

Tales for the Bush

Vidal, Mary Theresa (1815-1873)

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Tales For The Bush

“According to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.” Titus, iii, 5, 6, 7.

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THOMAS AND ANNE THOMPSON

“Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.”
Exodus, xx. 8.

CHAPTER I

THOMAS and Anne Thompson were among those who determined to leave England for New South Wales. They had been married eight years; their family was increasing, and labor becoming scarcer and scarcer. They heard of other families emigrating and that they easily got high wages, and lived in plenty: so they thought with their four children they would do so also. They were both honest, hard working and strong people, and Anne had been well brought up by a careful and pious mother, who had lived many years as servant in the squire's family. Anne was her only child, and she had been able to keep her at school, and, what is of far more consequence, she had set her a good example. Old Nurse Gordon, as she was still called, was well provided for by her former master's family, and though it was near breaking her heart when she heard of their plans to emigrate, she could not find any reason against it. She laid down her spectacles on the old Bible from which she had been reading, and, wiping away the tear from her eye with the corner of her white apron, she patted her little grandchild's head and answered, “well, Anne dear, I'm not learned enough to gainsay you, may be 'tis just as you and Tom say; but, if it was God's will, I should have wished to have you close my old eyes and see me laid in the grave - but His will be done!”

“Aye mother, that's the way to look on it,” said Tom “cheer up, and we'll save you a little something in that country which will go to make you more comfortable.”

“Thank ye kindly, Tom,” said the old woman, “but I am, thank God, well cared for-while my missis lives, I shall never want - night and day I pray God to bless her and her's -and you must do so too, for oh! it's a cruel comfort to think that, though we've no silver nor gold, we have one way of repaying they that are kind - we can pray to God for them. And now,” continued she, “let's have a cup of tea together,” and she and her daughter spread the tea-things and produced the loaf.

This was the last time they ever met in that little cottage. It was Sunday

evening. The old woman wore her Sunday gown, and white apron; the meadows seen from the door looked green; the sun set very gloriously, and threw its slanting red beams on them as they sat: the roses and sweet briar smelt very sweetly and they heard the chimes of the village church; for in that place they chimed every Sunday evening. As they sat, feeling sorrowful and sad, the old mother again spoke, "I'm thinking that's a sound ye'll not hear yonder; I suppose there's no church bells across the seas."

"I suppose not," said Tom, "it is a new country, a fine place for farming and grazing."

"Well, I hope God will prosper you - but mind my last words - when I'm dead and buried, mind my words 'honor the sabbath day, and keep it holy.' When once we forget this, we don't know where to stop: and Anne, my dear, see I give you this book, this Prayer Book; use it, and teach the children out of it; look, my name is on it - read it Tom." Tom read - "this book was given to Anne Gordon by her mistress as a reward for her punctual attendance at church."

"Yes, " said the old woman as she followed her son-in-law's voice - "yes, that's it - and now I give it to you, Anne Thompson, with my blessing; and you Tom, you have been a kind and sober husband to her; and now you are going so far, be sure you mind all your duty - may be there'll be no good parson like Mr. Howe - but remember his words, and keep your church and fear God."

It was now time for them to go, so putting the children's hats and bonnets on, Thomas and Anne returned home; they had a walk of a quarter of a mile, but it was a pleasant evening and they talked cheerfully of the future; how they should save money and buy a farm, and, perhaps, grow rich.

CHAPTER II

In five months from this time the family of the Thompsons reached Sydney. They had encountered some troubles on the voyage: Anne was very sick, and it made her very weak and inclined to be discontented and cross tempered, and there were many discomforts on board the ship. There were a great many passengers, and some of the bad ones quarrelled; but Tom was steady and sober, which was a great comfort. He attended to the children when Anne was ill, and was always ready to lend a helping hand when it was wanted, so that he became a favorite.

Their little boy John, the eldest, got very ill, so ill, that they began to fear it might be their lot to bury him in the ocean, as one other poor mother had done her child. This was a sore trouble to Anne; she thought she could

have borne to bury her child under a green sod; but to hear the coffin plash down into the waves of the deep sea - that was dreadful.

While she was thinking in this way, her mother's gift came into her head, and she opened the Prayer Book. She turned to the burial service; there she saw that the same good and holy words would be used as if she were at home in Ringford church yard; and at the bottom of the service she saw that there was something written expressly for a sea burial; it spoke of the sea giving up the dead and of God's subduing all things to Himself.

Now this comforted Anne, and she felt what a blessed book the Prayer Book was; there were prayers for every thing; in sickness, in death, or in joy. Whether on dry land, or on the deep waters, turn to your Prayer Book, and you will find words of comfort and instruction; the self same words too which all good christians have ever used, the same words which are uttered in every church throughout the world.' Thinking of these things and watching by little John, was of use to Anne; she felt she had been impatient and fretful at the discomforts of board-ship, and as she sat by the sick child, she prayed for forgiveness and for grace to help her to quench such feelings in future. Thus the trial was turned into a blessing, and Anne felt every day more ready to submit cheerfully to God's will. But it pleased the Almighty to spare them the trial of losing their child. Little John recovered; and before they reached land, he was as rosy as before, and said his catechism every Sunday, out of the Prayer Book, to his mother.

CHAPTER III.

I cannot tell you all that happened to them, or how many plans they had when they first landed; but they at last set up a little shop in some of the outskirts of Sydney; and besides this, Tom was able to get plenty of work at his trade, which was gardening. Every thing seemed to go on well: they had plenty of custom, and Anne's tidy appearance and respectful manner brought people to the shop.

There was no church where they lived, but the service was performed in the school room, every Sunday; and the two eldest children went to the school. The custom of the place was for all these little shops, like the Thompson's, to be kept open during Sunday. The shutters were half closed; and many persons bought all they wanted on Sunday, instead of coming on Saturday afternoon. At first this struck Anne's conscience: she thought of locking up the house, and going to church at the school house, with all the children; but her husband objected, and said that would never do, they must do as others did - it was the custom of the country; and, if they refused to serve customers on a Sunday, they should have none.

“And that's true, sure enough,” sighed Anne - “there's Mrs. Harris over the way, and the Browns, and scores of others that make no more account of the Sabbath than if it was a common day; but its hard to be forced to serve and slave on a day of rest.”

“Never mind Anne,” said her husband - “its only for a time, let us make haste and save some money, and then we can do as we like, we can keep Sunday as we did at home, and you shall be quite a lady.”

Anne smiled, for she wondered what sort of lady she'd make; and then she washed the children's faces, and tied their pinafores, and led them out to the door.

“Now go on steady there's my dears, and behave well in church, and mind the text Johnny.” Then she turned into the little room which formed both kitchen and shop. She took out her book intending to read, but presently Mrs. Harris over the way stepped in, and Anne had to serve her with tea and sugar; some spice was wanted which could not be found without more light, so she went to open the shutter.

Just then, Mr. Martin, the clergyman passed: Mrs. Martin and their three children were with him. Anne dropped a curt'sy, for she had not left off that custom which some people think unnecessary after they leave England. Her good mother had always taught her to be respectful to her superiors, and that politeness to one another is taught in the Bible. So Anne curtsied - but how ashamed she felt. She fancied Mr. Martin looked sternly at her - she thought that Mrs. Martin stared at her dirty apron.

“Ah,” thought she, “it used not to be so on a Sabbath morning at home, but it is just like no Sunday here, no bells, no church, no any thing.”

“What are you so long about taking down the shutters,” called her husband: so Anne hastily put down the shutter, and went in; but her heart was ill at ease - she did not feel happy.

Next Sunday, however, she minded it less; she did not see Mr. Martin pass. Mrs. Harris and Mrs. White came and laid out upwards of a pound between them, for Mrs. Harris was expecting some friends from Sydney to tea. They talked of the new store further on the road, where very cheap and good things were to be had; “but they will not do,” said Mrs. Harris, “they shut up on a Sunday because she's a Methodist. Such nonsense, expecting people to lose Saturday, which is always a busy evening, because they won't weigh out a penny-worth on Sunday; besides, really, in this country, folk hav'nt the convenience for keeping things, and it is very hard not to enjoy a good dinner on a Sunday.”

“Well Anne,” said her husband that evening, “this good day; we'll put up the money to buy a cow - I saw a beauty the other day - when we've got two or three head, then I shall think we are fairly in for good fortune.”

CHAPTER IV.

SUNDAY after Sunday passed; weeks and months came and went; all prospered with the Thompsons. They had bought a cow and calf, and put it out to a run; they lived well and put by a little besides; still, neither of them looked so nice or so cheerful as when they lived hard at Ringford.

Anne's clothes got out of repair; she never had any time to mend them; she was in the shop every day. They had plenty of custom, and all her time was occupied. She worked hard, and now she did not look forward to any day of rest. There was no quiet Sunday when cares and troubles were forgotten; no regular attending church, but only now and then when she could persuade Tom to mind the shop. There was no quiet evening walk; no hearing the children read. They had meat, and bread and butter, and plenty of tea and sugar, it is true, besides many other little luxuries; but it was eaten in discomfort; there was no regular time for any thing. All days were alike; no Sunday came to mark the time - to begin another week with the minister's blessing, after a grateful rest to the mind and body.

Anne was not happy, but she did not perhaps put it down to the right cause. Her conscience had spoken, and had not been heeded, and now it did not prick her. We soon slip down a hill when we once begin.

CHAPTER V.

ONE day, about this time, Mr. Martin came into the shop. After asking a few questions about her children and husband, he said, "How is it I do not see you at church Mrs. Thompson?" "Why sir, I do go whenever I can." "Very seldom I fear," answered Mr. Martin, "it is but too much the custom in this country to neglect church, and I am sorry to see that, amongst others, your shop is not shut on a Sunday; surely you know this is breaking the fourth commandment?" "I know it sir, I know it is very wrong," and Anne burst into tears, "but what are we to do? people will buy on a Sunday, and we depend on the shop."

"It may be a trial, my good woman; but if a few decent people held out, refusing to serve, any one on a Sunday, taking care to be doubly attentive and careful on other days, I do not think they would really lose. Besides, suppose they did lose - suppose, at the year's end, they were so many shillings or even pounds the poorer, they would still have gained." - 'Better is little with the fear of the Lord, than great treasure,' &c. - "It is positively and openly breaking God's commandments, and you cannot expect His blessing. Besides the evil it is to yourself, it is setting a bad example, and we are all answerable for this."

“Oh, it is not the likes of us people would take example from,” said Anne; “though I know it is a sin in us - I always said so.” And she cried again.

“Well, but if you really think that it is wrong, do not do it. Begin at once; it may be hard, but pray humbly that God will help you, and you will be able to resist the temptation. I am sure you have been taught your duty: your manners and appearance, and that of your children, told me at once that you had been taught. Surely you did not keep Sunday thus at home?”

“Oh la! no, sir - God forbid! But oh, that was all different; every body went to church, and bought things on Saturday; and the bells rung, and seemed to tell us it was Sunday. Oh, I wish we were back again!”

“There are no bells, it is true,” said Mr. Martin. “In this new country much is wanting that we are used to at home; but it only makes it the more necessary that each be more careful of himself, and pay even greater respect to the Sabbath. We can all, even the poorer, contribute to this. We can all observe the Sabbath, and try to pray in church, as God has commanded; and many can lay by out of the store which God gives them, to help towards erecting real churches, and having bells. But I will call again; I see a customer waiting. Good morning.”

“Good morning sir, and thank you,” said Anne, and, after serving the young woman who had just come in, she thought over all Mr. Martin had said. She felt it was all true, every word; her old mother's words too came back, and going into her little bedroom, she knelt down and begged God to forgive her and help her to be better. She found it was not so easy to pray as it used to be; she had forgotten the prayers. Ever since Sunday had not been regularly kept, she had become less regular in her own daily prayers. She left it to chance; when she thought she had time she said a prayer; but very often she passed the day without. Now, she could only remember the Lord's prayer, but she repeated it several times, and then she began to resolve to keep Sunday. But the great difficulty lay in persuading her husband. However, he was very kind to her and always seemed to take her opinion, so she determined to try and not be discouraged.

Accordingly, that evening, when Tom was making up his accounts, and seemed pleased at finding a good round sum was coming to him, he said, “Come Anne, what's the matter? I declare you're as blank as November - you shall have a new bonnet by Christmas as I'm alive; and we'll have roast beef and a bottle of Ale, and I wish old mother was just here to share.”

“Oh Tom, that word is a dagger to me; poor mother what would she say to see us so? don't you think, Tom, that now we could do without serving

customers on the Sunday ?”

“Why I thought you'd as good as forgotten that;” said Tom, “you know we do more business Sunday morning than any other day in the week.”

Anne then repeated all that Mr. Martin had said, and added “She was sure that, though they were richer, they had not been happier; and that they both felt weary and worn out on a Monday morning, instead of rested as they used to be at home: Besides,” added she, “I'm willing to try and make good the loss; I can take in a bit of washing; I can do clear starching as poor mother shewed me, and can make a penny by it.”

“Well, well, do it if you like, but see if we don't lose our custom; but do as you will.”

CHAPTER VI.

THE next day Anne told every one who came to the shop that she intended to take in clear starching; and when Saturday night came she began to feel rather nervous and ridgetty. She put away all she could; hid the scales and weights, and removed as much as she could out of sight.

Tom looked on at these preparations rather gloomily; but Anne took courage and went on. She took out their Sunday clothes all in readiness as she used to do, and though tired when she went to bed late that night she felt lighter at heart than she had for some time. But when we have allowed ourselves to do wrong for any time, we must not expect that it will be easy and smooth for us to alter just when we please. It will be hard at first, nor shall we feel always that peace which the consciousness of doing right is expected to bring. This is our punishment, and we should receive it humbly.

The next morning Anne shut the door, and dressed herself and children for church. Soon came a dirty ragged little girl for a pound of candles. “The shop is not open to day my dear,” said Anne quite boldly; and she could not help feeling how much better it was to have one's children clean and neat as her own were.

So far it was well, and little Johnny sat down and began saying over the commandments which he was learning for school.

Then came a knock at the door. “See who it is Tom,” said Anne, who was in the bed-room tying on her bonnet. “It's Mrs. Harris, that's who 'tis better not offend her mind - she's out and out our best customer; always pays regular, and has long bills.” Anne fidgetted at her bonnet strings. “Oh dear, dear, what shall I do, there she's knocking again, do speak to her, Tom.” “Mrs. Thompson,” called Mrs. Harris, “are you in?” “Yes,” said Ann, stepping forward, “but, but - ” “Why where are you going, hey ? come, be

quick, I want a lot of things to-day.”

Tom went into the bed-room: he had promised Anne she should do as she liked; but he could not stand this.

“We have determined to shut up shop Sundays,” said Anne timidly, “I was just going to church.”

“To church! shut up shop ! you astonish me! are you mad, woman? do you mean to lose all your business, just because you want to be my lady?”

“No, ” said Anne, “not to be a lady, but to go to church.”

“Hoity toity, heard I ever the like;” and Mrs. Harris laughed loud and rudely: she looked red and angry too.

“Well, Mrs. Thompson, as you like; but I'm not going to be insulted: if you choose to refuse to serve me, you know what you lose. I consider I've been a pretty good customer, and this is what I call downright uncivil.”

Here Tom put out his head, and with an expressive gesture, intimated his wishes to Anne.

Poor Anne! she stood in perplexity. It was a dear loss indeed if Mrs. Harris left them; her resolution began to waver; she was going on towards the counter, when, as she passed her children as they sat on the bench, she heard John saying to himself, “Remember that thou keep holy the sabbath day, &c.” Then, quick as lightning came back her old mother's words; she could almost fancy she saw her standing before her. Had Anne refused to listen to her conscience then, it is awful to think what might have been the consequence; but she did listen: her little boy's voice, “Remember the sabbath day,” rang in her ears; she stopped. “I'm very sorry, I hope you'll not take it ill in me, Mrs. Harris, but I cannot serve on Sundays any more.”

The effort of saying this brought the colour into Anne's face - Mrs. Harris flounced out of the shop - Tom swore that her cursed nonsense had ruined them - and poor Anne sank on the bench in a flood of tears. Tom refused to go to church, so she set off very sorrowfully with the children. Mr. Martin was not there, so she had not even the comfort of feeling that he would observe she had minded his advice. The day was spent sadly, and Anne felt that it is far more difficult to climb up the hill again, after slipping down, than to go on steadily every day.

CHAPTER VII.

The following week, Anne secretly hoped, would bring Mr. Martin; she felt it would be a comfort; but he did not come, and she had a great deal to bear from the remarks made by idle gossiping persons; for Mrs. Harris had taken care to spread the story, and every one wanted to know about it. Some turned up their noses and talked of hypocrisy, and trying to appear

better than other folks, and some said it was only just laziness, that she might take holiday on Sunday.

Tom still seemed annoyed, and one day after meeting Mrs. Harris coming out of another store, and being abused by her in no measured terms, he said he could stand it no longer and they must leave the place; he had no idea of being laughed at or pointed at.

Poor Anne! all this was very trying, and she almost felt inclined to give up the point, but just then she caught sight of the Prayer Book as it lay on the shelf, and that brought in thoughts which drove the others out. As far as she could reckon up there would be a great loss this week; so she determined to go and apply to Mrs. Jenkins for fine washing. Her application was successful; she had a few things to try how she could do it, and she was obliged to rise earlier in the morning in order to get them done.

When Saturday evening came she put on her bonnet, and went round to some of the neighbours and asked if they should be wanting tea, sugar, or candies, as, if they did, she would weigh it out, and send it down, for the shop would be shut on Sunday. One or two said if it was shut on Sunday they could go elsewhere, but others said they should be much obliged for her to send it down that evening: and the parcels came so neatly tied, and such good weight, that they declared after all Anne Thompson was a decent little woman, and civil and honest; and they didn't care if they *had* got all in before Sunday - it was more comfortable like - and then when they found they had not to go to the shop, they had more time on the Sunday, and nothing to think of, and some of them went to church.

This Sunday no one came but some strange man, to the shop, and Anne's earnings by her washing nearly made up the loss of the other Sunday customers; so Tom was in a better humour, and went with her to church.

Mr. Martin was there, and preached on the duty of keeping the sabbath. Anne and Tom both listened eagerly.

