

"Another breakdown, I suppose, and James will have to work late to get things to rights. I hope the damage is not serious, Mr. Wrigley?"

"A couple of days' work will repair it; but——"

Lizzie detected a little change in the face, and guessed that there was more and worse news to tell.

"Is any one hurt? Is James safe?" she cried eagerly.

A CHRISTMAS CAROL.

COME sound in sacred melody  
The praise of Him to-day,  
Who took the form of sinful man,  
To wipe our sins away:  
Let's sing the lowly manger  
To which the shepherds came—  
With hastening steps to Bethlehem  
To glorify His name.

In heaven, the holy angel  
Will strike the golden string,  
On earth, let man and maiden  
With sacred pathos sing:  
To-day the world's Redeemer  
Came down from heaven above,  
To guide our erring footsteps—  
To teach us hope and love.

To Christ our hearts are lifted  
On this His natal day,  
And through a thousand ages  
Mankind shall sing and pray;  
Then sing with joy and gladness,  
For this is Christmas day,  
When sin and earthly sadness  
Through Him are smoothed away.



Come sing in sweetest music,  
The holy Infant born  
Within the humble stable  
Upon that far-off morn.  
With heart and voice to heaven,  
Oh, send the song of praise,  
And supplicate our Saviour  
To be with us always.

All hail! then, to the Godhead—  
The holy Three in One—  
To God, the world's Creator:  
To Jesus Christ, His Son.  
Praise Him until in glory  
He comes to give us rest—  
Until He comes to take us  
For ever to the blest. Amen.

H. Bright.

WHIPPING JESSE LEE.



THE following interesting narrative given by General P., of Virginia, of Jesse Lee, one of the first Methodist preachers of New England, shows the power of Christian meekness over a turbulent and wrathful spirit:—

“When I was a young man I went to hear the Rev. Jesse Lee preach. There was a very large crowd in attendance, and many could not get near the house. Among others, I got near the door, and, being fond of show and frolic, I indulged

in some indiscretion, for which Mr. Lee mildly but plainly reprov'd me. In an instant all the bad feelings of my heart were roused. I considered myself deeply insulted, and that my whole family was disgraced.

“I retired from the crowd to brood over the insult, and meditate revenge. It was not long before I resolved to whip him before he left the ground. I kept the resolution to myself, and watched, with eager intensity of resentment, the opportunity to put it into execution. But the congregation was dismissed and dispersed, and I did not see anything of the preacher. How he escaped I could never learn, but I ‘nursed my wrath to keep it warm,’ and cherished the determination to put it into execution the first time I saw Mr. Lee, although long years should intervene.

“Gradually, however, my feelings subsided, and in the lapse of a few years the whole affair faded away from my mind. Thirteen years passed over me, and the impetuosity of youth had been softened down by sober manhood. I was standing upon the downhill of life.

“On a beautiful morning in the early spring, being from home on business, I saw, a few hundred yards before me, an elderly-looking man jogging slowly along in a single gig. As soon as I saw him, it struck me that it was Jesse Lee. The name, the man, the sight of him recalled all my recollections of the insult, and all my purpose of resentment. I strove to banish them all from my mind, but the more I thought, the warmer I became. My resolution stared me in the face, and something whispered ‘coward’ in my heart, if I failed to fulfil it. My mind was in a perfect tumult, and my passion waxed strong. I determined to execute my resolution to the utmost; and full of rage I spurred my horse, and was soon at the side of the man that I felt of all others I hated most. I accosted him rather rudely with the question, ‘Are you not a Methodist preacher?’

“‘I pass for one,’ was the reply, and in a manner that struck me as very meek.

“‘Ain’t your name Jesse Lee?’

“‘Yes, that’s my name.’

“‘Do you recollect preaching in the year — at — meeting-house?’

“‘Yes, very well.’

“‘Well, do you recollect reprov’ing a young man for some misbehaviour?’

“After a short pause for recollection, he replied, ‘I do.’

“‘Well,’ said I, ‘I am that young man, and I was determined I would whip you for it the first time I saw you. I have never seen you from that day to this, and now I intend to carry out my purpose.’

“As soon as I had finished speaking the old man stopped his horse, and looking me full in the face, said, ‘You are a younger man than I am. You are strong and active, and I am old and feeble. I have no doubt but, if I was disposed to fight, you could whip me very easily, and it would be useless for me to resist it. But as a man of God I must not strive. So, as you are determined to whip me, if you will let me get out of my gig and go down on my knees, you may whip me as long as you please.’

“Never,” said the old General, “was I so suddenly and powerfully affected. I was completely overcome. I trembled from head to foot. I would have given my estate if I had never mentioned the subject. A strange weakness came over my frame. I felt sick at heart, ashamed, mortified, and degraded. I stuck the spurs into my horse, and dashed along the road with the speed of a madman. I am now old; few and full of evil have been the days of the years of my life, yet I am not without hope in God. I have made my peace with Him who is the judge of the quick and the dead; and I hope ere long to see that good man of God with feelings very different from those with which I met him last.”

A soft answer turneth away wrath.

THE TWO HOUSES.



ONCE knew a rich man who determined to have a very large and beautiful house built for himself. He bought a lot of ground in a pleasant part of the city, and took great pains to have the house built in the best manner. There were many spacious rooms and wide halls. It was planned so as to be warm in winter and cool in summer. No

expense was spared to have it as comfortable and complete a dwelling as could be made. No doubt he looked forward to many years of enjoyment in his new and elegant house.

At the same time that this large house was preparing for himself and family, he had another built for them. And there was a great difference between

the two. For the second house had but one small room for the whole family, and that room was mostly underground. It had, indeed, strong walls, and was built of marble, but it had no windows, and but one small door, and that was made of iron. What a contrast there was between the wide and lofty mansion, so bright and handsome, and the low building under the willow-tree, which one would scarcely notice! Yet these two houses were built for the same people. This one was for the living family; the other for the dead. For the low house under the tree is the vault into which their bodies are to be placed, as one after another shall be called away from life.

The vault was soon finished, and it was ready long before the large house. And into which of them do you think the rich owner himself went first to take up his abode? Strange as it may seem, he was ready for the vault before the fine dwelling was ready for him; and many months before the spacious rooms of the new house were fit to be inhabited, its builder was laid in the narrow, dark, and cold apartment, which he will not leave until the earth shall give up its dead at the last day.

This is a fact which ought to fix the attention of the young. To you, everything in life seems bright and happy, and promising great enjoyment, and you forget its end, or imagine it is too far off to be thought of. The house of the living is so large and beautiful, that it hides from our sight the house of the dead.

But always remember, that like the man I have been telling you of, you may have to lie down in the silent grave before you have entered upon the pleasures of life which you are expecting. If you will be wise, you will live and act in such a manner as to be prepared both for life and death; to enjoy the one, and not to fear the other. The Saviour has declared, "Whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die." This is true in the most important sense possible. The true believer, whose sins are pardoned, and who is accepted in Christ, has the promise of a house which is not made with hands, but is eternal; not in this perishing world, but in the heavens. And the message from this life to that, is not to die as the world speaks of death; it is to fall asleep on earth, and awake with God.

Happy are they who remember their Creator in the days of their youth. When the Saviour was on earth, His kind words were, "Suffer little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not." He has the same heart of love now; the voice of invitation still speaks through the Divine Word. It is the voice of Christ, the Wisdom of God, who thus speaks, "I love them that love Me, and those that seek Me early shall find Me. Riches and honour are with Me; yea, durable riches and righteousness. My fruit is better than gold, yea, than fine gold; and My revenue than choice silver. I lead in the way of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of judgment: that I may cause those that love Me to inherit substance; and I will fill their treasures. Now, therefore, hearken unto Me, O ye children: for blessed are they that keep My

ways. Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not. Blessed is the man that heareth Me, watching daily at My gates, waiting at the posts of My doors. For whoso findeth Me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the Lord. But he that sinneth against Me wrongeth his own soul: all they that hate Me love death."

Let me leave with my readers the wise and kindly counsel of the Christian poet, James Montgomery, whose word to all, and especially to the young, is "Be wise to-day."