When he summed up the vices, and consequences that usually attended sabbath breaking, Anne trembled. She joined heartily in the prayer after the sermon, "That the words she had heard that day might bring forth in her the fruit of good living," &c.

CHAPTER VIII.

ANNE and her husband were now very regular attendants at church. Christmas came, Anne had not her new bonnet. They were not so rich as they might have been, had Mrs. Harris and the others continued to deal with them; but the little cottage looked cleaner, and more comfortable: they

had their baked beef for dinner; and as they took a stroll in the evening together they both acknowledged that it was well to have one day in seven to rest, and to be able to read the Bible, and hear good things in church. "The thoughts last out the week," said Anne. "Yes, I often think of them when I'm digging," said Tom: "the other day, when I was pruning Mr. Short's vines, I minded what the parson said about the vine on Sunday that as we pruned the plants there was finer fruit, so it was with us - we must prune ourselves, and cut away all that grows out wildly like."

As they were talking, a man came up, and asked if they were called Thompson, and, on being informed they were, he said he supposed this letter was for them, he had just arrived from England, and had brought it from Mr. King of Ringford. "Ah that's our clerk, and that's from mother," said Anne.

The letter was written by the clerk; it was to tell them that good nurse Gordon had quietly and peacefully breathed her last; that she sent them her last blessing, and left them her Bible, and what little clothes she possessed.

Upon comparing notes, Anne found that her mother had died on the very day on which Mr. Martin called, and spoke to her about shutting up the shop on a Sunday. She felt very glad she had by God's grace profited by this visit. She looked upon it as an especial warning of a watchful Providence, and she never afterwards felt tempted to break the Fourth Commandment.

This performing one duty helped her on to many others. Going to church opened her mind to other faults, and it brought a blessing which the world and its riches could neither give nor take away.

They had trials and disappointments, but they knew from whom they came; and Tom and Anne lived to see their children turn out well. No cottage so clean and neat as the Thompsons, with its gay little flower border before it. The shop continued to support them, and they put into the plate at church every week something towards a real church, and, as Anne hoped, a peal of bells.

Mr. Martin had often called, and proved a good friend to them. One day when he was observing how much more comfortable and tidy every thing was about them than in the other cottages, and how much more leisure they seemed to have; Anne colored up and said "Ah sir, it is you, next to God and my poor mother, we've to thank. It is all owing to keeping the Sabbath day."

Readers go and do likewise.

HANNAH AND ANNE SANDFORD;

or, THE QUICK AND THE SLOW GIRL

“O perfect pattern from above
So strengthen us, that ne'er
Prayer keep us back from works of love
Nor works of love from prayer.”

CHAPTER I.

HANNAH AND ANNE SANDFORD were the daughters of a small settler in this country. Their brother David, who was fourteen years old, assisted his father in the farm. Hannah was twelve and Anne eleven. They were old enough to be useful at home, in minding the younger children, or attending to the dairy and pigs; but their parents were good kind of people, and were willing to sacrifice this for the sake of their attending the Church School. John Sandford, the father, had given his portion towards building the School-house, and he felt interested in it; and on a Sunday morning he sometimes walked down and heard Mr. Neville the clergyman catechise the children, and explain the Epistle and Gospel for the day. He was a plain, honest man; he had not grown quite so rich as many others, but that was because he could never find it in his heart to ask more than the right value for an article: he was no great hand at making a bargain. He worked hard all the week; but on Saturday night he laid aside work, and anxious thoughts about his crops and cattle, just as he laid aside his working-clothes; and on Sunday, Sandford came out in his coat and white trowsers, and a heart that felt glad and at peace. He was always to be seen in his accustomed corner in church, and his conduct while there was very different from some others, who seemed to come only to look about them during the prayers; and then, if the sermon chanced to hit their fancy, listen to it as a matter of curiosity.

Sandford often wished that he could persuade his wife to accompany him, or he offered to take it by turns to stay at home and let her come. But Anne Sandford was one of those busy, bustling, thrifty women, who give themselves no time for thought; she said that it “was impossible for her to go to church.” She thought her whole duty consisted in making the most of everything, keeping her house clean, and everything polished and bright. She often blamed her husband for neglecting to turn a penny when he might have done so. And very proud was she of the sum her butter and eggs and poultry brought her in.

Now all this was praiseworthy and right. It is right to be saving and thrifty, and neat and clean, and, for many persons, it is right to work hard and have little time for quiet; but it is *not* right to set our hearts upon these things - it is very dangerous to do so.

The cares of this world are apt to choke the good seed which was planted in our hearts at Baptism, just in the same way as weeds in our garden destroy the seed we have put into the ground. We ought to try to balance our duties, that is, not to be so intent upon being neat and thrifty, as to forget the other duty of prayer and thoughts of God; nor to be so fond of thinking and being quiet, as to make us forget our daily duties and to be active and industrious.

Those who have the care of a family and farm upon them have necessarily much to do. Their appointed task is to be industrious and active; they have not so much time for reading the Bible and thinking, as single persons - or old people, or those who by weak health are shut out from hard work. But let them beware of making the world their idol -of forgetting God.

One day in every seven is mercifully set apart for the benefit of all. Every one may, on the Lord's day, go to church, and leave off from the busy duties of the week.

What did our Saviour say to Martha? She was cumbered about much serving; she was desirous to have everything neat and nice for her Divine Master: it was her duty, as mistress of the house, to attend to these things. But our Lord knew the danger of it, and he said to her kindly, but in a warning manner, "Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things; but one thing is needful."

CHAPTER II.

Now, having told you something of the parents, I must turn to Hannah and Anne.

Hannah was tall of her age; she had dark brown eyes and hair, and was rather pale. She was slow and quiet in all her ways, very timid in manner, and preferred sitting under a tree, doing nothing, to playing about: she was of an humble temper, and was very fond of those about her. Her younger brothers and sisters liked her better than Anne, though she was not so gay and cheerful with them; but she was never cross or passionate, and never spoke quickly or roughly to them: her fault seemed to be indolence. She was not very quick at learning, but it was a great pleasure to her; and she liked listening to Mr. Neville better than anything else. Often it brought tears into her eyes as he talked kindly, but gravely to them, about their

different faults. She felt then that she was very wrong in many things: she felt undeserving of any blessing; and so she went on, *feeling* and *thinking*, till she quite forgot to act.

Anne was the opposite to her sister; her blue eyes always looked merry. She was always singing, and was as active and quick in her motions as Hannah was slow: she was clever, too, and learnt very fast. Her mother always praised Anne very much; she was quite in her way - a smart, light girl, who would do an hour's work, while Hannah stood and thought about it. Sometimes Anne was quick and cross in her temper, but she never thought much of this; she always excused herself by saying, "It was soon over, and it was enough to provoke her if any thing went wrong."

From doing so much more than Hannah, she was much more like the eldest sister; and, by degrees, Anne had come to value herself and her services very highly, and to look down upon Hannah as a poor, spiritless creature. And so, I believe, did her mother; but her father encouraged Hannah, and said "she would do by-and-by, and that she was a good child, and very obedient and dutiful."

When this was said, it always brought tears into Hannah's eyes. She felt very grateful to her father, and wished to show it. It made her very happy for the moment to think that her father loved her; but then, half-an-hour afterwards, instead of busying herself about something that would please her parents, and trying to throw off her slow way, she would sit and think to herself, "Ah! Father only said this out of kindness; he did not mean it *really*. No one *can* like me, such a poor silly creature!" And then she made herself quite miserable with her thoughts, whereas she ought to have been grateful for having what she felt she didn't quite deserve: she ought to have been cheerful, and have begun at once to try and conquer her faults, which weighed so heavily on her.

CHAPTER III.

ONE day that Mr. Neville rode by Sandford's house, Mrs. Sandford complained a great deal of Hannah's indolence. She said that she was so unhandy about everything, and so slow, that it was less trouble to do it herself.

"I am very sorry to hear this," said Mr. Neville, "I thought that Hannah was a dutiful child."

"She's not to say undutiful, sir, neither," said Mrs. Sandford; "she never gives me a pert word, and always does just as she's bid. I've nothing to complain of in her conduct or temper; but she'll be fit for nothing if

she grows up so slow and sawny like.”

When Mr. Neville reached the school, he gave his horse to one of the boys to hold, and then took his seat in the great chair.

After some questions were asked of the master, he told the children to open their Bibles, and read the 10th verse of the 9th chapter of Ecclesiastes. “Hannah Sandford, do you read it,” said Mr. Neville; and she read it. He then talked to them a great deal about this verse, and told them how necessary it was to remember this : - To do everything as well as we can; to do it *heartily*, as unto God - not in a *half* way, lazily and indifferently, but as if our performing this duty, be it ever so trifling, was to show how real and earnest we are in our desire to be good. Much more he said, which I cannot repeat here. He did not allude to any one particularly by name, but Hannah applied it all to herself: she knew that her fault was not doing things with all her might. She thought they were very beautiful words, and that she should always remember them. Anne, too, thought that it was suitable to Hannah, and she felt proud that it was not for herself.

That evening when they returned home, Anne was quicker than ever; she laid out the tea-things, and made up the fire, and swept the ashes away, and began brightening the metal tea-spoons, all the time feeling how good and useful she was, and despising Hannah for being so different.

Mrs. Sandford said “There's Anne, as usual, always busy and putting things to rights, and Hannah I suppose is doing nothing.”

Hannah was sitting in the corner behind the door, out of sight, and she was intent on darning some stockings, which she knew that her mother wished to be done. She said nothing; she felt she deserved all her mother said, but she wished very much to do better, and she worked very busily till tea time. After tea she took up the cups, intending to wash them, but Anne snatched them from her, and said “Oh la! let them alone, you are so slow, I'll do them while you are looking at them.” Hannah was sorry and hurt, for she had begun to try and do better. This checked her, and answering nothing, she walked outside the hut and sat upon a log. Here with her hands on her face and elbows on her knees, she sat. She looked up to see the sun go down; and then the white clouds with their bright pink edges, and the soft colour of the sky, made her look longer. “Oh! how glorious, how beautiful,” thought she; and then the verses in the Psalms came into her head, which spoke of the sun: “In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun, which cometh forth as a bridegroom out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a giant to run his course. It goeth forth from the uttermost part of the heaven, and runneth about unto the end of it again; and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof.”

The pleasure which this bright and glorious scene gave her, reminded her of Mr. Neville. Whenever he spoke of serious things, or whenever she heard him in church, Hannah felt the same kind of pleasure, the awe and the admiration, which it now gave her to see the sun set. It was in Hannah's nature to look up to people and to cling to them, very much as the creepers we see, throw their long tendrils round a tree, or a fence, or anything which can support them. She sat a long time thinking of Mr. Neville, and of all the good words she had heard from him; and then the advice which he had given them that very day came into her head, and as her tears flowed, she resolved to persevere and try to mend - to try to be more industrious and active, like Anne.

CHAPTER IV.

NEXT Sunday was the first Sunday in Lent; and Mr. Neville explained to them what Lent was, and why our Church has appointed it to be kept. That, as our Saviour for forty days retired into the wilderness and fasted, and became subject to temptation, that we might follow His example; so we ought to fast, and watch, and pray. We ought to humble ourselves, and examine our hearts, and try to correct whatever is wrong; that when the great festival of Easter draws nigh, - that day on which Our Saviour rose from the dead, and ascended into heaven - we may be able to rejoice and have hope in His resurrection; and be able, with clean hearts and subdued tempers, to partake of the Lord's Supper, which is offered to every one on that day.

No one can properly and wholly rejoice in Easter, who has not in some way striven to take up his cross during Lent - who has not in some especial manner denied himself, and, in thoughts, accompanied our Lord through the period of His sufferings whilst on earth.

Mr. Neville spoke a great deal about self-denial - denying ourselves in little things - seeking to please others rather than ourselves - denying ourselves in our pleasures as well as in our food. He said that even children could do this. God gave every one of us many opportunities for denying ourselves. The withstanding any particular temptation watching ourselves strictly not to run in the way of temptation - setting a watch on our words, and even our thoughts - bearing with other people's temper - submitting to be found fault with, when we feel we do not quite deserve it, and not indulging in any favorite habits. All this was a way of taking up the cross, and denying one's self. He hoped they would all try to do this, and then Lent would not have been in vain to them: and he hoped they should all be able to rejoice together at Easter.

Before the School broke up that day, he mentioned that he wished them all, if possible, to wear their new frocks, which they had been saving money for, on Easter Sunday. He liked the old custom of putting on new and best clothes on that day; and he hoped they would all make their frocks themselves, which would prove them not to have been idle.

From school they all went to church, and then returned to their respective homes. There was only one service at this church, as Mr. Neville had to go and do duty at some distant place besides. The Sandfords' home was full two miles from church; it was a pleasant walk, almost all the way through the bush; and now that it was not hot weather they enjoyed it. Hannah was inclined to linger and enjoy the green look of everything, or to pick some of the blossoms which grew in the way; but Anne did not care for all this, she wanted to be back she said. Hannah recollected what she had just heard about self-denial, and she began to walk on so fast that Anne was quite out of breath, and wondered what had come over Hannah. "Oh," said she to herself, "she is thinking about her new frock, and she's afraid that may be mother'll let me choose instead of her."

In the evening Sandford told the girls they might take a walk with him to a neighbour's if they liked it; but Mrs. Sandford said the calves must be fetched in first. Anne was very anxious to see Jane Grove, to whose house her father was going, so she said "Oh, never mind the calves, I'll put them up when I come back."

Hannah liked a walk with her father on a Sunday evening better than any thing, but she recollected about "self-denial;" so she took off her bonnet and put it away, and begun tying on her blue pinafore. "So you're not going this evening?" said her father. "La, no," returned Mrs. Sandford, "she's too lazy, she'd rather sit on a log and gaze at the stars or the sky any day."

Nothing more was said. Anne, the two younger children, and their father, set off; and when they were out of sight, Hannah went out to drive the cows in. This was a matter of some difficulty to her; as fast as she got the calves in, they ran out again before she could get the slip rails up. At length in running very fast after one, she stumbled over a log, and tore her frock and pinafore sadly - meanwhile all the other calves scampered off. Mrs. Sandford coming out, said, "well, how mortal clumsy you are to be sure! such a difference between two girls in the same family! why Anne would have had them in in five minutes."

Mrs. Sandford now went after them herself; and Hannah sat down with the baby, thoroughly convinced she was a most unfortunate clumsy little girl. The baby was rather cross, and Hannah had to walk about with it, and do all sorts of things to amuse it: at last it was tired out, and Hannah laid it in the cradle; and then she sat down by it, and began her favorite custom of

thinking.

That night Hannah felt more cheerful and happy than usual. This was because she had really, and in good earnest, tried to conquer herself. She kept this up in little things every day: sometimes she forgot herself, but never for long; and, as she was always in the habit of adding the Sunday's collect to her other prayer, this brought back the remembrance that it was "Lent" every morning and evening.

CHAPTER V.

As it drew towards Easter, there was some consultation about the new frocks. Mrs. Sandford, who had a very good taste, had chosen some neat grey stuffs which would be serviceable through the winter, but she did not buy them; she wished the girls to go to the store and get them for themselves.

Anne, however, thought that grey would look too plain by the side of Jane Grove's smart silk dress, and she chose a bright green instead. Hannah did not go with Anne the day she bought hers; she happened to be busy, and she thought that a day's delay made no difference.

That evening Anne was busy cutting out her frock: her mother called to her, "Anne, put away your best bonnet;" but Anne was eager and interested in what she was doing, and did not move. Meanwhile the puppy found its way into the bedroom, seized the bonnet, and very quietly amused himself with pulling it to pieces.

When Anne looked up from her work and saw that the puppy had something playing with, she ran to take it from him. "Goodness me, he's got my bonnet, my best bonnet; he's torn it to bits; Oh, what shall I do!" and then she kicked the puppy and sent it off howling. Her mother was very angry, and said it was her own fault, for being so careless to leave it out; "if it had been Hannah I should'nt have so much wondered, but for you who are so neat and careful, I must say 'tis too bad."

Anne cried bitterly, and her mother said that she would have to wear her old shabby bonnet to church, or not go at all, for she had no money to buy her another. "Only to think of that nice new frock, and that old burnt brown bonnet." said Anne, sobbing; "I'll not go at all, I should be right down ashamed." Hannah, who had come into the room, was very sorry for Anne: she thought it an unfortunate accident, because Anne was always so very careful; and then, only this once she left it out and it was spoilt. Hannah was going to the store this evening to choose her gown, and she was to bring home some groceries for her mother. While she was waiting for the woman to take down the grey stuff, her eye rested on a row of nice

straw bonnets. "I wish Anne could have one of these," thought she. When the woman turned round she enquired the price of them, and found that it was two shillings less than what she had for the gown. "The money is all my own," said she; "father said I might do as I liked with it: I can do without a new frock; a clean white pinafore will hide its shabbiness; I don't mind these things so much as Anne: she's got the character for being so neat and tidy, 'twill vex her sadly to wear that dirty bonnet, and no one will notice it in me." As these thoughts ran through her head, the grey stuff was put upon the counter: it was very pretty, very tempting, just, the color that would please Mr. Neville; but she pushed it aside, and begged to see the bonnets: and, choosing a nice one, she pinned it carefully up in her handkerchief, and without taking another look at the pretty grey stuff, she took her mother's parcel and walked towards home.

They were all very busy, attending to a foal which had in some way injured itself, when she arrived. No questions were asked about the gown; and Hannah carefully hid her treasure, intending to choose a good time for surprising her sister. Two days after this, Mr. Sandford said, "Hannah what is become of your frock? I hav'nt seen you working at it; you'll be behind hand as usual." "I did not buy any," said Hannah. "Not buy any! well, what vagary is this? I thought you always wished to please Mr. Neville. I suppose it is old tricks again, to avoid the trouble of sewing at it." Hannah did not like to say what she had done, it looked like boasting, so she did not make any answer; but when Anne began the subject again as they were going to bed, Hannah said, rather quickly, "It is not from laziness." Then she recollected about selfdenial, and was sorry for being hurt and annoyed. She wished to take out the bonnet and show it at once to Anne, but she thought, "No, I've been angry; I will deny myself to-night." So she merely begged Anne not to think it was laziness, and she should know the reason soon. She went to bed.

CHAPTER VI.

THE next day was Good Friday, and going to school and church occupied Hannah's thought so much, that she, for a time, forgot all about the bonnet. On this solemn day she attended more than she had perhaps ever done to the prayers. Her daily practice of watching herself, and trying to deny herself, which she had now kept up since Lent began, helped her on this day to feel all that Mr. Neville had said more deeply. And as they walked home, thinking of the sermon which was adapted to the day, she felt grave and thoughtful. She fancied she had better put off showing the bonnet till to-morrow: it did not seem suitable just then to

introduce the subject.

In the evening, her father desired the girls to repeat, as well as they could, all Mr. Neville had said to them in school, for he was not able to go from home so early today. Hannah remembered nearly every word, but she was timid, and shrunk from repeating what appeared to her so good and beautiful. Seeing her hesitation, Anne began; and, as she too had a good memory, she gave very tolerably the substance of all their good minister had said. "Well now, I should like to have that down in writing," said their father, when Anne had ended. "Hannah, you are the best and quickest writer, try what you can do." Hannah obeyed very cheerfully: she wrote a very good, free hand, and finished her task before bed-time.

"Thank you, my dear," said her father; "I thought you knew all about it as well as Anne." "Why, she's just heard me repeat it, hasn't she?" said Anne, who had been so long accustomed to receive praise, that she was jealous of losing any. "Aye, so she has; but her words are not quite like yours, Anne: and there's some good things here which you didn't mention. I'm thinking this is most nigh Mr. Neville's explanation, after all." Hannah went to bed very happy: she was glad to have pleased her father; and she was looking forward to the next morning with great pleasure. She kept awake till she saw Anne was asleep, and then she pinned the bonnet to the curtain by Anne's side.

CHAPTER VII.

OF course Anne was much surprised and much delighted when she saw the nice new bonnet, and heard it was for her. She was a little uncomfortable, however; for she felt it would be right to say how she got the bonnet, that it might account for Hannah's having no frock; and then she knew that it must bring out the story of her own carelessness and untidiness which occasioned the destruction of her other bonnet. Anne was very proud of being regularly neat and tidy: she liked being thought so by others. She trusted too much to her own strength, and wanted humility. She was careful and tidy, not so much because it was right to be so in the sight of God, but to be seen of men, to obtain credit and praise; and she had gone on so long in this bad, dangerous habit, that she did many little mean things rather than lose a word of praise it made her jealous too. She knew and felt that, it was a very kind thing of Hannah to give her this bonnet - that it was very generous of her; but she did not like that any one should do better than herself: so these bad feelings prevented her from thanking Hannah very heartily. Hannah, however, did not notice this; for she knew that she always found it very difficult to thank people when they

were kind: she judged Anne by herself. Nothing was said about the bonnet that day. Anne did not mention the subject even to her mother; and of course Hannah did not. The next morning, Anne came down dressed in her new green gown. Her mother remarked her bonnet, and when she heard about it she said, "Well, it was kind, to be sure, in Hannah; but she was always kindly natured, and it was more the pity she was so dull and slow." Sandford said, "She is a good girl; and I dare say this gives her as much pleasure as a new frock." Anne didn't half like all this, but she had expected more to be said about it. Hannah thought it was quite enough, and drew her father's attention to Anne's frock: it looked very pretty and was nicely made, for Anne was clever at her needle. "Well, I'm glad you've got green," said Sandford. "Easter always falls in Spring in England, and then everything is green. I've often missed it here; for the young green leaves and buds seemed to be rising out of death, and spoke words to us as well as the Prayer Book." Hannah felt this was a very good thought, and she kept it in her mind as she walked to school. This made her forget her shabby frock entirely; nor did the recollection of it return, till Mr. and Mrs. Neville began to remark and praise some of the other girls. They both said Anne's was very pretty and made very neatly, and they were glad to see she was so industrious. When it came to Hannah's turn, she kept rather behind the others. She blushed up, for she thought Anne would say *why* Hannah had no frock; and Hannah was as shy of public praise as Anne was fond of it.

"Well, Hannah, no new frock?" said Mr. Neville; "how is this?" "But she looks so neat and clean with that white pinafore," said Mrs. Neville, kindly, "that she does as well without it; no doubt she had some good reason for it." Nothing further was said. Anne and Hannah both felt relieved, though from different causes; and the usual duties of the school were attended to.

Lent had now passed away, but the advantages and blessings of it did not pass away in those who had tried to keep it well.

Hannah did not give up her attempts to conquer her faults; from that time forth she persevered, till at last no one - not even her mother, could find fault with her for want of industry. She never could be quite as quick as Anne, but she made up for it by being more steady and pains-taking. She still loved to sit and watch the sun, or to think of Mr. Neville, or of any good and glorious thing she had ever heard of; but she did not often indulge herself. And by degrees she found that, even when most busy, pleasant and good thoughts stole in; and she was far more cheerful now that she tried to mend in earnest, instead of only thinking about it.

I am sorry to say that Anne's faults were not so easily corrected. The

great reason was, that she had never felt herself to be very wrong; she had trusted to herself; she had been vain of her good qualities. When conscience told her that she ought, in fairness and truth, to have told every one of her sister's kindness, she stifled the still small voice, and afterwards it did not speak much. Jealousy and vanity and self-esteem grew upon her.

No wonder, then, that Anne did not improve, clever and quick as she was. And no wonder that Hannah did improve, though naturally slow and indolent; for God giveth grace unto the lowly.

RUTH WALSH

PART I

“Light are their steps, who in life's earliest dawn
The mountain-tops of heavenly life ascend,
Brushing the dew-drops from the spangled lawn;
Nor ever from the straighter path descend,
Fixing their eyes upon their journey's end;
Sweetest, best thoughts are theirs, such as have striven
With childhood, and with dawning conscience blend,
To flee all other love but that of Heaven,
Ere weigh'd to earth with sin and much to be forgiven.”

CHAPTER I.

One evening at the end of November, a bullock team was seen slowly making its way over the rough and dusty roads. It had been a very oppressive day and the poor bullocks seemed to sink under their load. By the side of the dray, walked a young man and a young woman. An elderly female sat on the top of the load and appeared faint and worn. The loud smack of the drayman's whip was heard for a long way through the bush, and then his loud rough voice, sometimes encouraging them on with, “gee up Blossom -- come up Daisy,” or more often, I am sorry to say, he swore at them in shocking language, for cattle drivers say that bullocks mind nothing but an oath, and will not stir unless they are spoken to in a passion.

But has any drayman ever patiently tried to do without this? I fear not. I fear that the Third Commandment is often broken by them; and when the time comes that man shall be judged for every idle word he has spoken, it will be no excuse that bullocks are obstinate and lazy.

“This is a weary journey Dick,” said the young woman, “my legs ache and my head throbs, and mother too seems quite ill.”

“ 'Tis mighty hot to be sure,” said the young man, “I'm very dry - I wish I had got a pint of the good old ale of the Blue Dragon, I know.”

“Sure, there's tea for you Dick; now don't pray don't be casting a backward look at the Ale-house. God knows I and mother would never have been so easily led to follow you, but for the hope that you would learn to forget all that. But, see! there's smoke yonder, I wonder if we are come nigh the place!”

“Now then for it Daisy!” hollowed the drayman, “Now then sweetheart,” said he, as he stopped and stood before Ruth Walsh, “Now we're come to Manley's run; see there's the blacksmith's hut.”

“Manley!” repeated Ruth, “sure is he not a gentleman?”

“Aye truly he is my dear,” answered the drayman, “and mighty rich too; why, he can't count his cattle and horses, to say nothing of sheep, and a fine estate he has got besides.”

“Are not gentlemen called ‘Mr.’ here then?” timidly asked Ruth.

“Ha ha! he, he, he!” shouted the drayman; “Ye're a fresh one and no mistake; why darling in this country we're all gentlemen; we don't think of ‘Misters’ and titles d'ye see! we all get good pay and there's no need for bowing and curtsyng, Sirring and Ma'aming; we servants are great folks out here and I advise you my dear, to speak up more and forget your English manners, unless you mean to be the laugh of the whole settlement, - but, here we are let down the slip rails Dick.”

The dray now entered into a sort of rough paddock, round which stood some dozen bark huts, roughly put up. A little further on, was the farm and stock-yard, and beyond that, was seen a house, with a long sloping roof and deep verandah.

“That's the Master's house,” said the drayman, pointing, “and this is our place, you'll have your hut appointed you presently, for the overseer is a coming I see; that's his cottage;” and he directed Ruth's attention to a slab hut, with a little paling round it. A rough verandah and a few geraniums and roses round it, gave it a snugger and more habitable look than the others, which poor Ruth thought looked more like cow-sheds or pig-sties, than dwellings for human beings. But she gave up gazing in wonder at this, her new home, in order to attend to her old mother, who was lifted off the dray and seemed more dead than alive, with all the jolting and heat of the four day's journey from Sydney.

CHAPTER II.

MRS. WALSH, was a widow. She had but two children alive, Dick and Ruth.

The former had been taught a Wheelright's trade, but he had not been very steady in England; he had loved the good ale and jolly company at the Blue Dragon too well.

He had determined to emigrate in order to make, as he hoped, a large fortune; and after much thought, and many tears at leaving her native village, his mother consented to accompany him.

Her daughter Ruth, gave up her situation as housemaid in Mr. Benson the

Clergyman's family, and determined to share her mother's lot. She was a gentle modest looking girl, and had been a great favorite with her Master and Mistress. She had never before left the village of Fairfield, except once a year to visit the neighbouring market town; so that every thing seemed new to her and wondrous strange. The blunt manners of every one she saw in New South Wales struck her very much, and often she wondered what Mr. Benson would say to the disrespectful way in which the lower orders treated those in any way above them. She had learnt in her Catechism, to behave "lowly and reverently to all her betters;" and she understood enough of the Bible, to know that humility is one of the chief Christian graces. Alas! how many, like Ruth Walsh, have learnt their Catechism and have been taught to read the Bible, and yet at the first temptation give way. Just because they see others behave rudely and uncourteously they do so too. They forget that, "out of the heart the mouth speaketh," and that they who so easily throw off a respectful manner, disdain to use "Sir" and "Ma'am," or to show any deference to those above them, will very soon *be so in heart*. And this is plainly forgetting our Saviour's example, and acting contrary to the whole spirit of a Christian.

While Dick was speaking to the overseer, Ruth carried their things into the little hut which had been assigned them. She first put up her mother's bed that she might lie down and rest: but the floor looked so uncomfortable and dirty that she wanted a broom; and seeing two or three females standing outside one of the other huts, she ran across and asked them if they would be so kind as to lend her one. The eldest, who seemed to be the mother of the two others, went in and brought her one, while the two girls stared at her in a rude way. One would have thought that, as they were standing idle, they might have offered to help her to make a fire, or fill her kettle or something, as she was a stranger and had just come off a long journey but this did not enter into their heads.

CHAPTER III.

THESE two girls were called Betsy and Jane Brown, and their father was a laborer on the farm, while their mother did the washing, in which they helped her; but they were not well brought up.

The next morning one of the servants from the house, came with a message about the clothes; and the following conversation took place. "I say Mary, have you seen the girl that comed with the drays?" said Betsy.

"Yes, and that I have," answered Mary, "she has been speaking to the Mistress for this half-hour - a comely girl she is too."

"Well now, I wonder what they're speaking about! May be she'll have

some sewing given her, she looked very smart I thought last night coming off a journey - if you'll believe me, not a stitch out of place," said Betsy.

"O," cried Jane, "she's a regular prim one, I'd lay a wager; - she looks as if she's afraid to say "bo to a goose."

"Well," returned Mary, "I can't call her smart; - to my thinking she's neat looking but quite plain, just as my old Mistress in England used to try to make us dress; but it looks queer and old fashioned here, and I cannot fall into it somehow."

Just then, a young man passed. He was riding a colt, and seeing Mary standing at the door of Sally Brown's hut, he reined up, and putting his hat a little on one side, bid her "good morning."

"O! how hot it is Jack," said Betsy, as she threw back her long untidy hair which was half down her shoulders. "Where are you going?"

"No where in particular," said Jack, "but I have just seen the prettiest girl in the settlement; - why, to see her tight heels and smooth hair, is quite a treat after your's and Jane rough heads."

"O, Jack, Jack!" said the mother who had come outside to hang up some clothes to dry, "it won't do for poor folks to bestow so much time and thought on their persons. She'll not make a good poor man's wife, who is so particular about her hair."

"Why as for that matter," said Jack, "I'd bet something that Ruth what's her name, would not be so long as some folks I know of, putting on her Sunday bonnet and gown. I went to tell her the Missis wished to speak with her, and just tying on her bonnet she was ready in an instant; and that's more than you'd be with your rags and tags, but I must be off; Good bye."

"Well sure," said Betsy, "this is mighty fine; new brooms sweep clean, but I'm not to be put down for a prim methodistical thing like that; just wait till she's been in the country a few months, and then see." "To be sure," said Jane.

"Well then, you'll let us have these table-cloths in an hour or so, will you? and I must be off. Don't be jealous Betsy," said Mary, as she turned to go home.

"Jealous, indeed," said Betsy, with a toss of her head. "I hope I know better."

CHAPTER IV.

As Mary walked back she met Ruth Walsh, who had been speaking to Mrs. Manley about doing the needlework of the family. Mary could not help giving a long look at her after all that had passed. Ruth wore a dark

cotton gown, made very plainly, but fitting nicely; a clean white apron, and white muslin handkerchief showing above the gown, which used to be the fashion a few years ago, looked very nice: her hair was, as Jack had said, remarkably smooth, and was put back plain under a neatly quilled cap, which was set further on her head than one generally sees, and looked far more modest than when it is stuck on the back of the head, as if the wearer was ashamed of it. Jack was right too when he said she had a pair of tight heels; Ruth never could bear slipshod shoes and ragged stockings. Mary White, who was nurse-maid at Mrs. Manley's, could not help thinking that Ruth's appearance was far better than that of Jane and Betsy Brown; Mary sighed; for she thought of the time when she had dressed in that manner, six years ago, when she lived in Squire Jones's family: but since she had come out to this country, and always had good wages, she had left off this and many other habits. She liked to be neat and clean, but she liked to be smart too. On a Sunday, it was difficult to know which was the Mistress, and which the servant. Mary felt pleased and flattered when she heard herself called "*genteel* looking, and quite like a lady." She saw that every one else did, or tried to do the same; and she had almost forgotten what she used to be taught about it: but the sight of Ruth recalled some good advice which Mrs. Jones had given her about not being fond of dress, and not stepping out of the station in which God has placed us; and she recollected that her dress cost her a great deal of thought, as well as time and money. "The money was her own to be sure," thought she, "but the time; Is not that my Mistress"? how much more sewing could she not do for her Mistress if *all* her time was honestly spent in it; instead of picking her own sleeves to pieces to make them more in the fashion, and trimming her caps with bows.

All this came into Mary's head as she walked along: for many months, even years, these thoughts had been buried. Now the just seeing Ruth Walsh brought them back. Was this chance? No! It was ordered by an Almighty Providence, who often thus rules little things for us. When a good thought arises at hearing something said, or at seeing some person do right, it is not *chance*. It is the voice of God speaking to us. Never let us neglect it. We do not know that if we turn from it this time, we shall ever be permitted to hear it again!

CHAPTER V.

RUTH had agreed with Mrs. Manley to take her needlework. That lady, pleased with Ruth's appearance and respectful manners, asked her if she thought of going into service; but this Ruth declined, saying that her

mother was too weakly for her to leave her, but anything she could do at home, she should be most thankful to take.

Dick had agreed to work for Mr. Manley at so much a year, and he was to have double rations. But Ruth was anxious if possible to earn enough to buy her's and her mother's clothes. And she hoped that Dick would be steady, and put by a great part of his earnings, by the time he married.

It was on a Friday evening, that the Walsh's arrived at Mr. Manley's, and on the following Monday, they were each to begin their respective work. After seeing Mrs. Manley on the Saturday, Ruth busied herself in making their hut as neat as she could. She put up their trunks one on the top of another, and then covered them with a clean white cloth. Dick nailed in a rude shelf, on which she put her Bible and Prayer Book, and one or two other good books which her mistress had given her. There was no dresser, and no display of bright kettles and pans. They had only a boiler and some tin cans, such as they were directed to buy in Sydney for making tea. Two or three favorite cups and saucers and jugs which her mother had managed to pack in with her clothes, Ruth stuck out on the chimney piece; and then she made a neat blind for the window, which was not glazed but had a shutter to shut at night.

When Dick came in that evening, he professed himself astonished at all she had done, and said, "the hut looked another thing and quite snug, so different from the Brown's opposite," which he said, "was a dirty hole indeed!"

"And did you learn Dick, where church is?" said his mother.

"O, it is three good miles from this they say, through the bush: the Browns have promised to call for us to morrow morning."

"Three good miles!" sighed the old woman, "alas for my poor old bones, I must give up that privilege then!" She looked sad as she said this, for Mrs. Walsh had been a constant attendant at church from her childhood. For upwards of fifty years she had prayed in the same church, and she had *tried* to act upon all she heard there. No wonder then that she used the word *privilege*. To her and such as her, it is felt to be a privilege and a pleasure. If we wish to gain this we must go on persevering, because it is our duty, not expecting to find pleasure and joy at first. It is not to those who only go now and then, it is to the constant church-goer, that prayer is felt to be a never failing comfort, a pleasure as well as a duty.

CHAPTER VI.

THE next morning Ruth rose with a light heart. It was Sunday, a day she always looked upon as one of peace and comfort. She thought on this day,

it would be more like home: she expected to see things different from what it had been the day before: she put on her Sunday gown, which was a neat light cotton, laid out her bonnet and shawl; and then prepared her mother's breakfast.

Dick and Ruth waited sometime for the Browns, and at last Dick proposed that they should go and see if they were ready. "Step in a minute," said Sally Brown. There were tubs and pans lying about - the floor was unswept - Brown himself unshaven, sitting smoking in a corner - Sally all dirty, making a damper. Presently came Betsy to have her gown fastened, it would not meet; and after several minutes work and much pulling and pinning, it still gaped open half-an-inch: just as she had put on her bonnet, which was very smart with gay flowers pinned inside, down came her hair, for the bonnet was not large enough and the wire stuck in the hair. "Gracious me, we shall be late," said she.

"Well," grumbled old Brown from the corner, "ye've been long enough any how; two blessed hours you and Jane have been a dressing." When Jane came, she had to be pinned, and her collar was not put on to please her.