*To-day* is added to our time,  
Yet while we sing it glides away;  
How soon shall we be past our prime,  
For where, alas! is *yesterday*?

Gone—gone into eternity;  
'There every day in turn appears;  
*To-morrow*—on! 'twill never be,  
If we should live a thousand years.

Our time is all to-day, to-day,—  
'The same, though changed; and while it flies,  
With still small voice the moments say,  
"To-day, to-day, be wise, be wise."

Then wisdom from above impart,—  
Lord God, send forth Thy light and truth  
To guide our feet, inspire our heart,  
And make us Christians from our youth.

### OUR FATHER'S BRINGING UP.



ou contracted with Christ, I hope, when first you began to follow Him, that you would bear His cross: fulfil your part of the contract with patience, and break not to Jesus Christ.

Be honest, brother, in your bargaining with Him; for who knoweth better how to bring up children than our God? For (to lay aside His knowledge, which there is no searching out) He hath been practised in bringing up His heirs these five thousand years, and His children are all well brought up, and many of them are honest men now at home up in their own house in heaven, and are entered heirs to their Father's inheritance.

Do not forget that the form of His bringing-up was by chastisements, scourging, correcting, nurturing. See if He maketh exception of any of His children. No! His eldest Son and His Heir, Jesus, is not excepted. Suffer we must; yet, I persuade myself, your sufferings are but like your Saviour's (yea, incomparably less and lighter), which are called but the bruising of His heel, a wound far from the heart.

Be content to walk through the waters betwixt you and glory with Christ, holding His hand fast, for He knoweth all the fords; you may sink under, but you cannot drown, being in His company; and you may all the way to glory see the way bedewed with His blood who is the Forerunner.

Samuel Rutherford.



## A GOOD RESOLVE.

LET US LAY ASIDE EVERY  
WEIGHT, AND THE SIN  
WHICH DOTHSO EASILY  
BESET US, AND LET US  
RUN WITH PATIENCE THE  
RACE THAT IS SET  
BEFORE US  
LOOKING ONTO JESUS THE  
AUTHOR AND FINISHER  
OF OUR FAITH; WHO FOR  
THE JOY THAT WAS  
SET BEFORE HIM ENDURED  
THE CROSS, DESPISING  
THE SHAME, AND IS SET  
DOWN AT THE RIGHT  
HAND OF THE THRONE OF  
GOD.

*Hebrews xii. 1, 2.*

# EADY W H E N E V E R H E C O M E S, AND OTHER SKETCHES.



**T**HERE'S mother on the move already! What is she getting up so soon for?" said Martha Wilson to her sister Fanny, as she heard footsteps descending the stairs in the early morning.

"Farmer Hargreaves is going to give her a ride to market with him. He generally takes one of his own people, but to-day none of the family want to go, so as he knew that mother wants a day's shopping some times, he offered her the spare seat in his cart."

"But he will not be starting for hours yet. How ridiculous it is of mother to turn out so soon! She

will have plenty of time to tire herself in town, and would have been better for an extra hour's sleep, instead of getting up that much earlier."

"It is tiresome," replied Fanny, "for if the mother is downstairs it will not do for us to lie in bed and let her get things ready for herself;" and she at once began to dress.

Martha followed her example, not very willingly, for both sisters agreed in thinking that but for their mother's over-anxiety they might have enjoyed an extra hour's rest. But conscience would not allow

them to leave the good mother unassisted, so they made all possible haste to join her below-stairs.

"Why, mother, you are up too soon," began Fanny, as she entered the kitchen and found the fire already lighted. "We should have had breakfast ready for you in good time if you had stayed quietly in bed till your regular hour."

"But Farmer Hargreaves is coming, my dear," said Mrs. Wilson.

"I know that; but he never goes off to market at this time of morning," said Martha. "He generally passes at about nine o'clock. It is only an hour's drive, and there is no business doing before eleven."

"He mostly does pass about nine," agreed Mrs. Wilson.

"What time did he say he would call for you?" asked Fanny.

"Well, my dear, that is just what I cannot tell you. He said he would come, and he's quite certain to keep his word, if he is living and well. But I quite forgot to ask what time, and I suppose he forgot to tell me without asking. So I said to myself, 'I'll be soon enough. It will do me no harm to wait a bit here in the house; but I must be ready whenever he comes.'"

"It's not likely that just this morning he will be starting ever so much sooner than usual," persisted Fanny, resolved to convince her mother that she had made a mistake.

"Don't be put out about it, my dear," replied Mrs. Wilson. "You may be right, and I may have to wait, perhaps an hour. But I shall feel quite comfortable, because by being ready in such good time I shall be on the safe side. I had not meant to call you girls, for I could have managed very well; but I could not have been comfortable in my bed thinking that Mr. Hargreaves might be coming and finding me unprepared for my journey."

"And I hope you don't think we could have lain comfortably in our beds after we heard you moving about, mother," said both the girls, for they were good, dutiful daughters to their widowed mother, though apt to think sometimes that she was over-anxious and fidgety.

So they took the work in hand and got all tidied up and the breakfast on the table without loss of time, whilst the mother put on her better gown, and made herself ready for the drive to market.

Mrs. Wilson took her meal comfortably and without stint of time, and was able to read a few verses of God's Word and offer a prayer with her children according to daily custom. Only all was done just an hour earlier than common.

The three had risen from their knees, and the widow was glancing round to see if there was anything lying about to remind her of business to be done in town, when the sound of wheels was heard.

"I believe Mr. Hargreaves is coming," exclaimed she; and sure enough she was right. The wheels stopped at the little gate, and the farmer's youngest boy, whom he had brought so far for the purpose, ran up to the door to ask, "Is Mrs. Wilson ready?"

The widow answered by making her appearance and going towards the gate.

"Good morning, Mrs. Wilson," said the farmer. "Here you are, I see, as fresh as a daisy, and with every pin in its place. I am very glad to see you ready, for I was half afraid you might not be. I quite forgot to say last night that I must start at eight instead of nine, because I had an uncommon deal of business to get through. There's one man in particular that I never can catch unless I get to town before most of my neighbours. And having to go soon is another reason why I am able to give you a lift this morning. My wife is *extra busy* at home, and could not have left till later."

"I'm very much obliged to you for taking me at all," said Mrs. Wilson. "It is a great convenience, with a station a mile and a half off. I am glad I was ready, for, not knowing the proper time, I said to myself, 'I'll be soon enough, and then I shall be on the safe side.'"

"That's it!" said the farmer, with a smile on his ruddy face. "And would you believe it? it was knowing your ways that made me come round at all, though I had promised. I said to my wife, 'Mrs. Wilson doesn't know what time I start, but she's just the woman to be ready the earlier on that account.' If it had been any one of a lot of neighbours I could mention, I should have known it would be of no use to go near their doors. They would have reckoned what hour I mostly start at, and aimed to be ready by then; and even after all, three out of six would have kept me waiting. But I felt that you were not of that sort, so I came and found you ready, and here we are on the road to market. To anybody else I should have sent my respects, and as I found I must start too early for them, I would give them a lift some other time."

Thus spoke the farmer to his passenger.

Mrs. Wilson's girls, looking after their mother, said, "She was right after all. If we don't know the time, it is best to get ready soon enough, then we are on the safe side."

What does your conscience say, dear friend, as you read this little sketch?

There is One who has said, "Be ye therefore ready also, for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not."

Remember there is one journey all must take. There is one call to which no one can turn a deaf ear, yet no one knows when it will sound for him. It is no use to say, "I am young; it is not likely the call will come before middle age;" or, "I am in the prime of life; I will expect the call when I am old."

The journey is from time into eternity. The messenger sent to bid us take it is Death. He comes in an hour when we think not. No age can say, "Death has never called one like me."

There is a command for you to obey; take good heed to its warning, then the time at which the call comes will matter little: "Be ye also ready."

Never forget this command. Obey it now. Come to Christ for pardon now. You cannot be ready too soon. If at peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, you can wait in quietness and confidence, knowing that you are on the safe side.

Ruth Lamb.

NOW.