At length they started, but they had not gone far when a hole, which had been a small one in Betsy's stocking, became a very wide one: Ruth felt distressed, she had never been accustomed to go to church with such people; and they talked loud and jested with Dick very rudely all the way.

And here let me remark, that Ruth's dress had occupied about one quarter of the time that Betsy's and Jane's had; nor had she given it a thought; she was *always* neat, so it came easily to her. A person's dress is in some sort a picture of their mind. With some it is all for show: so long as the gown and bonnet is smart, "no matter what is under;" if a hole in the stocking does not shew, "no matter." Others do not even care for this: but a dirty, slovenly, rugged woman, cannot be right in her heart; she will not care for her actions either. To be habitually clean and neat, neat without shew or display, neat whether people are by to see it or not, is a sort of proof that, that person is also careful of her ways - careful to be modest, humble and regular in her temper.

Ruth was surprised to find how few persons there were at church, and that scarcely any of the numerous families living at Mr. Manley's were there. Alas! it does strike a stranger to find how very little regard is paid to the Lord's day in this country. Even in places where there is a church and a settlement, and a clergyman residing there, how very few attend! they say that they cannot leave their stock or their farm; or the distance is too great, or the heat too much. Do they know this verse? "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"

Many, many years ago, there lived a man who, having learnt to measure all things by the Cross, devoted himself to a holy and religious life: he gave up wealth, power and honors -- he prayed and fasted, and lived hard. This man wished also to convince others. When he saw any one loving this world -- either money, or pleasure, or fame - he stood before them and cried, "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"

There he stood, poorly clad, wasted by much watching and fasting; to the rich, to the great, to the poor and humble, to those who lay at ease and in indolence enjoying the luxuries of this world, or to the poor who worked hard for their daily bread - to all alike he cried, again and again, "What shall it profit &c.?"

His earnest manner and the awful meaning of these words, if they were thought of, did rouse many: and to us they are words as full of warning and meaning as they were then. What will flocks and herds, what will comfort, what will riches profit - when the day comes that we are to be judged?

Let us obey God, keep the Lord's day and go to church, if we live within reach of one. God's blessing which is given to those who gather together in His name, will be far more valuable, than the attending to worldly affairs on a Sunday can ever be.

Let us *trust* God and obey Him, without calculating the damage which may ensue to our herds or our crops; and if it be at the expense of a little bodily comfort, if it be far and hot, let us be thankful for the opportunity of shewing a readiness to sacrifice *something*, trifling though it be in reality, for the sake of the privilege of being a Christian, a member of God's Church.

That Sunday evening, Ruth spent in reading to her mother. Dick staid with them a little and then he sauntered out and gossiped with Betsy and Jane Brown and Jack Hall the stockman. Their loud laugh reached the ears of Mrs. Walsh, as she listened to Ruth's soft voice. "Ah," said she, "fear my boy has got into no good set; God grant he grow more steady and keep from bad company; he has no strength in him, he is too easily led."

"He is inclined to be good too, Mother," said Ruth, wishing to comfort her, and speak a good word for Dick.

And now if you want any further account of how Ruth went on, it will be found in the second part of this history.

PART II

"We sow 'mid perils here, and tears,

There the glad hand the harvest bears
Which here in grief hath sown."

CHAPTER I.

RUTH WALSH and her mother and brother had now been a twelvemonth in this colony. Let us see what a year has done for them. It was the evening of a very hot day in December; the grass in the paddocks looked brown; no green was to be seen, but the leaves of a few gum trees which stood near the huts. Work was over, and you could see some of the men plaiting straw for their hats at the door of the hut, or some sat idle, with pipe in hand.

Now and then a laugh proceeded from one of the groups, but, generally speaking, there was silence. Not a leaf stirred; it was close and heavy; distant thunder rumbled, and every now and then came a vivid flash of lightning. There was an oppression in the air, which seemed to weigh on every one's spirits. Betsy Brown, looking as untidy as when we first spoke of her, sat on a log by the side of her father's hut. She appeared to be looking towards a sliprail which led into the bush, as if expecting some one to come from that direction. Sally Brown, tired with the labor of the day, had dropped asleep, and her husband sat silently smoking his pipe. The hut looked even more wretched and comfortless than it did a year before; it was a striking contrast to the one opposite. Mrs. Walsh had made her hut quite tight and tidy; a narrow slip of ground had been dug round it, and bordered with a few old shingles. Here Ruth had put in slips of geraniums and honeysuckles, which were growing well. A parrot hung in his cage over the door; the window-blind looked as white as when new, and inside it was arranged with the same desire to have things neat and in order. Mrs. Walsh sat on a chair in one corner; her face was covered with her hands; she rocked herself backwards and forwards as if in great pain. Ruth sat nearer the door, and was trying to work; but her eyes wandered between her mother and the door; she looked pale and anxious. "Mother, dear, do take a cup of tea, and lie down - don't take on so - he'll come back," said she.

"Never, never. No, Ruth, my child will never come back, except it be as a disgraced man. I have feared this I have prayed against it. O my son, my son! I could have died for thee. I could have closed your eyes, and borne you to the grave; but O! this will break my heart."

Ruth rose, and took a long anxious look in the same direction in which Betsy Brown looked. She shook her head mournfully, and then clasped her

hands. A loud clap of thunder startled her. "This is an awful night, indeed," she exclaimed. "My poor brother! he is out in this storm."

"Ay, it is awful," said the mother; "for it is God's voice in anger; at least, it seems to me so; but O! it is nothing to that anger - that just and terrible anger which will be shown to sinners by-and-by. O my son, my son!" and her voice became choked with sobs.

After some time passed in silence, Ruth said she would step down and inquire if anything had been heard of Dick and Tom Grant, a man in the farm with whom he had left the day before.

"Have you seen or heard anything of them - of Dick and Tom, I mean?" asked Ruth of Betsy Brown.

"I? How should I have seen anything of them - a couple of drunken fellows! I think you might know better, Miss Ruth Walsh, than to ask me such a question. Sometimes you are shy enough of your words, and what makes you come to me to-night?" said Betsy.

"I beg your pardon," said Ruth; "I meant no harm." She then walked on a few steps, and stood leaning over the slip-rail leading into the bush. Then, remembering her mother was alone, she returned.

"No tidings?" asked her mother.

"None," said Ruth. "I fear he's been drinking again. Tom Grant is a bad fellow. O, how I wish we had never come here! bad company has been the ruin of him."

"He might have met with that at home, my dear," said her mother. "There are wicked folks everywhere; it is something within that is wanting; he can't ever say nay to any idle frolicking man who asks him. That easy, pleasant, smooth way of his, has been his enemy. Alas! that I should say so of my own child!"

CHAPTER II.

THAT night, when every one else was in bed about the place, Ruth still watched. There was thunder, but it was at a distance; and a heavy rain now fell. As she watched from the little open window, she thought she saw a figure move by the slip-rails. She looked again; the sheet lightening assisted her; she had seen right - there was some one there. She swiftly ran to the spot, and she heard voices a little farther on in the bush. She felt rather afraid, but, hoping her brother might be among them, she hurried on. On and on she went, till she was quite out of sight of the slip-rails. Presently a man put his hand on her shoulder. It was not Dick; but who it was she did not know. "Where are you going, my bird?" said he.

"I am looking for my brother, Dick Walsh," said she, as firmly as she

could.

“Indeed! Come along with me, and I'll bring you to him.”

“Where is he? tell me where,” said she earnestly.

“Don't be afraid, my sweetheart; he's close at hand: see,” said he, and he pulled her round a clump of thick bushes.

There was just light enough for her to see two or three men sitting down; one was lying apparently asleep or drunk.

She recognized Tom Grant's voice, as he asked her companion “who he'd got?” When he heard the answer, he gave a loud and terrible oath, and said Joe had spoilt all, unless, indeed, they could stop the woman's tongue.

And now I cannot tell you all that passed between these rude and bad men. They were prisoners who had escaped, and were robbing every one they met. Tom Grant was a colleague, though he had not openly left Mr. Manley's service; but he helped them to much of his master's property, and he had enticed Dick Walsh to join him in a drinking bout that day; and then, when he was not sober, induced him to join in a cattle-stealing expedition. To drown his remorse, which began to show as the effects of the liquor wore off, they gave him more; and now, when Ruth saw him, he lay dead drunk on the grass.

Her senses seemed to fail her, and her legs totter as she saw this, and heard the horrid language of those around her; but with a desperate effort, and silently calling God to support her, she reproached them for it, and desired that they would carry Dick home. This was, of course, answered with a laugh.

“Better not wish him to run into the lion's jaw,” said Joe, the man she had first met. “He has been concerned in a job which would go far to hang him if he was caught; he must keep to the bush now.”

“Hang him? Who has he murdered - what has he done?” asked she, in agony.

“O, no murder, dear, none at all,” answered Joe; “and now, hark ye - say nothing of all this. As you value your life, speak no word of all this - we have means to watch you, and we will drain any one's blood who peaches. D'ye understand? - we carry these things,” said he, shewing her a pistol.

Ruth's breath seemed nearly gone, but she kept up, though pale as a corpse. Her lips refused to speak; but as the man beckoned her to follow, she moved. Then, suddenly recollecting her brother, she turned and cried, “Dick - Dick Walsh, come home! If you've done wrong, come and confess it, and we'll pray for you. Come home, Dick - O let me speak to him!” said she, as the man put his hand before her mouth, and hurried her on.

When within sight of the slip-rails, he stopped and said: “Now go home

and *remember* - not a word - not a syllable. Your life is worth nothing if you speak. ”

Just then a rustling was heard in a bush near, and the man ran off. Ruth heeded it not: she walked on mechanically; she reached the hut, shut the door and barred it, and then fell on the ground senseless.

Just as Ruth reached home, another female figure was seen gliding softly along; she went into Brown's hut.

Sally Brown said, “Why, Betsy where *have* you been this time of night?”

“I only went, out to see if there was a native cat disturbing the fowls, they made such a noise,” said Betsy, and then she lay down in her bed.

CHAPTER III.

WHEN Ruth recovered her senses, and saw her mother sitting beside her, pale and haggard, miserable and anxious, she was just going to tell her all she had seen and heard. Then she thought that, perhaps, it might only add to her mother's grief.

Perhaps Dick might return - and then, as his figure came before her as she had seen him, and the coarse language and dreadful threats, she shuddered; and she dared not speak of it. Her mother asked no questions. A sad, weary day it was after this night. Ruth tried to work but did not succeed in doing many stitches. At last her mother said, “Take down the Prayer Book, Ruth dear, and read us a Psalm. My heart aches, and they are comfortable words to a broken spirit.” Ruth obeyed; it was the 13th day of December, and she read the Psalms appointed for the day. The evening Psalms affected both mother and daughter. The mother joined in audibly as she read, “Haste Thee, O God, to deliver me; make haste to help me, O Lord!” And though this and the preceding Psalm is written for and is typical of our Saviour, and apply to all that happened to Him so many years after, yet will they also comfort *us*. Ruth and her mother felt it so. Their affliction was very great; but it was permitted by the Almighty. He who sent it would also give grace and strength to bear it. They gave not way to noisy grief and exclamations, neglecting everything; they bowed themselves meekly under God's hand; they exerted themselves to go about the business of the day - Mrs. Walsh to attend to the poultry, of which she now had the charge, and Ruth to her needle-work. The hut was swept, the ashes raked up, and all was clean and tidy as usual; but they were longer on their knees that night by the bedside, and Mrs. Walsh gave her usual nightly blessing to her daughter in a lower and more tremulous voice, and her lips moved after she had said “ God bless you!” Perhaps she was

praying for her lost, her sinning child!

CHAPTER IV.

Two days after this, Ruth had to go to Mrs. Manley about her work. They had heard nothing more of Dick, and although rumours were about among the people on the farm, as Mrs. Walsh and Ruth had kept to themselves, they knew nothing of them.

“This is a sad business about your brother” said Mrs. Manley, and Ruth thought she looked rather sternly at her. “Sad, indeed, Ma'am,” she said. Just then Mr. Manley came in.

“Have you no idea with whom he is gone - have not you seen him since Monday?” asked he.

That dreadful scene in the bush came to her recollection just as she was going to say "no," and she stopped, hesitated, and coloured up. “We think he is with Tom Grant,” at last she said.

“As bad as can be” said Mr. Manley. “Mr. Smith's farm, eight miles from here, was robbed on Tuesday last, and it is suspected that there is a deep-laid plot, and that the same party were concerned in cattle-stealing. I heard from Brown,” continued Mr. Manley, speaking to his wife “that men were loitering in this bush. Do *you* know anything of this?” added he, turning sharply round, and looking at Ruth.

Many thoughts rushed across Ruth's mind. It might be betraying her brother - it might be putting herself in the power of those dreadful men - if she spoke the truth; and she shuddered, for she was by nature timid and easily frightened. But with these thoughts came also others that she, being a servant of Mr. Manley's, had no right to conceal what she knew from him; and that it was her *duty* to speak the truth, *not fearing the consequences*. “God help me!” she inwardly ejaculated; and then, taking a long breath, she told her master all she had seen and heard. She spoke in a low voice, but there was no hesitation. Calmly and quietly she told *all* -- even that Dick was there, and that he had been concerned in some bad deed, as she gathered from the man's words, “And now, sir, I've' told you all; but O, spare my unfortunate brother, if you can, and pray don't let mother hear of it.” She felt that she could stand no more, and, silently dropping a respectful curtsy, she turned to go home. Many in her situation would have talked violently and loudly of their own sufferings, their own feelings; -- many would not have told *all*; -- many, perhaps, would not have told anything: but Ruth had been brought up in a spirit of truthfulness; and though, from being an obedient humble child, and all her life walking in the path of duty, she was able, when suddenly called upon,

to act rightly and bravely, she was not herself aware that she was doing more than others. She always shrunk from talking of herself. Now, as she walked slowly home, she thanked God for enabling her to do her duty, though a painful one. She felt lighter at heart though in sore anxiety on her poor brother's account. I have before said that Ruth was naturally timid and fearful, and when night came, the recollection of the men's threats returned in full force. She could not shake off a nervous fear which crept over her.

Her mother bid her ask at Sally Brown's for a jug which they had borrowed, and as she crossed the green in front of the slip-rails, her legs shook violently, and the fear she felt was evident in her face, for the Browns joked her, and asked what was the matter. She tried to pass it off as nothing, but a remark of Betsy's made her still more uncomfortable. She said, "I wonder at *you* being so easy frightened: you were not afraid to be out in the bush on a dark stormy night; but then, may be, it was in company," and she winked knowingly as she spoke. Now, Betsy Brown was always glad if she could find anything to say which would make Ruth uncomfortable. She was jealous of her. It first began when Jack, the stockman, had praised Ruth's dress; and ever since she had encouraged and fed the bad feeling.

Jack had for some time left off joking with her, and been more steady; he tried to join Ruth in the walks to and from church. True it was, Ruth did not seem to encourage him, but Betsy saw that Jack liked her. Betsy did not really care for Jack, but she did not like to acknowledge that Ruth was a better girl than herself; and when she found that she could not accuse Ruth of vanity and spending much time on her dress, she sought about for other stories against her. Wicked as it was, Betsy had now contrived to whisper it about that, if Dick Walsh was concerned in these robberies, Ruth was also. She hinted that those who set up for being better than others, and spoke fairly and smoothly, were generally deep; and she mentioned, with many additions, having seen Ruth in the bush with a man on the Tuesday night. It is far easier to destroy a person's character than to make it. These unkind and false suspicions which a jealous, bad girl raked up against Ruth, were greedily swallowed by all who, like herself, hated anything good.

CHAPTER V.

PEOPLE are very apt to suppose that when they have done right - made any sacrifice for the sake of duty, a reward is sure to follow; and they think it hard if they do not receive the credit which they fancy is due to

them.

But, as Christians, we profess to look beyond this world; we profess to have our treasure in heaven; and very often the reward to the righteous does *not* come in this world, any more than the punishment to the wicked. Hereafter both will receive their dues.

Had Ruth Walsh expected any reward for doing her duty, she would have been sorely disappointed. As days passed on, she found that she was looked upon with an evil and distrustful eye by every one; a cold sneer or rude stare, or at best, a look of pity, was all she received.

This, in addition to her fears about the men's threats, and her deep anxiety for her misguided brother, preyed upon her. Nor was it long before rude and unfeeling hints were thrown out to her poor mother. Under pretence of sympathising with her, they expressed their sorrow and regret that so well-conducted a girl should forget herself so much. Of course, all this was unintelligible to Mrs. Walsh, nor did she even quite understand that the speeches at all referred to Ruth. She knew her child's heart, her modest, guileless ways; and she did not suspect others of being bad enough to wish to blast so fair a blossom. All her fears, her sorrow and trouble, was for Dick. Nothing was heard of him certainly, though reports had reached Mr. Manley that the party had been tracked by the police; and now Mrs. Walsh had learnt that her son was of this party.

There was, however, one person who did not give ear to the suspicions thrown out against Ruth, and this was Jack the stockman. He even courted her society more than he had done before, and took every opportunity to pay her attention. He never talked loudly and lightly, as he did with the Browns: when in Ruth's company, he was always quiet and subdued. Ruth could not help feeling grateful for this, and often Jack might be seen chopping wood or fetching water for the widow and her child, in the place of that son who had left them.

This, however, was not to last long. Mr. Manley himself partly believed that Mrs. Walsh and her daughter were not over-honest. He recollected poor Ruth's hesitation and confusion that morning when he questioned her, and he set it down as a proof that she was guilty, or, at all events, that she knew more than she chose to say. Mr. Manley had lived long in the colony, and had met with so much dishonesty, so much deceit and untruth amongst his servants, that perhaps we can hardly wonder at his being suspicious. Dick having failed in his agreement, and behaved so ill, Mr. Manley gave Mrs. Walsh and Ruth notice to quit the premises.

This was a sad blow; they had but a little money, which would very soon go, nor had they any friends in the country. Jack made inquiries for them in the settlement, and at last found a rude hut, which, with a little repair,

would serve them; and here they determined to take in washing or needlework, or go out for a day's work at any of the settlers who might want them.

Mrs. Walsh found one comfort in her heavy trouble ; she would now be close to the church, and would again be able to pray in God's appointed place.

CHAPTER VI.

MR. MANLEY allowed Mrs. Walsh to have a lift in his dray, which was otherwise going to the settlement, and Ruth walked beside it.

As they passed out of the green and by the different huts, no one turned to give a friendly "good-by." The Walshes were not liked, and the reason was, because they had never given in to any of the bad ways of those about them. Betsy Brown's coarse jeering laugh sounded in Ruth's ears, as she tossed back her dirty locks, and shading her eyes from the sun, looked after them. "Here'll be an end to smooth hair and smooth speech, I guess: Ruth Walsh's pride will be broke down *now*, I hope. Dick is the best of them out and out," said Betsy as she turned to her hut.

Near the slip-rails leading into the road stood Mr. Manley's children, and Mary White their nurse, was with them. She came forward and shook hands - "God bless you, Ruth," said she. "Cheer up, and don't mind what they say: you'll always find a friend in me. Missis will give you a job now and then, I don't doubt. Ruth," added she gravely, and with tears in her eyes, "I shall sorely miss you: you have brought back old times to my mind: seeing you has changed me -- thank you for it."

"You have nothing to thank me for," said Ruth, sorrowfully; "but *I* thank you, Mary, for these kind words spoken to a broken-hearted girl. Good-bye."

Mary felt that she had much to thank Ruth for. The seeing Ruth a year ago, when she first came to the farm, had brought up good thoughts, and these good thoughts had not been neglected: Mary had laid them to heart, and was changed. Her heart was more set on doing her duty. She thought less of dress, and her conscience became every day more tender: it pricked her often now, when before it had been silent, and she tried hard to attend to it; it was not always easy, but she *tried*. Mrs. Manley found her children more carefully attended to, and more work done. She did not know how it came about; she thought the children were grown very obedient and good-tempered, and the children thought that Mary was much kinder and more cheerful with them than she had ever been before.

The real cause of all this was that, when Mary saw Ruth's plain neat

dress, it reminded her of what she was taught when she was a girl at home; it brought back the kind, serious tone of voice in which her former mistress used to talk to her. This made her compare herself with what she was then. The more she thought, the more difference did she see - in so many *little* things had she gone back. True they were only little things, but added all together, they became great. Love of dress had led her to be neglectful of her duty in *little* things, had made her wish to be seen and admired, and had distracted her thoughts' when in church. Then, of course her temper suffered: people's tempers cannot be sweet and even while they go on habitually doing any one wrong thing - unless indeed, they are so far lost as to forget altogether they are wrong. Mary had not been *this*: she felt often uncomfortable. It was a mercy that she did. It was a greater mercy that the sight of Ruth should have given her such thoughts, and a still greater mercy that, through God's grace, she had improved them.

CHAPTER VII.

IN about a fortnight after Ruth and her mother left Mr. Manley's, they heard that Dick was taken up, with two or three others. It was but too clearly proved that he was of the party who committed the robbery, though as he was drunk, he had no actual share in it. He was sentenced for fourteen years to Norfolk Island. His want of more courage - not being able to say "No" to anything wrong, his light easy way of doing whatever others did, and his old love for liquor had brought him to this. The news fell heavily on his poor mother's heart. Ruth too, who dearly loved her brother, felt it a heavy trial. They had to work hard for their maintenance, and they lived poorly - in far less comfort than they would have done in England at their old home; but they did not complain; they always went to church, and every Sunday the widow renewed her thanks that she was once more within reach of this privilege.

Betsy Brown could not see that Ruth's dress was a bit less tidy than it was. True, she had no new bonnet at Christmas, and her old one was brown from the sun; but it was put on as modestly and neatly as before, and no rags or tatters appeared in either her or her mother. Ruth was grown very thin; her fresh color, which had struck every one when she first came, had faded; her step was less light and active; and often she had to stop when washing the clothes, and sit down, and her hand was pressed to her side as if she were in pain; but no complaint was heard, and no one but Jack Hall and Mary White noticed any change. They still remained kind friends, and Mary succeeded in giving her mistress a favorable opinion of Ruth, so that they got plenty of work from Mrs. Manley.

One evening, as Ruth sat on the bench leaning her head on her hand, Jack Hall came in. After some awkwardness, and coloring very red, he said he had come to speak his mind fairly out; he saw how it was: Ruth was over worked, and he wished she would become his wife. He was willing and able to support her and her mother too; Ruth's eyes filled with tears, but she said, "Jack, I cannot take your offer."

"Maybe you think I'm not steady or good," said he; "but since I knew *you* I've altered; though, for that matter, I believe I was always honest and sober, though perhaps a thought too gay. I can't bear folks to turn up their noses at you, which they do, and have done ever since that time Dick left. Don't I know you for the best and modestest girl that breathes? - are you not a right good daughter?" and then, brushing away a tear, he added, "Don't say nay, Ruth, but think of it - take time and think." Then, as Mrs. Walsh returned from bringing in her clothes from the bushes, he hastily bid her good evening, and galloped off.

"Jack is in a mighty haste to-night," said Mrs. Walsh. "I wanted him to carry a message for me to the house, There now, all these things are well bleached - suppose we begin ironing some to-night, Ruth." As she looked at her child she saw that she was crying, and immediately she took alarm. "Ruth, dear, what ails you? - are you ill, my dear? Have you and Jack had words, or - have you - *can* you have heard aught of Dick?"

"Oh no, mother," said Ruth, anxious to relieve her mother's anxiety. "Nothing. I am only very tired - not well, somehow, but I shall be better, presently - by the time the irons are hot."

Ruth exerted herself to iron that night, and between them they got a basket-full finished, which they were anxious to send to Mrs. Manley, who was going some journey. This was the last time Ruth worked with her mother - that night she broke a blood-vessel. The doctor who was called in said it must have been long coming on, and asked if she had been in any particular distress of mind. The poor mother acknowledged "yes," and then asked if there was no hope. The doctor could not give her much, but did not speak decidedly. However, from that day Ruth gradually got worse and worse; a dry and constant cough and difficulty of breathing was all she complained of.

The bitterest part was leaving her mother childless in a strange country, and of an age when she could no longer hope to do much for herself. "Jack," she said, a few weeks after to Jack as he called in one day to inquire for her - "when I'm gone be kind to mother - she'll not trouble you long - but be a son to her, and God's blessing will light on you."

Jack was much affected; he took Ruth's hand and kissed it fondly. "Trust me, while Jack Hall can work, or has a crust to eat, the widow Walsh shall

not want, for your sake, Ruth.”

“I thank you for all your kindness,” said Ruth. “When I was despised by others you always believed me; and now, with my dying breath, I entreat you, Jack, to serve God, that when your hour comes, you may possess a peaceful conscience, and have hope through your Saviour. Keep from idle company and drink, and go to church.” Her strength failed her, and she could say no more.

Jack left the hut full of thought - he saw her no more alive. That night, as her mother sat beside her, she spoke of her brother and left him her Bible, to be conveyed to him if possible. The next morning early, Mr. Ward, the clergyman, administered the sacrament to her and her mother, and prayed beside her in the words appointed for the sick in our prayer-book.

Jack Hall had to ride a long way that day after some horses, and when he returned he called at the hut. “How is Ruth, this evening?” said he.

“She is at rest for ever,” said the widow, solemnly, but calmly. And Jack followed her into the room, and saw that it was even so -- Ruth Walsh was dead! A sweet smile played on her features; it did indeed seem as if she rested. Jack knelt in agony by the bed; he prayed; and Ruth's influence ended not with her life. He became the most steady and honest man in the settlement; he never failed to attend church and receive the sacrament; his wife and children -- for in a year's time he married Mary White -- set good examples to all the settlement; their hut was neat and tidy; the children were remarked in school for good conduct and modest, neat dress; nor was his promise to Ruth forgotten respecting her mother: she was well and kindly treated by Mary and Jack. As long as she could she continued to do a little washing, and, when too infirm for that, she made herself useful many other ways to Mary. She lived many years after Ruth, though she never saw her son again. There was a melancholy stamped on her face, but she was at the same time cheerful, and expressed herself grateful for all the blessings she enjoyed. When she died, they buried her by Ruth's side, and Jack planted a willow tree over both graves, and at the foot of Ruth's grew a white rose.

Readers, if the character of Ruth interests and pleases you, try to be like her - try to be obedient, humble, and truthful - “whose adorning, let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting of hair, or of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible: even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.”

BENEATH a willow's light green shade
There side by side the two are laid -
Laid by that churchyard gate at last,

Whereby they oft together pass'd.
The tree puts on and drops its leaves,
When the dishevelled Autumn grieves;
But no rude change again shall come,
To reach them in their peaceful home.
When Death first ope'd the silent door,
The maid arose, and went before.
And so from places of the blest,
Grief came to be her mother's guest,
To fit her for that happier rest." ¹

1. Those who are already acquainted with these beautiful lines, will see that a very few words have been altered to suit the peculiar circumstances of the tale.

MARION MARTIN OR, THE MONTH'S TRIAL

PART I. MARION MARTIN OR, THE MONTH'S TRIAL

“Petty thefts once learnt at school,
Will proceed to greater sin;
Satan soon will gain the rule,
When he once hath enter'd in.

Say not, none the loss will heed
Say not, that the thing is small;
Thus doth sin to sin proceed.
Till it ends in heaviest fall.”

CHAPTER I.

MRS. GREY who had lived many years in this colony wished to meet with a little girl, to bring up as a servant, to help to attend in the nursery, or to fetch and carry; in fact to do any thing that was wanted. She had already tried several, but found them so very inattentive and idle that she would not keep them.

One morning a woman of the name of Martin came with a little girl; she said they had taken a piece of land on a clearing lease, and now before the crops came up, they were badly off. She had a large family of young children.

This girl, Marion, was the eldest; she was not quite twelve, but her mother assured Mrs. Grey “she was very handy and willing, and it would be a great charity to take her.”

“Well,” answered Mrs. Grey, “if she will be obedient, and mind what is said to her, and speaks the truth, and is honest, I have no objection; but, unless this be the case, I cannot have her in my house.”

“O Madam, I never knowed her tell a lie, and as for honesty, I hope we know better than to steal - sure if she did do such a thing, I'd break her very bones” - and she looked very threateningly at the child.

Marion, however, did not seem to mind it; she was looking about at the things in the room, the pictures and the chimney ornaments, and the polished tables and chairs; one after another she looked at them, and thought she should like to live in such a fine house.

After a little while, Mrs. Grey said “Well, I'll take the girl for one month, on trial. I shall give her a few necessary clothes, but if I part with her at the end of the month, I shall not let her take these clothes; if, however, she pleases me and remains on, they will be her's, and I shall give her

things to the value of £6 a year at first. By and bye, if she learns to do her work well and is steady, I will add £2 to this."

"Thank ye Ma'am," said the mother, "and now, Marion, mind all I've told you, and obey the Missis, and be quick and handy." She then took up her apron and rubbed her eyes very hard, as if she was crying, but Marion only laughed, and did not seem at all sorry to part from her mother.

Mrs. Grey did not quite like this bold and easy manner in so young a girl, just come among strangers, but she said nothing then. After a few moments she asked if Marion could read.

"No," was the answer.

"You must always say Ma'am, when you speak to me" said Mrs. Grey, "it is not respectful or proper to speak rudely. Do you know your Catechism?"

"No Ma'am," said Marion.

"Can you read?"

"No Ma'am."

"Do you ever go to church? I don't recollect seeing you there or your mother."

"No we never go to church, 'tis too far off, and us can't leave the hut so long."

"Well, now you may come with me to the nursery, and remember, I expect you to mind what the nurse says, and you must try and not speak quite so bluntly. You will have to wash over the nursery floor every morning, and dust the room, and bring up the nursery breakfast, after which I shall want you in my room; and after dinner you will have to help the cook to clear up things in the kitchen. Now you may sit here a little while, and nurse will tell you all about it;" saying which Mrs. Grey opened the nursery door, and told nurse to let this girl, Marion Martin, stay there till after dinner.

CHAPTER II.

FOR a few days, all went on well with Marion; she was, as her mother said, very quick; and as she had been used to hard work, she got through the washing and cleaning well. She had to be taught many things, and after she had dusted the room as she thought very well, her mistress called her back again, and showed her how she had left corners untouched; but Marion was good tempered, and with a smile she did it over again. One day when she was dusting her mistress' own room, Mrs. Grey came suddenly in; she thought Marion seemed rather confused and startled, but she did not take any notice of this. An hour afterwards, when she came

back, she thought her work-box looked very much out of order, and when Marion came in for some work, she said, "Marion, remember I do not allow you to touch or open any thing about my room, without asking leave; you must always do the same when I am not by as you would in my presence, for God's eye is every where - He sees all you do."

Marion coloured up, but did not answer.

Then her mistress said, "if you ever break any thing, always come and tell of it directly, and try to speak *exactly* the truth about every thing. People who tell lies cannot go to Heaven when they die. I suppose you know what I mean by Heaven and Hell?"

"Oh! yes, I know Ma'am."

"Well then," said Mrs. Grey, "if you know, you must *think about* it whenever you are tempted to do any thing that is wrong, to be pert, or to touch what does not belong to you, or not to speak the truth; then it is the Devil tempting you, just as you heard me read yesterday, he tempted Eve to eat the forbidden fruit, and you must resist this, that is, you must fight against it, and pray to God to help you; if you don't do this, you will not go to Heaven when you die. Now go to your work; I expect you to finish that seam before dinner, and in the evening I will talk to you again."

Marion said "thank you Ma'am," much more respectfully than she did: she had never been taught what is right, but she liked hearing Mrs. Grey talk and read to her. Marion had not been brought up to speak the truth; if she told a downright lie, her father beat her; but neither her father nor her mother cared about her being *correct*, and she was in the habit of saying much that is not true. She was very curious and inquisitive, and liked to see every thing; this made her open her mistress' work-box that morning, and most likely if her mistress had asked her if she had done so, Marion would have said she was only dusting it, or something of that kind.

CHAPTER III

WHILE Marion was sewing in the nursery, she heard a carriage pass by, and she wanted to see it and who was in it, so she ran to the window. After standing there some moments, she called one of the little girls, who was also working, to come and see the beautiful white horse.

"I can't," said the little girl.

"Miss Ellen is doing her task," said the nurse, "her mamma always expects her to sit still till she's finished it - come away from the window." Marion, however sat down on a chair which was near the window, and began to work again. Presently nurse left the room.

"Miss Ellen, do come," said Marion, "and look out a minute, now nurse

is gone no one will know; it is worth your while to see this pretty horse and the smart man with gold round his hat; and O, my goodness, what a pretty lady, do see Miss Ellen."

Ellen jumped up and looked out. "O, it is only Mrs. Kerr," said she; but just then the horse seemed frisky, and it amused both the little girls, to watch how often the lady put her foot on the step and was obliged to draw back again. At length the pretty white horse stood still just for a moment, and the carriage drove off. "There now," said Ellen, "Mamma will be displeased, because she told me not to move till I had finished."

"But sure I'll not tell her," said Marion, "and she'll not know."

"But I shall tell her," said Ellen, "it is very wrong not to tell the truth; I should be afraid not to tell, for God is angry when we do so."

"Well don't tell against me, Miss Ellen, your Mamma will not punish you, but she'll be line and angry with me and I must be sharp or I shall not have finished this seam."

"If Mamma asks me I must tell," said Ellen. Marion found she could not make up for her lost time, except by working badly, so when she carried her work to her mistress, Mrs. Grey said they were much too long stitches, and that Marion had not done it well, and she supposed she must have been idling, playing with the children instead of minding her work."

Marion said "no Ma'am, I hav'nt been playing, I've been working very busy."

Mrs. Grey did not say any thing more. Then she looked at Ellen's work; it was very neatly done, and she praised her.

"Mamma," said Ellen, "I did not do right, for I forgot what you said about not moving, and I looked out of the window a little."

"Then, my dear, you cannot have your ticket to-day," said Mrs. Grey.

Ellen was sorry, because she only wanted two tickets more to make up the number for which her Mamma gave her six-pence; but she knew it was quite just in her Mamma not to give it, and she resolved to be more careful to sit still the next day.

CHAPTER IV.

MRS. GREY was very kind to Marion, and took great pains to teach her; she read and talked to her nearly every evening, and let her go to church; and Miss Ellen, who was just her own age, tried to teach her to read. Marion had very good sense and soon learnt; but she had been too long brought up in bad ways and with bad examples before her to be good all at once. She did many wrong things; she was sly, and when her mistress did not see her, she stopped in her work and idled; and once when she was

taking the dishes to the cook, from the hall table, where the footman had placed them, she was tempted to taste some pudding - which looked very nice. She thought there was no great harm in it, but she knew she would not like any one to see her doing it, which ought to have shewn her that it was wrong. At last she did it every day, so much so, that the cook complained to her mistress; and then Mrs. Grey said "you know Marion it is wicked to steal."

"Yes Ma'am, but sure I didn't think *that* was stealing."

"Many people who turn out great thieves, *begin* only in that way," said Mrs. Grey; "it is a temptation which every servant has, more or less; they have no business to touch what is not their own. You must keep your hands from picking and stealing, the Catechism says, and this is *picking*: it is taking what does not belong to you, and what you are not allowed. If you go on in this way, by and bye you will take greater things; you will forget that it is wrong. It is a sad thing not to be trusted, but I cannot trust you to carry the dishes any more, I must bid John take them to the kitchen himself."

Marion cried, and she thought it was very hard: she knew it was wrong to steal cattle, or money, or clothes; but she didn't see that this was like that at all, and she thought Mrs. Grey was very stingy to grudge her a little bit of pudding! Mrs. Grey did not grudge the pudding; but she knew that it was encouraging a very dangerous habit. She gave her servants every thing that was necessary, and they lived very comfortably; and she expected what was sent into the parlour was to be taken care of, and not fingered and tasted after it came out.

CHAPTER V.

MARION soon became a favorite with the children; and Miss Ellen, who was her age, liked to play with her, and often asked her Mamma to allow Marion to go into the garden with them.

Mrs. Grey said "Marion has never been taught what is right, so that you must be very careful to set her a good example Ellen. I think I can trust you to remember all I have said, and that you will not learn of Marion any thing wrong."

"O no Mamma, I think that Marion is very good, and anxious to learn, but she has a very unhappy home, with her mother; I hope she'll not leave us."

"That depends upon herself, in a great measure," said Mrs. Grey.