Two great men were looking each other in the face—Paul, the apostle, and Felix, the Roman governor. So powerfully did the apostle reason about righteousness, temperance, and the judgment to come, that the governor trembled. No doubt he felt his sin. Then was the time for him to repent and believe. Christ was knocking at the door of his heart, and the Holy Spirit was enticing him to let the dear Saviour come in. But he would not. He was determined to continue awhile longer in his sins. He lost his opportunity. Then he said to the preacher, "Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee." He shut the door of grace against himself. There is reason to believe that Felix never found the convenient season, and that he died, as he lived, impenitent. He was lost. The fatal act was his procrastination. How many people there are who put off until to-morrow what they should do to-day! Sometimes it is only a moment's delay, but it is enough to accomplish their ruin.

A touching story is told of the late Prince Napoleon. He had joined the English army, and was one day at the head of a squad riding on horseback outside of the camp. It was a dangerous situation. One of the company said, "We had better return. If we don't hasten we may fall into the hands of the enemy." "Oh," said the prince, "let us stay here ten minutes and drink our coffee." Before the ten minutes had passed a company of Zulus came upon them, and in the skirmish the prince lost his life.

His mother, when informed of the facts, in her anguish said, "That was his great mistake from his babyhood. He never wanted to go to bed at night in time, nor to arise in the morning. He was ever pleading for ten minutes more. When too sleepy to speak, he would lift up his two little hands, and spread out his ten fingers, indicating that he wanted ten minutes more. On this account I sometimes called him 'Mr. Ten Minutes.'"

How many have lost not only their lives, but their precious, immortal souls, by this sin of procrastination! God's time is now, not "by-and-by." He says, "To-day if ye will hear My voice, harden not your hearts." The Bible teaches us, "Now is the accepted time, and now is the day of salvation."

Let no one, like Felix, when impressed with the truth, say, "Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee." Let no one put off even for ten minutes that which should be attended to at once. When God calls we should promptly obey. And He now says to each one out of His blessed kingdom, "My son, give Me thine heart." Will you do it?  
*Dr. Stryker.*

WEAK THINGS BECOME MIGHTY.

A rich, learned, and powerful nobleman of Saxony, having frequently visited Berlin, Frankfort, and Paris, had imbibed a bitter hatred against Christianity. The conversation of wicked men, the reading of infidel books, and the

pleasures to which he was addicted—all had inclined his heart to sceptical principles. Returning home, he abandoned himself without restraint to sensual pleasures, and openly professed infidelity, diffusing this poisonous influence all around him.

As he had in his gift the appointment of the pastor of the parish where his domains lay, he gave it to a young minister whom he had formerly known at the university, and who was no more religious than himself. These two men seemed to vie with each other in ungodliness. Being the count's favourite companion, the unworthy pastor sought only to please his patron. Their favourite talk at table and elsewhere was scoffing at sacred things, so that the servants, frivolous as they were, could not avoid being shocked.

The count was highly pleased with his minister and chosen friend. He told him often that his greatest delight would be to see all religious opinions—which he called superstitions—effaced gradually from the minds of his tenants; and he added that if he could obtain such a result, he should think he deserved well of the country. The parish thus went on very badly, and impiety prevailed in all its forms. Only one man—the schoolmaster—resisted the current; but he had no great learning or authority, and he was under the jealous watch of the pastor, who did not wish the children to hear evangelical truths, or, as he said, to be imbued with dark and gloomy notions.

What human means were there to rescue this German count, since the pastor himself encouraged him in his infidelity? But that which is impossible with man is possible with God. "A poor child of about eight years," wrote the count afterwards to one of his friends, "was chosen by the Good Shepherd of our souls to be an evangelist to me, and to lead me from infidelity to living faith. The event will be for me a perpetual motive to adore my Redeemer."

The case was thus:—

One day the count, walking in his grounds, heard the sweet voice of a child in a garden. He approached, and saw a little girl who was singing, seated on the grass, her eyes moistened with tears. This sight excited his curiosity; he entered the garden, and seeing that the little girl had a sweet and intelligent air, he felt moved with pity, the more as her mean clothing showed that she belonged to a very poor family.

"Why do you weep? are you sick, child?" asked the count.

"No," she replied, "but I weep because I am happy—so happy!"

"How can you weep, if you are happy?" said the count, surprised.

"Because I love so much the Lord Jesus Christ!"

"Why do you love Him so much? He has been dead a long time, He can do you no good."

"No, He is not dead; He lives in heaven."

"And even if this were true, what benefit is it to you? If He could help you, He would give money to your mother, that she might buy you better clothes."



"I do not wish for money; but that the Lord Jesus Christ will take me one day to Himself in heaven."

"It is your grandmother, or some such person, who makes you believe this."

"No, no; it is true, and it makes me glad." And the child's eyes filled again with tears.

These simple replies, this candour, this happiness in poverty, forcibly struck the count's mind. He gave the child some money, and went away.

"Two things," he wrote in the letter above cited, "occupied my thoughts on my return to the house, and the following days. I asked myself, How did such sentiments find their way into this child's soul? for I knew that neither the pastor nor the schoolmaster had imparted them. Next I wondered how a child of eight years could be filled with such sincere love; for I had remarked in the girl's look and manner an ardent affection for the Redeemer; I had seen that her soul was happy. In vain I sought a philosophical solution of this phenomenon; it was inexplicable to me."

While he meditated on these things, the count remembered another incident. Having set off on a journey from Cassel to Gotha, eight or nine years before, he stopped at New Dietendorf, a settlement of Moravian Brethren, and was led by curiosity, or to beguile the time, to one of their evening meetings. The pastor, in preaching from our Lord's words in taking a little child and setting him in the midst of His disciples, made a remark which appeared to him then very singular, namely, that the Lord honours persons who profit by a child's conversation. This sermon excited the count's sneers rather than his sympathy. But the subject recurred now to his mind after his interview with the little girl. He thought continually on "profiting by a child's conversation."

On his return home he was more serious, and avoided talking as before on religious topics. The

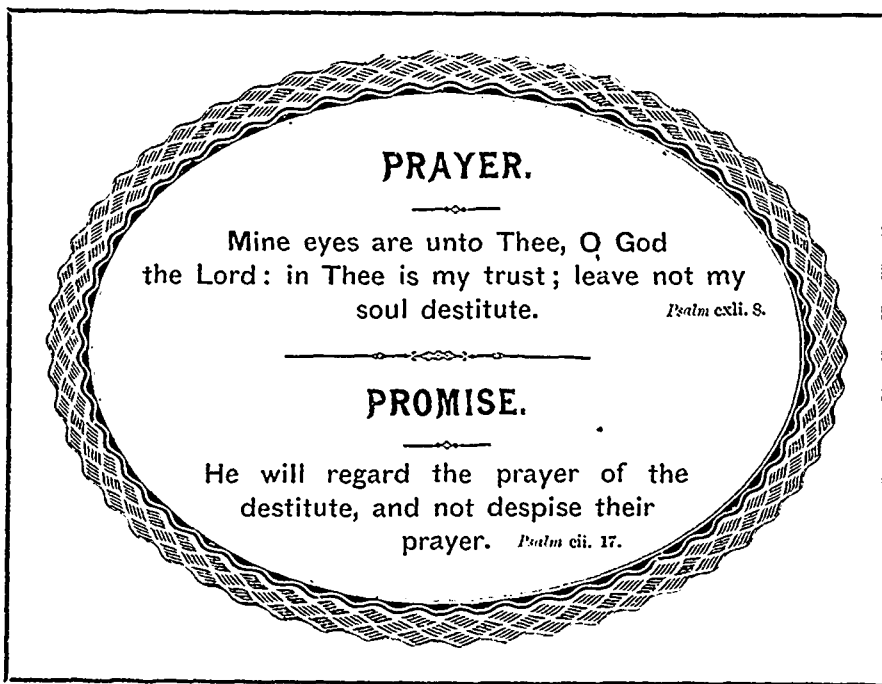
pastor, his constant guest, was surprised at this reserve; but the count did not speak of the conversation with the little girl, lest he should be ridiculed.

A week afterwards he was called by his business to journey on the frontiers of Austria. His road led him to Gnadendorf, another settlement of Moravian Brethren. He arrived there at night.