One evening when Ellen was gardening, in her own little garden, Marion came and helped her. No one else was there, for the nurse had taken the

younger children for a walk, and Ellen's brother George was out riding. His little garden was next to Ellen's; they both were very fond of gardening, but George's was always the neatest, and had the most flowers in it; he also had a cherry-tree, which was considered by him very precious, not being so common here as in England. It was now very full of ripe cherries, and as Ellen weeded and raked over her bed, she looked at the red ripe cherries, and wished to have a bunch to refresh her.

"Well, Miss Ellen, why don't you take some?" asked Marion.

"They are not mine," said Ellen.

"O but see how many there are, sure one or two bunches will never be missed, and Master George is so good-natured, he'd give you some if he was here I know."

"Well, I dare say he would, Marion, but you know I must not take them: Mamma often tells me to respect other people's property, and it would not be *honest* to take them without leave."

"La, I never should have thought about such a trifle," said Marion.

"But that is what Mamma says we should mind," said Ellen; "if we are careful about little things, it is easier to be careful about great things, just as people say "take care of the pence and the shillings will take care of themselves."

"Well how clever and good you are, to be sure," said Marion, "I wish I'd been taught all this, but somehow I don't think of it. I tell you what, Miss Ellen, I do believe if I had stopped at home, I should have been a right down thief some day; I'm sure mother is."

"You don't say so, or you don't mean it I hope," said Ellen.

"O but I do though; she does'nt, call it thieving, nor does father, but I'm sure *you* and your Mamma would, and I suppose God does. Why only two or three months back, when they sold some potatoes, father put a few good ones just at the top of the bag, and all the rest were bad, and I helped at the job."

"That, certainly, was not honest," said Ellen."

"And then Miss Ellen," continued Marion, "when we lived at Mr. Jones' farm, and mother was cook, she used to get a deal more flour than was wanted, and sugar too, and make cakes and sell them."

"Don't tell me any more," said Ellen, shocked, "besides, Marion, they are your parents, and I don't like *you* to tell all this."

"But sure, Miss Ellen, you say about "honour your father and mother," when you repeat your Catechism; and how am I to honour mine, when every day I am learning that what they do is wrong?"

"Well, Marion, you should ask Mamma about this, I am not old enough to tell you, but I'll tell you what I think you should do; you should

remember that it was not any merit of your's that made you know more than they do, but it was God's mercy to you, in putting it into Mamma's head to take you, and you should be sorry for them, and not speak of it lightly; and then there is one thing more you can do for them, I mean ask God in your prayers, to shew them that they are wrong."

The little girls were now called in, and putting up the rake and watering pot, they left the garden; but Marion could not help thinking how she loved Miss Ellen, and wished she was like her.

CHAPTER VI.

BY little and little, Marion improved. She had learnt to leave off many little sly ways, and she thought more about fearing God than she had ever before done, and she checked herself very often when she was going to equivocate, that is, not tell the *exact truth*, just as a person might go a crooked path to any place, instead of the straight road. The truth is like the straight road, there are no windings, all is seen before you fair and open; equivocation is the winding, crooked path which, in the end, leads to lying.

Mrs. Grey was pleased with Marion, and had determined to keep her: it only wanted a week to the end of the month. Now it happened that Mrs. Grey was in the habit of leaving a plate of biscuits on the side-board every night, that Mr. Grey might have one before he took his ride before breakfast. "My dear," said he one day, "why didn't you allow me any biscuits this morning?"

"I left out a plate full," said Mrs. Grey.

"Then all I can say is, there was none when I came there," said her husband.

"Well that is strange, I know I left them out, because I had to go to the store for them, there being none in the side-board. Was any one up when you came down?" said Mrs. Grey.

"No one but that little girl Marion, she was washing the steps I recollect as I went out."

"And had been washing the hearth stone in the dining room," continued Mrs. Grey. "Ah! I fear she has not lost her old tricks; if it is her I shall be very sorry."

Ellen listened to this in trembling, for she would be so vexed if it *was* Marion!

Mrs. Grey, after the breakfast was over, called Marion into her own room, and speaking very gently and quietly, asked her "if she had scoured the dining room hearthstone that morning?"

“Yes Ma'am,” said Marion.

“What time did you do it?”

“Quite early Ma'am, before the Master was up.”

“Very well, that was right; and now, Marion, tell me the truth, did you take any of the biscuits which were on the plate?”

“I did not see any there this morning,” said Marion. and she coloured very red, because she recollected some former morning wishing very much to take one, and she was prevented doing so by seeing some cherry stones left on a plate. These stones reminded her of the cherries, and all that Miss Ellen had then said, and she had turned away from the biscuits and did her work quickly, so as not to think of them again. Recollecting all this made her blush, and I suppose Mrs. Grey fancied that it shewed something was wrong, for she looked very grave, and said “Marion, I hope you are telling the truth. *I* cannot tell whether you took the biscuits or not; but there is an Eye which sees every thing, which knows your very thoughts now. Take care and speak the exact truth.”

“Indeed, indeed Ma'am I have” said Marion, and she cried bitterly, and said “O you don't believe me, and Miss Ellen will not believe me, and I shall have to go away and be wicked at home again; but I've spoken the truth, I did not see them this morning.”

“Well, Marion, dry your eyes, it is no use to cry, we must try and find out what did take them. You see what comes of persons not having a character for speaking the truth, or for not being quite strictly honest! It is part of their punishment, that though they do try to alter, they cannot be believed at once, they must be *proved*.”

Mrs. Grey made many enquiries, but could discover nothing about the biscuits till the evening, when Marion was desired to bring the basket in which she kept her brushes and scrubbing cloths up into her Mistress' room, to scour the floor where some grease was spilled. As she pulled out her stone and cloth, something caught Mrs. Grey's eye: she rose and looked into the basket, which was a wide and flat shaped one. “Ha!” she said, “look here,” and she held up a piece of the same biscuit which had been missed. Ellen was very much frightened, for she thought that Marion must have taken it, and, by mistake, laid some in her basket; but Marion began to clap her hands, and said *now* then she knew all about it. She said that Sancho, the puppy, was playing about this morning, and he had particularly come to her basket as she was washing the steps. She had not taken notice at the time, but she now recollected he was eating something; from the sound, she thought it was a bone." No doubt Sancho was the thief, and had laid the bit he did'nt want in the basket. Mrs. Grey smiled at Marion's eager joy, and at Ellen's quiet pleasure; she said she believed her,

and to make it more sure, she would leave Sancho in the room that night when she laid out the biscuits. When the circumstance was mentioned to Mr. Grey, he recollected having left Sancho in the dining room the night before, and he also had some faint idea that he saw Sancho with a piece of *bread*, as he thought, in his mouth; no doubt it was the biscuit. Mr. Sancho was left again in the dining room, and again the biscuits were gone by the time Mr. Grey came, and moreover, the plate was broken.

And Marion was very happy, and said the fright she felt at being thought to tell a lie, and to have to leave Miss Ellen, would make her in future doubly careful of her ways; nor was this only talk; Marion lived on with Mrs. Grey many years, and learnt to be not only a good servant as to doing her work, but honest, and a lover of truth. Her great trouble was about her brothers and sisters, who, she feared, were no better taught than she had been.

“Ah Miss Ellen,” said she one day, “if mother had'n't happened to meet one of your men that day in the bush, and told him whereabouts a calf was he was looking after, I never should have been here. How wicked I should have been! When the man saw me, he said Mrs. Grey was on the look-out for a girl, and all in a minute mother took me. What a lucky chance it was!”

“I don't think it was *chance*,” said Ellen. “We know a sparrow does not fall without our Heavenly Father knowing it, and it was He, Marion, who brought this about. Nothing happens by chance. There is an Almighty Providence, Mamma says, in every turn in our lives.”

“Well, any how, it was a good thing for me,” said Marion. That month's trial shewed me many things I never learnt before.”

PART II. MARION MARTIN; or RESTITUTION.

“When Thou, O Lord! shalt stand disclosed
In Majesty severe,
And sit in judgment on my soul,
Oh how shall I appear!”

CHAPTER I

ONE morning a young woman was scouring the verandah belonging to Mr. Landon's house. She was very respectable looking, and, although in her working dress, and doing a dirty job, she was clean and neat. She sang as she worked, and seemed cheerful and happy. She had nearly finished

when the overseer passed; seeing her, he stopped and said, "Good morning, Marion. is the master up yet?"

"No, he is not," answered Marion.

"Well, I am lucky for once to find *you* in the way," said the man, "you keep yourself so close. Come, now - stop a bit," added he, seeing that she was taking up her bucket, and going in. "Do stop a moment - there's no hurry, and I've much to say to you. Come, my pretty Marion," said he, as he tried to take her hand - "think better of what I said a month ago. You won't find a man more willing or more able to do for you than I am. I can offer as comfortable a home as any man in the colony to my wife; and you know well enough you have but to speak the word, and you shall be mistress over my property."

Mr. Hardy glanced at his good dress as he spoke, and played with the seals of his watch. Perhaps he thought that a poor servant girl like Marion Martin could not resist the temptation of all his wealth, for he was indeed very well off. He was a favorite overseer of Mr. Landon's, and managed all his large concerns; his Master paid him well, and trusted him, too; for he was clever, and well used to all the ways and habits of this country. Marion Martin had, however, ever since we first knew her as a very little girl, tried to follow all that her kind mistress, Mrs. Grey, and Miss Ellen told her: she had learnt to fear God in all her ways; she did not think it enough to go to church on Sunday, and be well behaved while there, and perhaps read good books on that day; but she had followed her mistress's example, and carried her religion into every thing. She was *always* trying to be a follower of God, and to feel that God's eye was on her.

Mrs. Grey was now returned to England, but before she went, her daughter Ellen had married Mr. Landon. He was wealthy, and appeared to be all that he should be. He was an attentive observer of his religious duties, and enforced the keeping the Sabbath among all his servants; he was kind to the poor, and very amiable and good-tempered in his own family. Mrs. Grey hoped that her child had married one who would help her in her path through life - help her to keep in that strait and narrow path which leads to Heaven.

Marion begged that she might be "Miss Ellen's" servant, and accordingly she became housemaid in Mr. Landon's family. All the other servants were there before Mr. Landon married. Marion was sincerely attached to her young mistress, and Mrs. Landon in return treated her very kindly, and was always ready to be a friend to her, and advise her.

Marion's father and mother had been in great trouble: one of their sons had been transported for cattle-stealing, and all the others were thought very lightly of. One of her sisters, who had gained a situation in some

family, was turned off as a thief. Nothing prospered with the Martins but Marion had been enabled now and then to assist her parents out of her wages, and she felt often grieved and unhappy to think how badly they went on. Under these circumstances, it was a temptation to Marion to accept Mr. Hardy's offer. People wondered at her doubting one moment; for Hardy was well-looking, and thought a great catch by every one in the settlement. When dressed in his best clothes, all the young women admired him very much, and were desirous to attract his notice; but though he had a joke for many, it was to Marion he chiefly turned his eye.

Why then did Marion avoid him? Why did she, in her prayers, beg for grace to be enabled to say "no" to him?

CHAPTER II.

As Mr. Hardy was trying to persuade Marion to stay and talk to him, he pulled out of his pocket a very pretty white shawl, and said, "See - this is a trifle I got for you a week ago, but have never yet found an opportunity to give it. I chose it white, because I know you don't like flaring smart things. Won't you take it, Marion?" said he, kindly.

"Hardy - Mr. Hardy, I can't take it. I can't stay here listening to you. You know what I said a month ago my mind is still the same. You are rich, it is true; but where did your riches come from? Hardy, if you had only five shillings a week, gained honestly and fairly, God knows I would sooner share it with you than all you have now," said Marion, earnestly.

"This is folly," said Hardy. "You are the first person that ever dared to cast up dishonesty, or any such thing, in my face. Ask Mr. Landon. I consider that I am a faithful good servant. I have always taken care of his interests: no cattle - no calves ever missing in my musters! No; Ben Hardy can hold up his head as a good overseer; and besides, I have told you that those bullocks you stick at so, never were my master's. It is the way of every one - not a bit of harm in it! Why, in dry weather, people's cattle will stray miles and miles, and no one knows one calf from another. I never altered a brand. Mr. Landon knows it as well as I do. He has often said - 'Take care of *my* property, Hardy, and I don't object to your feathering your own nest, if you can.'"

"Did he say this?" said Marion, gravely. "I wonder if my mistress knows it. No - I'm sure *she* would never say that; and my conscience tells me it is wrong and dishonest to take what does not belong to you because it is unclaimed, and I never will marry any man who does and thinks it right. It is dishonest in the sight of God." And Marion once more turned into the house. "I wish you well, Mr. Hardy, and thank you for your kind

intentions; but I cannot keep your company or take your presents,” and she shut the door. “Well, that's an extraordinary girl, anyhow,” exclaimed Hardy. “Fool that I was, ever to let out a word of the matter! Why, look at all the stations in this country aye, nearly all. Look at the overseers - haven't they done just as I do? - and don't the masters encourage it? It is quite enough to be honest to one's employer, I should think. Besides, it is the way here, and people would never get rich if they didn't do as others do.”

Saying this to himself, Hardy walked on, and I fear that it did not occur to him that there is a judgment to come; - that at the last day we shall be judged according to what we have done, whether it be good, or whether it be evil. Then, at that most awful and terrible hour, masters who wink at and allow dishonesty and bad practices in their servants, provided they are faithful to themselves, will tremble under their self-accusing consciences; and servants who are only honest so far as it helps them to retain a good situation - who are honest when it is convenient, and dishonest when there is no fear of earthly disgrace what will become of them?

CHAPTER III.

Marion's mistress, Mrs. Landon, had not been married quite a year, and just now she was in very bad health, owing to a fall from her horse. In consequence of this, Mr. Landon's housekeeper continued to keep the keys, and superintend every thing in the store and kitchen. Marion sometimes assisted her.

One day, about a week after the above conversation with Hardy, Marion and Mrs. Smith were in the store, weighing out some meat, which was to be sent to a house in the neighbourhood, where the doctor of the district lived. Mrs. Smith cut off almost all the fat, and then put the meat on the steelyards to weigh it. She could not read very well, so she bid Marion look what was the weight. “It is not quite thirty pounds; it wants a quarter of it, I think,” said Marion.

“O then that'll do ; - write down thirty pounds,” said Mrs. Smith. “Carry it out to the boy, and say it is thirty pounds for his Master.”

“Hadn't I better put this piece of fat to make out the weight?” asked Marion.

“Bless you, no! - they never weigh it at Dr. Easy's. Sure they take just what they get; they're no managers at all.”

“Well but Mr. Landon would not like short weight to be sent, would he?” said Marion.

“But he'll know nothing of it,” returned Mrs. Smith; “no one will know.

If it was to Mr. Thorpe's it was going, I'd take precious good care to have it all right, or there'd be a fine fuss kicked up; and Mr. Landon would not, of course, like it to be said he sent short weight."

Marion said nothing, but she felt heavy at heart, for well she knew that if her mistress was aware of all this, it would make her very unhappy.

They went on, weighing out the different things, and Marion observed when they came away, that Mrs. Smith brought out all the fat which she had cut off, and that she tied it up in her apron too. Marion then went to her mistress's room, whom she found in great pain and very ill. She told Marion to sit down and rub the leg which pained her. This soon brought a little relief, and then, as it was getting dark, she told Marion to fetch a candle. As she went to the kitchen, she heard the cook telling Mrs. Smith she should want some fat for candles that evening, and Mrs. Smith answered - "Then I've none to give you. Tell Hardy about it; another cask must be had."

"Wasn't there some from the sheep to-day?" enquired the cook.

"How should there?" said Mrs. Smith. "Didn't Dr. Easy have pretty near all the sheep?"

"I thought they didn't get the fat, that's all," said the cook; "for the boy said the mutton was shocking lean, and that his master complained about it."

"The Easys are always complaining," returned Mrs. Smith, angrily; "they ought to take it as a great favour that my master supplies them at all, and be glad to take what they can get."

"But," said Marion, "we cut off the fat, Mrs. Smith."

Mrs. Smith winked and put up her finger to Marion, and as she went out of the kitchen, followed her and said "Marion, don't be so simple as to blab before that stupid creature, who hasn't got two ideas. Say nothing to *her* of the fat - that's my perquisite, d'ye see? and, as I'm not mean nor greedy, of course as long as you come to the store with me, you shall get a share. It is a fine thing, for I get three pence a pound for it."

"But does Mr. Landon know of it?" asked Marion.

"Why no doubt he does, dear. I don't take it from him: I make it up to him by putting on a little to the weight. Of course he would not object. Servants must live, and there's many a way of turning a penny if you're sharp; and that saves the master's pocket, for of course, where there's much opportunity for perquisites, the wages are lower. D'ye think I could afford to take so low as I do, if I could not make a little here and there besides?"

Here Mrs. Landon's bell rang, and Marion ran as fast as she could, without making any reply to Mrs. Smith.

CHAPTER IV.

DR. EASY had come to see Mrs. Landon; he was very kind and attentive. Mrs. Landon asked how his wife was, and hearing that she was very weak still, she asked if there was nothing that could be sent from her garden or house for her. Dr. Easy said that he should be much obliged if they could supply him with a little fresh butter, as that they could not get at home, and his wife had expressed a wish for it. "Certainly," said Mrs. Landon; "and, Marion, do you remember that some goes to-morrow."

After the doctor was gone, Mrs. Landon said that she felt very much for them: they were very poor, and she a great invalid; and that Dr. Easy was so easily imposed upon, he got cheated on all sides. She added - "It is fortunate for him they have applied to Mr. Landon; they will be better off now for supplies." Marion remembered the short weight, and the removal of all the fat. She sighed deeply; she felt as if she ought to tell her mistress, and yet, from what she had heard from both Hardy and Mrs. Smith, it was done with Mr. Landon's knowledge. She knew not what to do.

Soon Mr. Landon came in; he had been riding all day, and seemed tired. After enquiring for his wife, he told Marion to fetch his slippers, and sat down by Mrs. Landon's couch. As Marion was pulling off his boots he said, "By the-bye, Marion, I've seen your mother to-day - Martin is your name, isn't it?"

"Yes, Sir," said Marion.

"Well, they're in great trouble: their landlord has turned them out for debt. She was crying and wringing her hands, and your father was nearly as bad. I was sorry to hear, too, that your brother is likely to be sent to the iron-gang - that young lad who is on Hunt's farm."

"What, Jacob, Sir?" said Marion.

"Yes, that's the name; he has been robbing his master. He was set to plant potatoes, and he managed to make off with a great number very cleverly, and many other tricks of the kind. They seem a sad set. How is it you are so different?" added he kindly. Marion looked at her mistress, but said nothing. Tears rolled down her cheeks.

The next morning Mrs. Landon said that she might walk into the settlement, and see what had become of her parents.

When Marion first came to Mrs. Grey's as a little girl, she did not appear to care for her mother much; but since she had, by God's grace, learnt His will, and tried to act up to what had been promised for her at her baptism, she had felt more for her family. She knew that, as a child of God, she must be a dutiful child to her parents; - that it was her duty to pray for

them, to be very sorry for their faults, and to help them in every way she could. By far the greater part of Marion's wages had been given by her to her parents, and she had, according to her ability, given good advice to her sisters and brothers. When she reached the settlement, she found that her father and mother were still at the hut, their landlord having allowed them to remain another day.

What an uncomfortable, wretched state every thing was in! The father was nailing down an old box, and the mother, all rags and dirt, with a pipe in her mouth, sat on a low stool looking on. When they saw Marion, they made loud lamentations, complained of the hard-heartedness of their landlord, and the undutifulness and wickedness of their children in bringing disgrace upon them. "There's Jacob in gaol - he'll be sentenced to the gang; there's Betsy run off with Sam Foster, turned out of place as a thief; there's John in Norfolk Island, and the rest must starve!"

"Ah, no!" said the mother; "Marion will not let that be. I will say *she's* a good girl. Lend us a trifle now, my darling, to pay up what we owe, and I swear it shall come again to you this time."

"Mother," said Marion, "you shall have all I've got, but that is but ten shillings. I bought a pair of shoes, and that's all. You've had all last half's wages, and now no more will be coming for three months."

"Ten shillings! why we owe better than three pounds, girl," said the father. "Have ye no way of making it out?"

"None," said Marion; though the fact and all Mrs. Smith said did flit across her mind; but she hastily dismissed the thought, and asked if they could not find work any where. Just then who should ride by but Mr. Hardy! He stopped, and got off his horse. - "Ha, Martin, I'm sorry for ye. Bad times these, Mrs. Martin. How are you, Marion?" added he, as he put his hat down. "Marion," said he, in a lower voice, "though you spoke up the other morning, I can't for the life of me, forget you. I can only say I'm ready now to make it all right. If you will marry me, I'll pay your father's debts."

Marion rose and walked to the door of the hut, and Hardy told her parents that he wished to befriend them; that he loved Marion better than any other person; that he wished to make her his wife, and that he had a comfortable home to offer.

"Well," said Martin, "and so you have, and I can say that she is a good girl, and it is a reward to her for her goodness."

"But she won't have me," said Hardy. "Why, I can't tell; but she'll say nothing to me - nothing at all;" and he looked very unhappy.

Marion was speaking to her little sisters, and Martin said - "O that's coyness and shyness, that's all. She'll come round."

“Well, then, let me have your good word,” said Hardy, “and I'll set you up. I don't know why, but somehow my heart is greatly set on that girl;” and he went out of the hut. “Good morning, Marion,” said he. “I won't disturb you;” and, giving Mrs. Martin half-a-crown, he rode off.

CHAPTER V.

AND NOW came a very hard trial for Marion: her father and mother first entreated, and then scolded her, about not marrying Hardy. They said it was cruel to them, for Hardy would keep them from want; in fact, it would be the making of all the family. Besides, it was a capital match - so clever and so sober a man, with such a snug home, and good herds and flocks of his own. Folks said he would soon quit being overseer at all, and be quite a gentleman. All this and a great deal more they said to induce her to consent; and when Marion tried to explain her reason - that it was because she did not think Mr. Hardy honest, and that her conscience told her those flocks and herds were gained by dishonest and evil means - they only laughed at her, and called her senseless and fantastical. Marion felt this very much; but the hardest part of it was, that she secretly liked Hardy; she liked his goodnatured merry way, and his good looks; she felt that he had been kind and forgiving to her often; she felt that she could love him, and that it was very hard to say "no"; but she feared and loved God more, and she prayed to suffer reproach, or want, or any thing, rather than be led to do what was displeasing in His sight. She knew that God required our *whole* hearts. We must serve Him entirely, in every step we take - not when it is convenient or more plausible in the eyes of the world. She had learnt what it was to be honest in the sight of God, as well as honest to men, and she shuddered at any thing approaching to dishonesty. The lessons she had learnt during her month's trial when a child, had sunk into her heart, and brought forth good fruit.

She told her parents that she could never marry Ben Hardy, but she would work for them, and give them all she had; and, followed by their taunts and reproaches, she returned home. She was sad at heart, and yet she felt comforted: her conscience was at ease, and as she walked she prayed that she might continue to resist temptation.

When she reached home, Mrs. Smith began upon the same subject. She said that every one was wondering what could make Marion refuse Mr. Hardy. “It was a great shame; and now, too,” added Mrs. Smith, “that your family is come to such disgrace, sure it would be a fine thing to be Mrs. Hardy, and hold up your head in spite of them.”

But Marion felt that perhaps in the sight of God there was no difference

between stealing a master's potatoes, or taking away calves which, from drought, had been suffered to wander about. She felt that the eighth Commandment, "Thou shalt not steal," and our Saviour's words, "Therefore all things whatsoever you would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them; for this is the Law and the Prophets" - was broken in either case.

Several weeks passed away. Poor Mrs. Landon grew worse instead of better, and Marion saw so many things going on wrong in the house, that she felt quite unhappy. She began to think that Mrs. Smith was not always quite honest even towards her master and mistress; and this was likely enough, for when we take a false step, it often throws us very far; when we miss our road, we soon lose ourselves, if we are not watching and looking out for signs to tell us whereabouts we are.

CHAPTER VI.

MR. HARDY, finding that Marion really was firm, at last ceased to follow her. He soon courted and married another young woman.

It was a blow to Marion; it was a great trial; but she felt supported, and soon was enabled almost to forget Hardy as she attended upon her sick mistress. Very, very ill was poor Mrs. Landon, and there seemed but small chance that she could survive the accident. Mr. Landon was very fond of her, and very kind; he nursed her with gentleness and affection, and studied in every way to please her. When he was obliged to be out, Marion sat by her; and often, if she was easy enough, her mistress talked kindly to her, as she would to a friend, and spoke of her feelings about her illness, and the comfort she felt in all she had learnt as a child, and the blessing it was not to have forgotten God till she was laid on a bed of sickness!

One day Mrs. Landon happened to speak of Mr. Hardy, who had given up his situation as overseer, and lived as a gentleman. She said, "How was it, Marion, you did not marry him? I always thought he liked you, and I thought him a very well-behaved, pleasing young man."

"Yes, Ma'am, I know he is. O, Ma'am, it has been a sore trial to me, but, thank God, it is over!" and she burst into tears.

"Why did you not tell me before if you were in trouble, Marion?" said her mistress. "You know I have always told you to come to me; we were children together, and I might be able to advise and comfort you."

"Yes, Ma'am, I know you could and would; and many's the time I've been going to tell all, but you were so ill! - and so I have never said a syllable to any one who understands me." And then she told Mrs. Landon

all about it - how Mr. Hardy had pressed her, and her parents urged her, and how she herself had ill well-inclined towards him. "But then, Ma'am, I could not, for he is not honest, and his wealth - 'tis gained by dishonest means!"

"Hardy not honest! Surely you mistake, Marion. Your master has the highest opinion of him. I will ask him," said Mrs. Landon.

"Please don't, Ma'am, for - for - I believe my Master knows it already. I believe Master knows it all," said Marion, hesitating.

"Impossible!" said her mistress. Then, by asking more, Mrs. Landon drew from Marion all the particulars, and before she finished, Marion also told her what she feared was going on in the house, and all about the short weight, and other things which she had seen. "And now, Ma'am, I've told all. It has weighed on me day and night. I knew you would not suffer it, and that your Mama would be frightened at it. And O, my dear lady, I hope I've not hurt you or vexed you!" said she, seeing that her mistress looked anxious and excited.

"You have not hurt me, Marion; you have done right, quite right, to tell all you knew. And now give me a little cold water, and leave me."

Marion obeyed silently, and trembling at the change in Mrs. Landon's countenance.

When she left the room, Mrs. Landon burst into tears; then, composing herself, she said in a tremulous voice, "I will ask him - it cannot be! My dear, good husband never could be so blinded as this implies. God forbid!"

When Mr. Landon left his wife's room that night to call his servants into prayers, they observed that he looked much upset. It seemed as if he had been weeping, and his voice trembled as he read prayers. They concluded that Mrs. Landon must be worse, and they were right - she was much worse; but though this was the case - though the doctor was sent for, and Marion could not leave the bed-side - still Mr. Landon came into his study, and called up Mrs. Smith. He went over some accounts with her hurriedly, and then, paying her wages, dismissed her.

He then sent for the clergyman, as his wife wished to receive the Lord's Supper.

When Mr. Jackson asked him to join, he said he could not, and there was so much agitation in his manner that the clergyman forbore to press the subject.

This comfort and blessing was administered to Mrs. Landon and Marion; and, after all was over, and Mr. Jackson gone, Mr. Landon went to his wife. She was much exhausted, but as he knelt in anxious sorrow by her bed, she smiled, and put her hand into his. - "I have distressed you," said she, faintly; "but, William, it was my duty. I could not leave you without

pointing out the danger of such practices.”

“Well, my love, say no more,” answered her husband. “I have done as you wished; I have dismissed Mrs. Smith, and I will look out more sharply henceforth - if, indeed, I have spirit to do anything again;” and pressing her hand - that hand which he felt would so soon be unable to return the pressure - Mr. Landon burst into an agony of tears.

“William,” said she to her husband, “don't say so: God will make up my loss to you. Turn to Him, my dear husband, with your whole heart, and He will turn to you, and refresh you. You have done wrong, but God is merciful, and He, knowing the temptation, will not be extreme if you repent.”

“I see that it is wrong - I see it now, but I have done it because others did, and because of the difficulties there are to prevent it,” said Mr. Landon, bitterly; “and O! *this* is my punishment - my beloved wife, my comfort and support, taken so soon!” and again he wept.

Two days passed, and Mr. Landon was a widower!

He had never left her side; and an hour before her death they had prayed together. He bowed his head and bore this affliction meekly. His love for her had been strong and pure; he had long respected and admired her character. He had felt that when she was his wife, he should be supported to do what was right, both by her counsel and example. He had been called a good man; he had built a church, and attended service regularly, and maintained decency and order in his household. He was called an honourable man, and stood well with the world. His riches had increased, but the evils which money making so often brings, had grown upon him - his heart was not right. Since he knew and loved Ellen Grey, he became aware of this, and now she was removed! But in her removal he learnt a bitter but wholesome lesson. His sins, his long indulged habits, were brought home to him, and when he laid his wife in the grave, his heart became alive to his faults, and her influence was still shed over him.

Several weeks afterwards he called on Mr. Hardy, and after much explanation, much self abasement, Mr. Landon made Hardy promise to drive a herd of cattle for him to some station far up the country, and deliver this letter: -

“Sir, - The accompanying herd belongs of right to you. Many years ago, when there was a drought, your father's cattle were scattered, and my overseer possessed himself of many of the calves. Like many others, I allowed it, thinking that he would look after my property all the better for it. I have, through God's mercy, become aware of the sin of masters conniving at dishonesty, when it does not touch their own pockets, and I desire to make restitution, that my repentance may be sincere.” Your

Obedient Servant, J. Landon.

Shortly after this letter was delivered, to the astonishment of the gentleman and Hardy, who almost believed his master mad, Mr. Landon received the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper in his church. Sad as had been the long neglect of this duty, it was perhaps better that he had not presented himself to communicate while he was wilfully doing wrong, by conniving at his servant's dishonesty. He continued to live on his farm, but most of his former servants were dismissed. Marion remained with him. He never married again, but lived quietly, mixing but little in society, and was very grave, as if something weighed on his mind.

After some years, both Marion and her master were deeply grieved to hear that poor Hardy was ruined. His wife had turned out very ill, and every thing seemed to go wrong with him. His sheep died, and his crops failed. He fell into great poverty and distress. Mr. Landon went to see him, and relieved him as far as he could; but he was much altered, and instead of receiving Mr. Landon's attention graciously, he said "I am a ruined and broken hearted man. *You* first encouraged me, at least you did not warn me against dishonesty, and now I have long been given up to the devil! Marion too, *she* spurned me!" By degrees, this bitter spirit was soothed; but whether Hardy repented or not we cannot tell.

He was suddenly summoned into the presence of his Maker. An upset from a dray killed him.

And Marion mourned for him! She never accepted any other offer, but lived on with Mr. Landon.

APTON FARM

PART I

O teach me, Lord, my heart to try,
Ere I before Thee come;
Mindful of Thine all-searching eye,
And of the judgment doom.

Lord, if within my spirit aught
Of former sin remains,
O grant me tears of bitter thought
To wash away the stains.

CHAPTER I.

THE days work was over; and Robert Stevens led home the horses from the paddock in which they had been ploughing. As he reached the fence he turned round to give a last look. "There might be worse furrows than that," said he, with evident satisfaction. "Straight as an arrow and no ugly clods, it is as fine as a lady's garden pretty near! and I'll wager there'll be a goodly crop from off that bit of ground. 'Tis a choice piece: and how pretty the furrows look. Well old girl," continued he, patting one of the horses, "we've done no bad days work and now we'll home."

So saying, he whistled cheerily and proceeded across one or two more paddocks. And now a hut appeared in sight. It was nothing more than a slab hut, but still there was an air about it which bespoke some degree of wealth to the possessor. There was a good barn and several other out buildings, all in repair, and a fenced yard in much neater order than one often sees in the bush residences in this country. Several cattle were grazing near, and a great number of fowls and ducks and geese, were scattered about, some already perched on their favourite roosting spot, while others seemed still inclined to linger on and peck about. As Robert came near, a tribe of dogs rushed out and gave him a noisy welcome, another man who was in the yard came and helped him to give the good plough mares a feed of corn and then he turned towards the hut.

Robert was apparently a young man of about two or three and twenty, he was what would be called, comely and well-looking - he was the only son of his mother and she was a widow. And a very dutiful son he was to her, and every one who knew them, thought they were "lucky" folks, and had every thing to make them happy, for they were rich! they had a capital firm, well stocked too, and it was hinted that Stevens had over and above

this, left some money in the bank. He had died suddenly a year before the time of which I am writing. He had been a dark looking man, one who never looked you straight in the face, and was always said to be of a very bad temper. People did not like him, and he had always kept aloof from his neighbours. Since his death, his widow had not seemed to enjoy her property, which has been left to her for her life, nor did she appear more cheerful and happier, as people supposed she would now that her ill-tempered husband was gone. She looked melancholy enough in his life time, but she looked still more so since, and yet some old settlers about, remembered her to have been a gay, fresh coloured lass, who had a joke and a smile for every one. A pretty, modest and good tempered girl. Her son seemed to have inherited this good temper and gaiety of her, but had you seen the widow on this evening, as she was when Robert entered the kitchen, you would wonder if this description would apply to the same person who now sat on the bench dressed in black, in a widow's close cap. The face, was deadly pale and much wrinkled about the eyes, the hair was very grey, and looked older than the slight figure seemed to warrant.

"I'm glad you're returned Bob, said she, I was looking out long for you."

"Why I'm not late," said he, "but you're not well, or you've had your old fancies again, and come, if you had seen the pretty day's work I'd done, you'd be cheered up. 'Tis a beautiful bit of ground that, it is quite a treat to turn up such mould as that, and though I say it, there is not a prettier, snugger farm in the colony than Apton is, we'll have fine crops I warrant."

The widow sighed deeply but did not answer, she rose however, and made preparations for her son's supper.

CHAPTER II.

WHILE eating his supper, Robert talked on, and he calculated how much the crops and how much the cattle would bring in that year. To all this his mother listened, but when he paused, she said, "O Bob, I'd sooner be without it. I'd rather have a crust of dry bread and nothing more, than have my present feelings. I always did mistrust it; I always did lift up my voice against it, always did I say? no, would to God I had done so always. No, I sinned grievously, but afterwards, I begged and begged, that it might be given up. Then followed a long time, a long, weary time; I was never happy, and yet the thoughts did not come so often or so badly, till my illness the other day, and O Bob," and she shuddered as she spoke, "when I lay so near death, then it all came back again; O, that I could make a clean breast!"

"Mother, you see this wrongly; may be you did wrong at the time, you

and father too, but it is all passed and gone; 'tis years ago, and you are sorry enough for it; what more can you do? After all, you did no harm, you only held your tongue, when speaking might have hanged a fellow servant; I can't see no harm in this, not I. And now the spring cart is mended, you can go to church, and that'll set you easy again, and do eat something for you've never picked up flesh or strength since you were ill."

CHAPTER III.

ON the following Sunday, Mrs. Stevens was driven to church by her son. The freshness of the air and the motion perhaps did her good, or more probably it was her son's kind attention to her comfort, and his cheerful merry voice, which roused her.

Robert was indeed a most excellent son, and when his mother's pale face and her care worn countenance came before him as he was working, he felt that he would do any thing to make her happy. Nor could he exactly understand *why* she was not so. She had every thing to make her so; plenty of this world's good, a pleasant place to live in, her neighbours respected her, and her son loved her dearly, nor had he ever given her any trouble or anxiety. He was sober and industrious. What was the reason? It was an uneasy conscience.

Mrs. Stevens had attended church pretty regularly, she read too out of her Bible and Prayer Book. All this she had done for years, and it had given her a good name; she was called a religious person, and some went so far as to think her grave melancholy expression was a further proof of her being religious. Why, however, did she on this day, when the Lord's Table was spread, turn her back on it? why did she go away empty, refusing that bread of life, which alone can sustain the life of the soul, just as our food nourishes the body? why had she for years, time after time, neglected this duty, this exceeding great privilege?