"The next morning," says he, "I heard the bells ring, and was told it was the children's festival. The director allowed me to attend the love-feast, and the children's singing pleased me much. I went also to the evening meeting. The preacher delivered a touching discourse on the text, 'Have ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings Thou hast perfected praise?'"

"At the close of this sermon the pastor made an affecting prayer, earnestly imploring the pardon of sin

for the sake of Christ. This service made upon me so strong an impression that I am sure it will last throughout eternity. I was bathed in tears. I felt my sins as I had never felt them before. The question which the persecutor Saul addressed to Jesus



on the way to Damascus, 'Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?'—this question arose in my troubled soul. I continued to weep bitterly till a sweet peace had penetrated my heart. I felt then a tranquillity which words cannot express. I was convinced, to my great astonishment, that the name of Jesus—that name which I could not hear formerly without contempt—was become to me infinitely dear and precious, and that I had obtained mercy."

The nobleman renounced his infidelity, publicly declared his sorrow for the injury he had previously inflicted on the cause of religion, and for the remainder of his days marched faithfully under the holy banner of Jesus Christ, admiring and blessing the ways of Providence. Probably the most learned theological arguments would have been powerless against his arrogant scepticism; but what learning was incapable of doing, the Lord did by means of a child.

IT TAKES TWO TO MAKE A QUARREL.

“WELL, there, I’ve done. I never said nothing to you, and you come becalling me in that way! I’ll have nothing more to say.” Such were the words uttered in broad dialect which I accidentally overheard the other day. They set me thinking about quarrels—what foolish things they generally were, and how easily they might often be put a stop to, if people only went the right way to work about them. It seemed to me that

with.” It takes two to make a quarrel, and I think Sally’s plan was successful, for the sound of angry voices soon died away.

It is a curious thing to think of how quarrels begin—what little trifling things often bring about great strifes. Sometimes even the real commencement of the quarrel is forgotten, or the thing first quarrelled about is no longer of importance, and yet the quarrel goes on all the same. Now, perhaps it



Sally Robbin’s plan was a very good one, and one that wiser and greater people than she might often follow with great advantage. It’s a great point in such things to know when to stop. I do not fancy that Sally herself had been quite blameless in this matter. Her sharp tongue had very likely inflicted some wound upon her neighbour; or perhaps some want of courtesy had awakened bad feeling; but at any rate it was the best thing she could do to stop the quarrel at once. “The beginning of strife,” the wise man says, “is as when one letteth out water: therefore leave off contention before it be meddled

might help to stop our contentions, and allay our ill-feelings, if we would take advantage of a pause in the strife, and ask ourselves, What is it all about? Is it worth quarrelling for?

Why, the way in which half our quarrels begin is enough to condemn them at once. Something has occurred, perhaps, which has not quite pleased us. Our work has not gone on so smoothly as usual. The good wife’s fire wouldn’t burn, or the chimney smoked; or one of the children had had an accident and torn its new frock, the good man’s dinner wasn’t quite ready when he came home; or his wife was gone to speak to a neighbour, and the baby was crying with no one to attend to it.

Or perhaps one isn’t quite well, and the uneasiness of the body makes the temper irritable. Then come in pride and selfishness. We feel ourselves very much injured. The fire ought to burn, and it isn’t our fault. The children ought not to be so tiresome. The wife ought to be at home. We begin to brood over imaginary wrongs. Then we think of something one of our neighbours or friends has done that we don’t quite like; and presently we have succeeded in making out a grievance which shall worry us and make us unhappy, and ready for making other people unhappy too.

Now what is all this like? When Guy Faux wanted to blow up the Houses of Parliament, what did he do? He got gunpowder and faggots and packed them away quietly in the vaults, intending when the time came to fire the gunpowder. This is

what people do who allow themselves to get unhappy about trifles, and keep things on their minds to worry them. They are carefully bringing together the gun-powder and faggots, and then presently some unfortunate spark alights on the powder and there's a dreadful explosion!

Oh! it's always a bad and dangerous thing for us and for our neighbours and friends when we begin to think about and brood over our grievances; when we allow our minds to rest upon such themes as these: how badly we are treated; how little other people think of us; what a hard lot ours is; how much worse off we are than others. Our mind becomes then like a body that from disease is tender all over, and cannot be touched without pain. Presently some one, perhaps one of those dearest to us, accidentally says or does something which gives us an excuse for being angry, and we say some cruel irritating words, and the quarrel is begun. Who shall say where it will end?

It is not too much to say that the peace of families has been wrecked, husbands set against wives, wives against husbands, children against parents, and brothers and sisters against each other, by causes no more real or important than something of this kind. What foolish and wicked things most quarrels are!

But how to put an end to a quarrel that has unhappily been begun? Ah! the pity is, that sometimes it is too late to put an end to it; for even if one is willing to come to terms, the other may not be. But supposing one of the parties to a quarrel wishes to have peace, to restore good feeling, to put an end to strife, and the other will not, still let him not despair. Even then "a soft answer" may "turn away wrath." At any rate, he may wash his hands of it and say, "Well, I've done all I can to make peace, and I am willing to do more if need be; if you will quarrel now, the quarrel is on your side, not mine." Let him take Sally Robbin's plan, and say, "Well, there, I've done." It takes two to make a quarrel and two to keep it going; and if one leaves off the strife, it will die out of itself in time.

Make up your mind to this, at least, that the keeping up of the ill-feeling and the anger shall not be your fault. It may cost you a little sacrifice of feeling to go and say, "Neighbour, I have had bad feelings towards you, and I ask you to forgive and shake hands;" but if you will do it, you will have a lighter heart and an approving conscience. Ten to one, too, but you will win your neighbour's heart, and if not, upon him alone will rest the blame. Oh! it is a dreadful thing to keep alive angry feelings, to perpetuate strife. What evil thoughts and evil actions of all kinds a quarrel engenders, and what misery it brings to ourselves!

If he that hateth his brother is a murderer, and no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him, what shall we say of some who call themselves Christians, and yet indulge in envy, hatred, malice, and keep up strife with their neighbours, or perhaps with those who ought to be dearest to them. God help us all to free ourselves from this great sin.

Above all, pray. Come to the throne of grace, that you may find grace to help in time of need. Pray.

God has Himself given you a prayer: "Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth, keep the door of my lips." And pray also for the new heart and right spirit which fears to offend Him even in thought, and which guards against angry thoughts as much as against quarrelsome words.

### CHRIST IN THE HEART.

THE veteran soldiers of Napoleon idolised him. In their estimation he was the perfection of all military genius and nobility. They would fight for him, suffer for him, and die for him. As emperor he was as much their idol as he was on the tented field. No language could exaggerate their devotion to him. An old soldier, who bore the scars of many battles, was brought under the surgeon's knife in an hospital. A tumour was to be removed from the breast. As the knife did its work, and came very near to the heart, the hero exclaimed, "Doctor, cut a little deeper, and you will find the emperor!" He carried the emperor in his heart, so true was his devotion.

The believer, in whose heart Christ is formed the hope of glory, can say the same about the Captain of his salvation, "Go a little deeper, and you will find the Master." To him Christ is "the chief among ten thousand and the one altogether lovely." Christ has no rival in that soul.

### THY BROTHER SHALL RISE AGAIN.

HE is but sleeping a little while,  
 Away from life's toil and din;  
 His lips are wreathed in a tranquil smile  
 That tells of the "rest" within.  
 "He whom Thou lovest is sick!"—the cry  
 Went up from a soul in pain;  
 Behold, he sleepeth! and by-and-by  
 "Thy brother shall rise again."  
 "Lord, hadst Thou been here he had not died!"  
 I had kept him with me still,  
 In my human heart's love, deep and wide,  
 From the grave so dark and chill.  
 What, then, of the rest his soul would crave?  
 The sleep he had sought in vain?  
 Rejoice, believing beyond the grave  
 "Thy brother shall rise again."

Kathleen Mary Smith.

### THE TWO VOICES.

FIFTEEN miles from Madrid, the capital of Spain, in a bleak, barren spot, surrounded by rugged mountains, stands the most wonderful building in the whole country.

It is called the Escorial, and comprises a magnificent palace, a large, richly-ornamented church, cloisters, a convent, college, and library. It was begun in 1562 by Philip II. of Spain, and finished twenty-two years after, and it cost six millions of ducats. (A gold ducat is worth about nine shillings.)

A stranger looking at this vast pile would exclaim, "What could possess any one to build so grand a structure in such a bleak, barren spot?"

It does indeed seem difficult to understand why it was placed there, though it is said to have been because the durable stone of which it is built was obtained from a mountain close by.

I am not going to try to describe the place and all the costly things it holds. I only want to take you, in imagination, into one part of it, the great vault below the church, which is the burial-place of the kings and queens of Spain.

This mausoleum is round, and lined with the finest kinds of marble. In it, in tombs of marble placed in niches one over another, lie the mortal remains of the Spanish monarchs who have lived and died during more than three centuries past.

On Sunday, November 29th, 1885, a long and stately procession wound its way up the hill towards the Escorial. When the funeral car reached the great door of the monastery, it was found to be shut.

Then the chief officer of State knocked, and a voice inside was heard to ask, "Who wishes to enter?"

The answer given was, "Alfonso the Twelfth."

He of whom the officer spoke was beyond the power to wish, for he lay still and cold within the gorgeous coffin conveyed by the funeral car. The speaker was demanding a last resting-place for his dead master, Alfonso XII., King of Spain.

Then the doors were thrown open, the coffin was carried into the church and covered with four grand cloaks, whilst a thousand tapers were lighted.

Next followed the Catholic burial service, and when its solemn music died away, the coffin was again lifted and carried down the twenty-five steps which led to the great vault below, where it was placed on a marble table.

Only three persons followed—the Prior of the Convent, the Minister of Grace and Justice, and the Lord Chamberlain.

Now came the strange and touching ceremony which is customary at the burial of a monarch of Spain.

The great officers who accompanied the coffin had already given a certificate that it indeed contained the body of Alfonso XII. In the vault the Lord Chamberlain unlocked the coffin, which was covered with cloth of gold, raised the glass covering from the face, and requested perfect silence. Then kneeling down, he shouted three times in the ear of the dead king: "Señor, Señor, Señor!"

The mourners waiting in the church above heard this cry, and said that it sounded like a wail of despair, for the man who uttered it was the Duke of Sexto, the favourite friend and companion of him that was dead. Vainly did he call "My lord!" in that ear. There was no voice nor any that answered. Then the Lord Chamberlain rose from his knees, and said the usual words: "His Majesty does not answer. Then it is true the king is dead."

He locked the coffin, gave the key to the prior, and

having broken his wand of office, he threw the pieces at the foot of the table. The vault was then closed upon its new and silent inmate, and the people slowly left the church, amid the solemn tolling of the great bells.

So the young king, into whose short life many sorrows had been crowded, lay in his splendid sepulchre, to await that last dread summons which shall reach even the ear of the dead and must be obeyed.

We will carry our minds from the tomb of this last Spanish monarch backwards over more than eighteen centuries and a half, and stand in imagination with another company of mourners, in a still more distant land.

We shall not see the funeral procession, for the inmate of this rocky tomb has already lain four days in it. Two loving, weeping sisters, accompanied by a sorrowful procession of mourning friends, are going together to visit the burial-place. One, the dearest friend of all, newly arrived from a distance, had asked the question, "Where have ye laid him?"

"Lord, come and see," was the answer of the mourners, who then led the way to the rocky tomb of Lazarus of Bethany.

Three times did the Spanish Lord Chamberlain shout in vain in the ears of his dead friend and monarch.

One call from the lips of Jesus was enough to bring back from the grave him who had lain there four days already. "He that was dead came forth."

The earthly friend who was only mortal could do nothing to rouse the king who lay in the arms of death.

The Friend who was God as well as man, who was to take away the sting from death and victory from the grave, spake, and it was done. Lazarus heard His summons, and came back to life and light, to change the tears of his sorrowing sisters into glad words of joy and thankfulness; to look again upon the face of Him he loved as man, but in whom dwelt "all the fulness of the Godhead bodily."

When Jesus trod this earth He declared, "The hour is coming and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live." For Jesus to raise a dead body to life again was the exception. His greatest of miracles was wrought only on a few occasions, to manifest His Divine power. But, blessed be God, it is no rare thing for the soul dead in trespasses and sins to be called back to spiritual life by the voice of Jesus.

The testimony of every saved sinner is the same. He joyfully declares that by faith in the Son of God he has found pardon, justification, and peace. "Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved."

Jesus still calls. His voice is now the voice of love. His life and death were the manifestations of the Father's love for lost and ruined sinners.

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."



*The Palace of the Escorial, the Burial-place of King Alfonso.*

Jesus calls *now* to the weary, to come and find rest.

To the sinner, to repent, believe, and live.

To those who mourn with a godly sorrow He promises, "Your sorrow shall be turned into joy," and "Your joy no man taketh from you."

To the lost Jesus calls, "Return," and promises a Comforter who shall reveal the way of salvation to their longing, waiting hearts.

"The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you." No need for you to lack guidance, for "When He, the Spirit of Truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth."

I repeat, the call of Jesus is the call of love. It is a call from eternal death to eternal life. But how many there are who turn a deaf ear to the call; who show no more sign of having heard than did

the dead king of Spain when the cry of his friend was shouted three times beside his coffin. By these a special warning is needed, and in the very words of Jesus it must be given. We may refuse to listen now to the loving call. We may put off our repentance to the "more convenient season," which will never arrive. We may think the warnings fit the circumstances of all but ourselves. We may come to the last of our days on earth without having heeded the loving voice of Jesus.

But "the hour is coming in the which all that are in the grave shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation."

This last call will be the summons to judgment. How shall we meet Jesus as our Judge, if we have refused to accept Him as our Saviour, Redeemer, and King?

*Ruth Lamb.*

# TOO MUCH OF A GOOD THING!

## AND OTHER SKETCHES.



John had been up bright and early.

**M**R. JOHN SPRAGGS was a man of principle. He believed in doing what was right, in thinking what was right, and in saying what was right. A good clear conscience was one of his most cherished possessions. "I want," he used to say, "to look every man in the face without flinching;" and consequently he never knew what it was to go down a side street to avoid anybody, whether rich or poor.

But Mr. John Spraggs, for all his good principles, had a good deal to learn, and although he was pretty

comfortable he was not exactly happy. But he became happy, thank God, and I should like my readers to know how he became so, if they will listen for a few minutes.

It happened on a New Year's day. It was a cold, wintry morning; the snow had been falling heavily all night, and John had been up bright and early to clear a path from the church door. All day long folks had been wishing him "A happy New Year," and he had been wishing them the same, and "many of them." To tell the truth, however, he

had become tired of receiving and returning the New Year's greetings long before the day was over, and actually dreaded having to receive or give any more. But in they came faster and faster, for all the world as if everybody knew what he did not want them. At length, his day's business over, he took refuge by his own fireside, and for the first time for some hours began to breathe freely and comfortably again.

"I am glad," said he, confidentially to his wife, "that New Year's day only comes once a year. It's been nothing but 'Happy New Years' all the day long. I'm thoroughly sick of them."

Now Mrs. Spraggs had had a good many of them too when she went out to do her bit of shopping. But she had quite enjoyed them, and to tell the truth had stayed out a little longer to have a few more of them. And so it was not to be expected that she should show a particle of sympathy with her other half.

"But you want a happy New Year, don't you, John?" she asked.

"Of course I do, my dear," he replied; "but wishing won't bring it, will it? What am I the better for all these scores of wishes I've had to-day? All they've done for me is to give me a headache, that's all."

"Now look here, husband," said Mrs. Spraggs, "I've got a notion; it's been simmering in my head all the day, and I shan't be comfortable till it's out."

"What's that, my dear?"

Mrs. Spraggs' reply was at first in dumb show. It consisted in getting a clean sheet of paper, a pad of blotting-paper, a new pen, and an inkstand; and it was not until after spreading them out and arranging everything that she made any remark.

"I vote," she said, "for being practical. I vote for wishing ourselves a happy New Year, and putting down on paper in black and white what will make it a happy New Year."

"Ay, that's sensible," said John, who had braced himself up to sticking-point. "What shall we put down first?"

*This New Year*, wrote Mrs. Spraggs, *shall be a year of new resolutions.* "There's a good deal in making up our minds, John; more than folks commonly think. Good resolving is half-way house to good performing. Where there's a will there's a way, you know. We have proved that over and over again, haven't we? We'll resolve to brace up our limp wills, to put on new armour, and to begin afresh."

"The very thing," said Mr. Spraggs; "I'll sign to that."

"Now it's your turn, John," said Mrs. Spraggs.

"*This New Year shall be a year of new pursuits,*" proudly suggested Mr. Spraggs, who seemed determined to let no grass grow under his feet. "I don't know how you feel, my dear, but I know I haven't read my Bible as much as I ought to have done. And I know, too, that I haven't done as much good as I ought to have done. And I'm afraid I haven't gone to church as regularly as I ought to have done. Yes, we'll make it a year of new pursuits."

"That's splendid!" said his wife, her face full of smiles. "Now it's my turn again."

"*This New Year shall be a year of new faith.* We shan't do very much better, John, if we don't get some new faith as well. Weak faith is all very well, but it's nothing near so good as *strong* faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. I don't see why we shouldn't have this strong faith either, do you? And so, John, we'll trust the Lord for forgiveness, we'll trust Him in our troubles, and we'll trust Him for all our future. There are plenty of promises to trust in, thank God. I'm sure it will be a happy New Year if we only get new faith for it."

By this time the paper had begun to appear quite business-like, and both husband and wife looked at it with evident pride and pleasure. But there wasn't enough yet to please Mrs. Spraggs, who insisted on her good husband suggesting one more new thought for the New Year.

After thinking a bit, he said, "Well, there is just one thing I think we can't leave out anyhow. It is this—

"*This New Year shall be a year of new love.* We'll try to love the Lord more, my dear, and we'll try to love one another more, and not get out of temper and say unkind things. Yes, and we'll try to love everybody, whether they love us or not."

When he had finished, said Mrs. Spraggs, with a bright face and a somewhat roguish look, "A happy New Year, John."

To which John replied, with every whit as bright a smile, "The same to you, Mary, and many of them."

Rev. Charles Courteney.

## SEEING THE GRACE OF GOD.



We are told that when the tidings came to the church at Jerusalem of the conversion of the Gentiles at Antioch, they sent forth Barnabas, to go as far as Antioch, who came thither, and, "seeing the grace of God," rejoiced.

It is evident that there was a grace to be seen at Antioch; that it was a genuine work of grace, not a mere excitement—a shaving-fire in a sheet-iron stove—not simply new means, novel methods, and fresh winds of doctrine; not some sectarian dispute which was engaging attention, but "the grace of God," manifest in saving men from sin, turning them to the Lord, and making them heirs of a heavenly inheritance.

Barnabas had eyes to see the grace of God. Some only see defects in the work, and faults and failings in workers; some see only the hubbub and confusion of the labourers, but he could see the grace of God. Barnabas had a keen eye to perceive grace. He saw grace in Paul, when he assayed to join himself unto the Jewish Christians, who were all afraid of him. Barnabas took him and brought him in, and secured him fellowship with the saints.

He saw grace in Mark, when, having deserted them in their first mission, Paul refused to have anything more to do with him, Barnabas was more patient and charitable; and seeing the grace that was in Mark, he took him with him on a mission, and so encouraged and nurtured him, that in his last letter Paul was glad to summon Mark to his aid, as one that was profitable to him in the ministry.

To see grace we must be familiar with it. Hypocrites see hypocrisy; worldlings see worldliness; sinners see sin; good men, like Barnabas, who are full of faith and the Holy Ghost, see grace, and rejoice in it, and labour to extend its reign.

Can we see the grace of God? There are places where there seems much formality, much sin; and yet if we had the eyes of Barnabas we might amid it all see the grace of God, and rejoice. There are some names, even in Sardis. There was one just Lot in Sodom; there was a Joseph in Egypt; there was a Daniel in Babylon; and so God has His lights shining amid the darkness. Happy are they who, from their knowledge of the Lord and His will, can rejoice in the manifestations of Divine grace.

### THE PRESENCE OF JESUS.

JESUS, Thy name is ever dear,  
And ever welcome unto me;  
Happy I feel when Thou art near,  
Though in the workhouse still I be.

My lot on earth is poor and mean,  
My circumstances sad indeed;  
But Jesus cheers the dreary scene:  
He meets me in my greatest need.

He smiles on me though some may frown,  
He pities failings none can see;  
He welcomes me whoc'er may spurn:  
How kind my Jesus is to me?

He comforts and He succours me;  
He teaches me to look above,  
Beyond this life and its rough sea,  
To yonder land of rest and love.

He hushes all my passions still,  
He makes the storm become a calm,  
Brings sweet submission to His will,  
And holds me with His mighty arm.

He makes the curse a blessing prove;  
He turns my sorrows into joy,  
He teaches this hard heart to love,  
And make His praises my employ.

He turns my darkness into light,  
He makes this earth become a heaven,  
Gives inward peace 'midst outward fright;  
All glory to His name be given!

Grace Dickinson.

### THE FIVE-POUND NOTE.



IT WAS a good many years ago a merchant missed from his cash-drawer a five-pound note. No one had been to the drawer, it was proved, except a young clerk whose name was Weston. The merchant had sent him there to get change for a customer, and the next time the drawer was opened the note had disappeared.

Naturally, Weston was suspected of having stolen it, and more especially as he appeared a few days after the occurrence in a new suit of clothes. Being asked where he had bought the clothes, he gave the name of the tailor without hesitation; and the merchant, going privately to make inquiries, discovered that Weston had paid for the suit with a five-pound note.

That afternoon the young clerk was called into the merchant's private room and charged with the theft.

"It is needless to deny it," the merchant said. "You have betrayed yourself with these new clothes, and now the only thing that you can do is to make a full confession of your fault."

Weston listened with amazement; he could hardly believe at first that such an accusation could be brought against him, but when he saw that his employer was in earnest he denied it indignantly, and declared that the money he had spent for the clothes was his own, given him as a Christmas gift a year ago. The merchant sneered at such an explanation, and asked for the proof.

"Who was the person that gave it to you? Produce him!" he demanded.

"It was a lady," answered Weston, "and I can't produce her, for she died last spring. I can tell you her name."

"Can you bring me anybody that saw her give you the money, or knew of your having it?" asked the merchant.

"No, I can't do that," Weston had to answer. "I never told any one about the gift, for she did not wish me to do so. But I have a letter from her somewhere, if I have not lost it, in which she speaks of it."

"I dare say you have lost it," the merchant sneered. "When you have found it, sir, you bring it to me, and then I will believe your story."

Weston went home with a heavy heart. He had no idea where the letter was; he could not be sure that he had not destroyed it; and it was the only means of proving his innocence. Unless he could produce it his character was ruined, for he saw that the merchant was fully convinced of his guilt, and appearances, indeed, were sadly against him. He





*"It is needless to deny it," the merchant said.*

went to work, however, in the right way. He knelt down and prayed to God for help to prove that he was innocent, and then he began to overhaul the contents of his desk and trunk and closet.

He kept his papers neatly, and it did not take long to see that the letter was not among them. He sat down with a sense of despair when he was convinced of this. What else could he do? Nothing but pray again for help and guidance and strength to endure whatever trouble God might choose to send upon him. Sceptics may sneer at such prayers as this, but Weston would smile and say, "Let them sneer."

"When I rose from my knees," he said, telling me the story years afterwards, "I happened to catch my foot in an old rug that I had nailed down to the carpet because it was always curling at the edges.

The nail at the corner had come out, and stooping down to straighten the rug, I saw a bit of paper peeping out. I pulled it from its hiding-place, and it was the letter!

"How it got there I don't know. The fact that I had found it was enough for me, and if I had not gone on my knees again to give thanks for such a deliverance, I should be ashamed to tell you the story now.

"I brought that letter to my employer. It proved my innocence, and he apologised. A month afterwards the five-pound note was found in Mr. Finch's overcoat. He had never put it in the cash-drawer at all, though he thought he had. He raised my salary on the spot to pay for his unjust suspicions; and I have never yet repented of trusting the Lord in my troubles."



*The Exiles in Babylon.*

### TEARS BEFORE JOY.

READ PSALM cxxvi. 5.

THE seed is sown in tears. The allusion of the Psalmist is probably to the returning exiles from Babylon; that they were like persons sowing in fear and misgiving; and well they might, for they were visited with continual drought and failures of crops. But the words have a literal truth, for it is a fact that some seeds have to be steeped in water before they can be sown. And what is the sowing of seed? You drop a little seed into the ground. It is there in God's earth, for the earth is the Lord's. You cannot keep it in your barn, unless you would make it useless. So you trust it to God, and God takes it.

The seed rots and dies, as our bodies do when they die. It is gone altogether away from your sight. If you go and dig it up again it would be no good to you. So you leave it in God's earth, and God keeps it there week after week, but not for ever. It is sown in doubt, and fear, and hope. You have misgivings about its growth. You watch with much anxiety the cutting sleet of February and the remorseless blasts of March. You see the tender blade quivering and straggling—a little weakly thing—against every wind that blows. Storm and sky and biting cold seem all leagued and banded together to destroy it, and then when the weather is a little milder you watch the elements. You are anxious lest there be not enough rain or not enough sun. Now your hopes alternate when you see a likelihood of too much of one or of the other.

For long weary months you are filled with anxiety, doubt, hope, fear, as to the harvest. Is not the seed, then, sown in tears? The very time of the year when it is dropped into the ground, is not nature clothed in melancholy? Are you not sorrowful and anxious lest the seed do not prosper and bring forth fruit?

And such, brethren, is the path that saints must

tread; they, indeed, must sow in tears. Is not history from the creation full of it? Had not Adam, after he had fallen, to sow in tears, and in the sweat of his brow to eat bread? Had not Noah to sow the seed of God's warnings, and put up with the mockings and scoffings of those who disbelieved him? Had not Jacob to work long for Rachel, and to lose his loved Joseph, and to exclaim, "All these things are against me," ere he reaped in joy? What were God's people in Egypt? Sowers in tears, slaves given up to animal passions, their very life a burden; and when they came up out of Egypt, and ere they reached the promised land, how they sowed in tears! What doubts and fears and anxieties troubled them, and made them almost despair of possessing the home of milk and honey.

And what of those who sat down by the waters of Babylon, and amid tears of sorrow talked of their beloved Sion? Did not all these sow in tears? And need I stop here—what shall I say of Him who wept over the grave of Lazarus, and over the ingratitude of His people? Was not His whole life subject to the ill-treatment and unkindness of others? Were not His words rejected, and disbelieved, and scorned? And oh! did He not sow in tears when the agony of the garden and the suffering of the cross forced drops of blood and drops of water from Him? And that Church which He died to purchase, how much martyrdom, tyranny, oppression, opposition it had to endure, and how many of its saints had to die the martyr's death by sword and by flame!

And speak we of ourselves—what a sowing in tears is the life we live here! How full of discouragements, and crosses, and sorrows! What doubts and misgivings and disappointments! Does not all this render life a sowing in tears? We may have what we call a joy now and again, but how quickly and unexpectedly it gives place to sorrow; and when the last great trial comes, and the feeble pulse and the suffering body tell that you are at the brink of the tomb, and you must,

part with friends and loved ones, and all in this world dear to you; and when the death struggle is over, and the last sigh ceased, what—what is that final act? Is it not, amid the sorrows and tears of humanity, to consign your body to the ground, earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust, in sure and certain hope of the resurrection to everlasting life? This, indeed, is the final sowing in tears—our bodies are sown in corruption, sown in dishonour, sown in weakness, sown a natural body, there to minister to the fulness of the harvest which shall be ripened in the end, when it shall be raised in glory!

But the day of trouble is the day of promise: seed sown in tears shall yield a rich harvest which shall be reaped in joy! For months the farmer has been paying labourers to plough and harrow his fields, to drill his wheat, to hoe and guard his crops. He has been parting with good seed, enriching the soil; the crops have been in danger from the wetness of spring, or from the absence of sun in summer, or from the beating rain and tempestuous wind; there has been fear of bad weather in which to reap and carry, and when at last, in our variable climate, the farmer succeeds in carrying to his barns his year's crop, what relief of mind it brings.

Harvest-time, then, is indeed a time of joy! What more cheerful than to watch the reaper put his sickle to the wheat, to behold the field full of sheaves, to watch the waggon with its team of horses, and the labourers quickly piling up the shocks of corn, here and there the gleaner looking carefully for the scattered ears—every countenance bearing traces of pleasure and happiness, and every arm working with a will, until the fields are stripped of their golden glories, the barns filled, and all harvested in safety.

Such is the path by which the Church of God is ripened for her perfection and for her triumph in the world to come. The storms of this earth—its sorrows and sighings and tribulations; its cares, anxieties, and weariness—all that seems to bear us down now and make us sad and heartbroken, every tear shed in faith and hope shall result in joy. Let our discouragements be what they may, or let the enemies of God's Church seem as strong as they may, yet godliness shall be stronger than all; and if we be faithful to our Lord, then the very trials which threaten to overwhelm us shall but minister to the fulness of the harvest which shall be ripened in the end. Faithful is He that hath promised, and it would be strange indeed if He who for ages and generations hath kept His word of promise, so that harvest has never failed, should not also keep His promise to His own children, that they "who sow in tears shall reap in joy."

"They that sow in tears shall reap in joy." The seed is not sown for its beauty, but for its fruit. If you are to reap in joy, the object of your sowing in tears must be to produce a useful and abundant harvest. The frost or drought may spoil a crop, sins indulged and opportunities neglected may make the harvest of your lives impossible, but any way there

must come the reaping, there must come the summing-up of all the past.

What shall your harvest be? You, young men and maidens, whose hearts are full of hope. Behold in the decay of nature how mortal mere earthly hope is, and while there is time lay hold on that hope which is the anchor of the soul both sure and steadfast. "Be not deceived, God is not mocked; whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap;" sow now to the flesh, and of the flesh you shall reap corruption; sow to the Spirit, and an abundant harvest shall be yours.

And you who are in the summer of life, you who see fame and interest and pleasure displaying their shadowy promises around you, mark how the harvest is past, the summer ended, and be warned that the illusions of time must pass, and the spirit return to God who gave it.

And you who are now in the eventide of life, when the eye becomes dim and the strength decays, let the harvest which is gathered in remind you of the mighty change you are soon to undergo, and of the last great harvest festival in the realms of bliss above. And one and all make your choice now, and make it for ever. Sow in tears now and you shall reap in joy; sow in joy now, scatter around the seed of pleasure and fame and riches unthinkingly, and what shall you reap? Shall it be good or evil? Shall it be light or darkness? Shall it be shame or peace? You and God alone know. Oh, make your choice now and for ever. Let life be lived in earnest, not full of easy yesterdays and confident to-morrows, but like the toil of the faithful husbandmen, from summer to summer and from dawn to night. When the sighs of earth are for ever ended, the sorbs of life wiped away, the gate of tribulation passed, you who have sown in tears now, glory to God, shall then reap in joy!

*Rev. W. Fraser.*

### THE LOVE OF JESUS.

How condescending and how kind  
Was God's eternal Son!  
Our misery reached His heavenly mind,  
And pity brought Him down.  
He sank beneath our heavy woes,  
To raise us to His throne;  
There's not a gift His hand bestows  
But cost His heart a groan.  
This was compassion like a God,  
That when the Saviour knew  
The price of pardon was His blood,  
His pity ne'er withdrew.  
Now, though He reigns exalted high,  
His love is still as great:  
Well He remembers Calvary,  
Nor let His saints forget.  
Here let our hearts begin to melt,  
While we His death record,  
And with our joy for pardoned guilt,  
Mourn that we pierced the Lord.

*Dr. Watts.*

## HE SEES AND HE KNOWS.

**M**RS. JACKSON, a widow with four young children, lived in a small house about two miles from Westbourn. She settled near this town after her husband's death, because there were good schools in it, where her children could have a free and good education. She chose One Tree Cottage, as it was called, because, being in an out-of-the-way place, half a mile off the main road, the rent was low. Her earnings were very small, and it was only by working very hard at her needle that she was able to pay her way until the children should be old enough to earn their own living.

A time of heavy sickness came, trouble after trouble fell on the little family; the poor mother was unable to do her usual work; rent day was close at hand, and there was nothing, literally nothing, wherewith to pay. A whole year's rent was due, the landlord had been so far indulgent—fifteen pounds it was—and there was no one to whom Mrs. Jackson could go to ask for a loan of the money.

Then severe cold set in; there was a heavy snow-fall; and very sad were the faces which were gazing into the little fire in the sitting-room of One Tree Cottage one evening in December. The children knew and shared their mother's anxiety; she had borne her cares and griefs as long as she could without a murmur; but now they must know how she stood, and be prepared to leave their pleasant little home, and to go into a very small, cheap lodging. That was not all, either, for she had nothing left to carry on with until the middle of January, when some money would be due to her; and the man from whom she bought her provisions had told her he could not afford to let her have any further credit.

Tears fell fast down the poor mother's face; little Nell's head was buried in her lap; Mary held one of her hands, and looked up into her face, the picture of misery. John, naturally a bright sturdy lad, who hated to see his mother weep without being able to comfort or help her in any way, looked into the fire with a pale set face.

Suddenly he turned to her and said, "Mother, the copy I had to write at school to-day was, 'Man's extremity is God's opportunity;' does-n't that mean that when things are at their worst God will send help?"

"It does, my boy, it does; and yet I fear no help can come to us in this particular trouble. Mr. Jones will not wait any longer; to-morrow, he says, the money must be paid, or we must leave, and our furniture will be sold."

"If you prayed very hard, mother, perhaps God would send us some money," said little Nell, looking up; "last Sunday the minister said we must pray hard, and God would answer, and send His angels, like He did the raven, in my picture book."

"I think mother was praying nearly all last night," said Mary, softly. "I did not sleep much, and I saw mother in the moonlight, kneeling by father's old chair every time I woke up."

It was quite true; nearly all through the night, and constantly through the day now closing, Mrs. Jackson had been praying for some way of escape out of this trouble and need. Sometimes she had felt as though her prayers would be answered, she could not tell how; but now the daylight had left the sky, the snow lay thickly on the ground, and no one was likely to come up their lonely road.

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Will Soames, the cheery kind-hearted carrier, was driving along the main road from Westbourn to Horton that same snowy evening. It was hard work for his horse, even on the good level road.

"It'll be fine and bad up that lane to One Tree Cottage," he said to himself, "and I've a mind to leave this parcel where it lies till next journey. Old Mr. Wilson told me to be sure and take good care on it; but he knows it's safe enough in my cart; and it can bide till to-morrow, or even next day, safe enough." So he made up his mind to spare himself and his good horse, and to pass the turning up the rough lane.

But somehow he could not keep in that mind. "Perhaps it's summat her needs for them sickly little wenches o' her'n," his kind heart suggested. "So up we go, Bob," he shouted, jumping out of the cart and seizing the rein with one hand, whilst he patted the beast's neck with his other. "Up we go, and nowt more about it. There's a good rest and feed for both on us later on."

"What can that be?" said mother and John in one breath, ten minutes later, as a loud rap came on the door.

"A parcel for you, missis, and a fine sweat me and Bob's in; we wanna wait till it's opened. There's nowt to pay on it," he added, as he noted a troubled look of hesitation on the widow's face, as she held the parcel unopened. "Good night, a merry Christmas to you all!"

Merry! they thought it would be the dreariest they had ever known. "Perhaps it is some sewing from Mrs. May," said Mary.

Mrs. Jackson opened the parcel with trembling fingers; a sudden feeling of hope and thankfulness had come into her heart; still her hands trembled, and fresh tears started to her eyes.

"Whoso trusteth in Him shall not be ashamed." There was a warm shawl for herself, frocks for Mary and Nell, an overcoat for John; but on unfolding the shawl out fell a letter.

"Oh! see, quick, mother, who does it come from?" cried John.

There was no name within, only a few lines in an unknown hand, to say that God had blessed the sender so richly during that year that he must be allowed to bring some Christmas joy to some of His children. There were also four crisp bits of paper, four new five-pound notes. The widow's heart was too full to speak for a little while.

"God did send it, didn't He, mother?" said little Nell. And they read the 103rd Psalm together before they went to bed.

J. A. Owen.

## A NEW AFFECTION.

JUST on the verge of womanhood, Mary Pearce left her home for service full of life and gaiety.

With a light step, a toss of her head, and an arch smile, Mary was wont to pass up and down the village, the admiration of some, the envy of many. A bonnie looking maiden she was, with her bright eyes and plump rosy cheeks; and as she stood at her cottage door, laughing gaily with one and another as they passed, the matrons argued that no good would come of it, but shook their heads and congratulated themselves that their own girls were quite different from Mary.

But Mary was bent upon seeing the world, and when a situation as under-housemaid was offered in the neighbourhood, she applied for it, and obtained it; she was in high spirits from the time of her getting the situation, up to the last evening before leaving home.

Mary's tears at parting were soon dried, new scenes soon dispelled the old ones, and once settled in her new situation she quickly became reconciled to the change. In many respects her new mode of life was a pleasant one. Her mistress also valued her, and often was leave granted to Mary to go out when the work was finished. Being naturally fond of gaiety, Mary sought every opportunity of frequenting places of amusement. In her eager search after pleasure Mary soon forgot all about her home.

It was clear that she had got upon the wrong track, and was fast speeding away from all good influences and good habits. She had been going on for a long while in a system of deceit, cheating her mistress into the idea that she was attending the church regularly, when one morning, dressed as usual for a walk with a foolish young companion, she heard the church chimes suddenly burst out; her companion was not true to his appointment, and Mary walked, attracted by the sweet sound of the bells, towards the church, stood for one moment at the gate of the churchyard, then hardly knowing what she was doing, passed through the gate into the churchyard, and from thence into the porch.

The service had already begun, and after a hymn the minister gave out his text—"The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." The Holy Spirit of God brought those few words home to Mary's heart. "And have I," she said to herself, "been selling my

soul to Satan, and is death the wages he gives? Will health and beauty last only for a little while, and have I nothing to supply its place when it is gone? Must the end of it all be death? How very terrible!" With these bitter reflections, she left the church. Her first feeling was that the offer was not for her; and, oppressed and overcome with grief, she walked home. Her heart was full; her fellow-servants rallied her on her low spirits, but she could not rouse herself or tell them the cause: the trouble was real. God's Spirit was showing her to herself, telling her the truth, convincing her of sin. For several days Mary was in a state of sad depression, very silent, and often with eyes brimful of tears.

One evening, when the rest of the servants were otherwise engaged, Mary took her little Bible and seated herself in a corner of the kitchen, near the window, to catch the last gleam of twilight, and read once again the minister's Sunday morning text, the text that had been haunting her so all the week. She read it through and through, and exclaimed, almost audibly, "The gift of God—eternal life, did the minister say there was such a gift, and that I might have it? If it is to be had, I will plead for it with all my might."

Silent words of earnest prayer followed her resolution. She prayed for grace to believe, and that prayer was heard. The hand of faith was stretched out to receive the gift,

and Mary felt a joy within to which she had been long a stranger. Mary's fellow-servant looked astonished, and asked her, somewhat pettishly, what was the matter with her. Mary at once replied—

"I have loved gaiety and worldly pleasure and sin, and I thought myself happy; but I did not know till now what real happiness was. I have a new affection," she said, her old bright smile lighting up her face, "and I'm happier now than I ever was in my life."

Reader, the world is passing away, and you are passing out of the world. What have you to look to when every earthly thing is fading from your view? What support have you for old age? Those who have tasted the love of Christ know there is nothing on earth to be compared to it. If you will make Him your friend, then you will be able and ready to forego all mere earthly pleasure; attracted by His love you will be ready to give it up for His sake; you will even wonder that you ever grasped at shadows when real happiness was within your reach.



Mary read once again the minister's text.