When young, she had been a regular communicant, but after her marriage she left it off. Years passed, and she became hardened to it. Her conscience ceased to smite her, when she heard notice given that the Lord's Supper would be administered on the Sunday following. She learnt to leave the church without sorrow or compunction, though it was ready. But she was never happy, and then came a dark, dark time, and all her beauty was consumed away; she no longer sang at her work or smiled, she went about heavily and mournfully. People said that it was her husband's bad temper, but when he died it was the same, even worse. It then pleased God to afflict her with a sore illness, and during her agony and danger, her conscience again became very loud in its warnings. This made her, on the

day we are speaking of, bow down her head and shed bitter tears, as she again left the church, and dared not present herself before the Lord's table. Now again her conscience spoke to her.

Robert was disappointed, he hoped that now he had mended the spring cart, and she could go to church, she would at least have been as well as she was before that illness. But to day, the going to church, seemed only to have increased her misery. She kept in her own room for the greater part of the day, and when she made the effort to join him, she could scarcely speak. A neighbour came in, and to him Robert expressed his fears about his mother. Mr Barker, shook his head and said "she looked very bad sure enough. No doubt it was something past the power of man."

Then he told Robert that he knew some one once at home, in Ireland, who was taken in that way, but that their friends took them to the Priest, who soon put it to rights. Mr. Barker was a Romanist, and Robert did not agree with him. So he thought this all nonsense, and said "he didn't see what a Priest could do, more than any other man." But Mrs. Stevens heard them talking, as she sat silent in the corner, and it struck her, that perhaps the Minister might be able to comfort and advise her. She thought of this a good while, and the more she thought of it the more she wished to speak to Mr. Lloyd. But he was a stranger to her, he had only just come to the district. She heard he was very strict. And something in his face and manner made her feel a little dread of him. The former Clergy man, had often come to Apton, but he had always praised her for coming to church, and had not spoken of her neglecting the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

Robert went out with Mr. Barker to look at the farm, and when she was left alone, Mrs. Stevens took out her Prayer Book. She read the exhortation which is used when the "Minister giveth warning" for the celebration of the Holy Communion.

That part particularly struck her where it says - "And because it is requisite that no man should come to the Holy Communion, but with a full trust in God's mercy and with a quiet conscience: therefore if there be any of you who by this means cannot quiet his own conscience herein, but requireth further comfort or counsel, let him come to me, or to some other discreet and learned Minister of God's word, and open his grief; that by the Ministry of God's holy word he may receive the benefit of absolution, together with ghostly counsel and advice, to the quieting of his conscience and avoiding of all scruple and doubtfulness."

And in the Second Exhortation, addressed particularly to those who are negligent of coming, she read "If any man say, I am a grievous sinner and therefore am afraid to come: *wherefore then do ye not repent and amend?*"

"Ah!" said Mrs. Stevens to herself, "I will just go to our Minister, I will

tell all, and may be I shall find comfort. ”

Robert, when Mr. Barker left him, went to another hut; Janet Maclean lived there and he persuaded her to allow him to have their banns published the Sunday after next. He hoped that when he brought home his wife, it might cheer up his mother, for Janet was good tempered and a well spoken pretty girl, whom Mrs. Stevens had always liked.

CHAPTER IV.

A few days after this, Mrs. Stevens told her son she thought she should walk down to the Settlement. “Walk!” said Robert, “sure you're not up to it mother. Wait till I can go with you, or go in the cart.”

“No thank you Bob, I must go alone, and I would rather walk. I have strength enough for it. Alone, alone!” said she, repeating the word, “I'll stop at the slip rails as I pass, look out for me, that you may take the house key.”

“Very well mother, I'll do so, but what now makes you take on in that fashion? Janet offered to come and stop with you I'm sure she'd do you good,” said Bob.

“Nothing will do me good, till I can put down those awful thoughts,” said his mother pressing her hand to her head as if in sudden pain, “but through God's grace I'll try to day, if comfort can be had.” Robert wondered what she meant and he felt uneasy about her, and when she stood at the slip rails two hours after as she had agreed, waiting to give him the key, he almost fancied that her mind was not right. He again begged to go with her, but she waved her hand wildly and said “go back to your work I must say what you shall not hear, I must go alone.” And she walked on very quickly.

Her son watched her till she was lost from sight in the thick bush, and then he remained leaning over the rails and thinking. He had heard people say, that it was from being religious, his mother was so stern and gloomy; and he began to believe that so much reading had turned her head.

Robert had no very strong temptations. He was not tempted to drink, or to steal, or to be ill tempered. It was more comfortable and more respectable to be sober and honest, and he had been taught from a child to be hard working, so he thought that he was good enough. He went to church whenever he could, but he had never realized to himself, that there is but one way to Heaven, a strait and narrow way, which will not admit of turning to look round at the world; of resting awhile in the security of comfort and ease, or of waiting to be careful and over anxious about anything. On this path we must go straight on, neither looking to the right

hand nor to the left, and in the end it leads to Heaven. All other ways, those broad roads, where people stop to amuse themselves by the way, where it is imagined we may love the world, and yet be on our journey; these broad roads lead not to Heaven, but to Hell. Robert had not felt this. He had not committed any great sin it is true, but he was sleeping and wanted rousing, such a sleep is very dangerous!

And now Mrs. Stevens is in Mr. Lloyd's parlour. She is speaking, in a very low voice, and Mr. Lloyd, is listening attentively. He looks very grave, but kind. He had made her sit down, seeing how exhausted she appeared.

“And you are the person to whom Apton Farm belongs, and your son lives with you?” asked Mr. Lloyd.

“Yes sir.”

“And you say, you are a regular attendant on church, and that you read your Bible, but that you have not received the Holy Communion for a long time? why is this,? said Mr. Lloyd, have you been confirmed?”

“Yes sir, when I was a girl in England, I then received the Sacrament. I came out here very young and went into service, I there fell in with my husband; I never took the Sacrament after I was married, because he didn't, and I grew careless and I forgot it.”

“But now that you are again reminded of it, why any longer neglect it? It has been very wrong to stay away so long - but now, redeem the time,” said Mr. Lloyd.

“Sir, I can not, I dare not,” said she, shuddering, “I have made bold to come to you and I hope you will forgive me, I have something to tell.”

“My good woman you were quite right to come. It is just what I wish all my parishioners should do. If any thing is on their minds, to whom can they apply so well as to one whom God Himself appoints to watch over them? and you did very right.”

“Thank you sir, then I'll begin my story.”

CHAPTER V.

“My husband and I lived on a gentleman's estate, he was a farm laborer and it was at a time when wages were high; we were saving, and hard working, and laid by something instead of spending it all: we wished to get a bit of land of our own and farm it, and we saved all we could to do this. Then sir my man got an accident, he hurt his arm and for a long time could do no work and it took a sight of money to pay the doctor. We had to leave our place on the farm and lived in a hut belonging to the master, where he allowed us odd jobs, such as my husband could do, and I was

forced to work too. All our savings went, and from that time things took a wrong turn. My husband never held up his head again, and my heart failed me much. About this time, it was on a Tuesday evening, after sunset, I mind it was raining hard, one of the servants from the farm came into our hut. I was busy with my children and gave no particular heed to him, but he and my husband talked long together, and they went out, dark and wet as it was. Hour after hour passed, and I got uneasy. I didn't know where my husband was. It was dark as pitch, and rained terribly hard. I stood at the door of the hut with my baby in my arms who was ill, he died just a week after, and somehow or other sir, strange fancies came over me. I mind that I felt shivered, and I went back to the fire with my child, and I fell asleep, then sir," said she, rising and speaking, so fast and low, that Mr. Lloyd had to ask her to repeat what she said, "then sir, a dream came over me. I dream't that my husband and me were living in a nice snug farm, that we were all well to do and comfortable, and all was nice about us; but wherever I turned I saw a black snake coiled up lying by me, if I went out or staid in, lay down in my bed or was at my meals, still I thought this creature was at my side, and his eyes glistened at me, and a shudder went through me right into my heart. O sir, I shall never forget that dream."

Here she stopped to take breath, and it seemed as if the recollections of all she had said prevented her from saying another word.

Mr. Lloyd said, "and did your husband return?"

"My husband sir? what? O sir, yes he saw the snake afterwards, but it was no dream, he saw it when he was dying, it was no dream then, sir!" said she wildly, and clenching her hands, "that snake is the Devil!"

Mr. Lloyd tried to bring her back to her story, and at last, she recalled her wandering thoughts, and after a little while went on, though she grew paler and shook violently as she spoke.

"When my husband came back he shut the door, and told me his fortune was made. The long and short of the matter is sir, the other man had managed to make off with a number of mares and cattle, at different times, he was going far off with them, but could not get away without assistance, and he knew how poor we were, and offered a bribe to my husband to help him, and keep the secret. What they did that night, I cannot say, I don't know, but he gave a sum of money, and swore, as long as we kept the secret, he would send us more; he kept his word, and we kept ours.

"I misdoubted the thing, and I told my husband he'd better have nothing to do with it, we were poor, but we were honest, and better we kept so. However, sir, he showed me that this was not dishonesty. We took nothing, if we told perhaps the man would be hanged, and what he gave

us would make us comfortable for the rest of our lives. I looked at my child and thought that money would feed and clothe him, and get medicine for him: I looked at the miserable hut where the rain beat in, and I thought of the comfortable home I had seen in my dream - I held my tongue!

“Well sir, we heard no more of the matter. No one ever suspected we had any words with the man who had suddenly left. We kept quiet and did not move yet. My child died, though I got medicine and all he wanted. I buried him and three others all within a twelve-month. Then my husband got better, he worked again and we bought some land, and built a hut; fine seasons came, and we made a deal of money. Apton became a right good farm. My son Robert was born there, but I never had any peace, I lost my happiness. I had every thing about me, but I didn't enjoy my life. One night again, I dream't I saw the snake, and then I begged my husband on my knees, to give back all we took from the man: sir, I said I would tell all, rather than live on as we were doing. I could not bear my thoughts. My husband grew angry, he swore at me and he struck me, he was a changed man, he threatened my very life if I ever whispered of it, so I held my tongue. We were never agreeable together afterwards, he behaved badly to me, but that's past and gone now! He took very ill, and suffered mortal pain, he never let any one come nigh him but me, and he dared me ever to breathe a syllable to any one, he was so wild and unnatural like, that it frightened me, and I swore one night I never would! and now sir, I'm breaking my oath, what will come of it. O God help me!”

“Such an oath, it would be worse to keep than to break,” said Mr. Lloyd.

“And then,” interrupted she, “then sir, he saw the snake, he shrieked and said I had put it on him, and that it was killing him body and soul, O sir, his cries will ever sound in my ears! O it was awful! For hours he raved about the snake; he shook his fist at me and said I had done it, and, sir, he never spoke to me again. No, he left off raving and turned his head, I heard low groans, but never another word did he speak. He died that night, and I was left alone with one boy, that's my son Robert.”

“Yours is a fearful story, indeed,” said Mr. Lloyd, “it is an awful lesson to teach us how great is the danger of sinning wilfully, with our eyes open. You both knew you were doing wrong, and your ill gotten wealth has indeed proved a curse.”

“Sir, sir!” sobbed the poor woman, “can you give me no comfort, am I lost? can nothing be done for my husband?”

“My poor woman,” said Mr. Lloyd, “your husband is gone, where there is no more repentance. As the tree falls, so does it lie. Let us leave that to God. But for yourself, you have time given you. It is God's grace which has made you even now confess and feel such sorrow. You can repent, and

may God enable you to do so truly and effectually! "There is hope for sinners, if they come back in real penitence, if they are willing to obey God."

"I am ready to do all that you say sir," said she, dropping on her knees. "Now you see why I could not come to the Lord's Table. I was very ill sir some time back, and it was then that all that had passed came before me again. I seemed to feel I was a girl again, and I remembered all I had been taught, and I thought of the wickedness of never receiving the Lord's Supper. For sir, I have been taught. But could I, could I dare to come!"

"Certainly not," said Mr. Lloyd, "it is dangerous indeed to stay away, but awfully dangerous to come when we are living in sin. Professions of repentance are not enough, we must do the best of our power, undo what we have done, we must be ready to act as well as to say Lord, Lord! Is the man alive from whom you got the money?"

"He is, sir, I heard of him no later than two months ago. He is rich they say, but O sir, for God's sake don't make me tell of him, he is a fearful man."

"If we are doing right we need not fear what man can do," returned Mr. Lloyd, "but I must have time to think of all you have said. I will of course say not a word, and in the meantime I hope to see you come to church, I hope that you will be constant in your prayers for grace, and doubt not you will receive comfort. I will also pray for you, and you may thank God that He has roused you once more before it is too late. Hear His voice, and pray to do His bidding, that you may be saved from eternal punishment."

Mrs. Stevens did not answer. Her hands were clasped together and she remained on her knees. Mr. Lloyd said in a solemn voice, "O God whose nature and property is ever to have mercy and to forgive, receive our humble petitions; and though we be tied and bound with the chain of our sins, yet let the pitifulness of thy great mercy loose us: for the honor of Jesus Christ, our mediator and advocate."

The widow tried to say "Amen," but her sobs choked her voice. Mr. Lloyd, made her sit quietly in his room, and take some little refreshment before she returned.

When she left, she thanked him with streaming eyes, and said she felt relieved, Mr. Lloyd promised to call and see her in a day or two, and Mrs. Stevens proceeded towards home, she was exhausted and feeble, and was greatly comforted by seeing Robert, who feeling anxious about his mother, had come to meet her. She told him she had been to see the Clergyman, but no more, and they walked on in silence.

It may perhaps be thought that of course now Mrs. Stevens must be quite happy and even joyful. She had confessed her fault, and she felt sorry,

indeed she had suffered a great deal both in body and mind. Now then, she will at once receive her reward. But no, we who have thus gone astray may not so easily attain to all the privileges of obedient children. Confession is one step, but it must not end here. We must take care to prove our penitence by deeds of self abasement. We must prove that we are really sorry by being content, as the prodigal son was, to be one of his Father's hired servants. God will, in His own time, lift us up, but we must be content to sit down in the lowest place, in sorrow and mourning. It is a work of time to restore our Baptismal garments to their purity and whiteness. But every effort will, through God's grace, accomplish something, and if we really try to wash them with our tears, we know that our Saviour can and will cleanse them in His blood.

Mrs. Stevens had confessed her faults and felt sorry for her sins, she was comforted, and she felt something like hope; but never perhaps before had she so completely felt the words, "have mercy upon me a miserable sinner."

There is something in this spell
Of a fearful one from Hell.
A voice from Heaven hath told us plain
That he labours might and main,
In the little space he can,
If he may but ruin man,
But in them such mystery seems
That I dare not think of dreams;
Whence they come or what they say,
If they be from Hell or nay.
Oft we know they are from Heaven,
Holding up in mirror true
Our most secret selves to view,
Unto them such power is given.
Haply we in them are brought,
Unto world's beyond our thought;
It may be our Angel good,
In a way not understood,
With the enemy doth strive
While we scarcely seem alive,
And to sense, in slumber seal'd,
Thus the strife is half revealed.
Only this I dare to tell
Of matter so inscrutable,
Did we always rise and pray,
For the fearful firings they say,
We should wiser be all day.

PART II.

O if Thou seest us erring still,
O bend to thine, our stubborn will,
And bring us to Thy fold again,
(If need) by chastisements and pain.
Bring us before our Sun go down,
To bear the Cross, to win the Crown.

CHAPTER I.

ABOUT two weeks after Mrs. Stevens went to Mr. Lloyd, Robert and Janet Maclean took a walk together. Their banns had been twice published and now they talked with cheerful hope of that time when Robert would bring her as his wife to Apton Farm. He had been born there and he had worked on it ever since he was a boy. Lately he had made some little improvements to please Janet. He added to the garden and made it very neat, and some new useful furniture was added in the house.

It was Sunday, but neither of them had been to church. This arose from the foolish habit which people have of thinking it more modest to be absent when their banns are called. But is it right? Are they not going to undertake new and important duties? Will their own strength suffice for this?

Or should they not rather, especially seek for grace, to give them grave and solemn thoughts, to prepare them to perform their respective duties as husband and wife? How can people expect God's blessing on their marriage, when they absent themselves from that place, which alone sanctifies their union, when they deprive themselves of the benefit of public prayer, so thoughtlessly?

They are not ashamed to have their names coupled together in joke by any one who chooses. Why then when it is done by God's appointed Minister in a Sacred Holy place?

I fear that Robert and Janet, like very many others, did not think seriously enough of what they were undertaking. They liked each other, and Janet liked Apton Farm. They were young and lighthearted, and they forgot to pray that God would strengthen and sanctify their affection for each other, so that they might be enabled to bear with one another, and strictly fulfil their vows:- "to cling to one another, for better for worse." No earthly love, however strong, can do this. No other motives of self interest or convenience can make people act up to their vows, when troubles come, and when bad temper shews, and mutual faults are exposed. That love which is purified and sanctified by religion alone, can

do this. We must seek for God's blessing upon us, and pray for strength to do our duty, which may not always be easy.

And perhaps it is from want of this that we see and hear of so many unhappy marriages in this country, husbands forsaking their wives, and wives leaving their husbands. Do they forget that for all this, they will have to render a strict account? Janet went in to see Mrs. Stevens, who was very poorly, and then she walked round the garden and into the yard, and Robert was but too proud to shew her all his treasures.

Janet was in high spirits, and she was foolish enough to toss up her head at her father's humble hut when she returned.

She found her mother in her dirty working clothes hard at work, and though generally a good natured, kind girl, her head was so full of being mistress of Apton Farm, that she sat down with her thoughts running on what she should do, and what she should wear, when she was "Mrs. Stevens," and did not attempt to assist her mother.

CHAPTER II.

"WELL, Mrs, Stevens," said Mr. Lloyd, the next day, as he sat in her room, "I have thought very seriously about it, and I can see but one way. If you are sorry and feel that you and your husband did wrong to take the bribe, all that you can now do is to return it. It was very wrong to consent to keep his crime a secret; but I do not see how that can now be remedied. The ill-gotten wealth however, can, and ought to be returned."

"What sir, return it? we laid it out on this farm. Everything we have came from it. Besides, it is my son's after my death. Surely God will not require this of me!"

"We cannot serve God and mammon," said Mr. Lloyd. "God will not accept half our hearts, or a half obedience. You never ought to have received the bribe. You enjoyed it for years. "

"Enjoyed it sir? never! never *enjoyed* it, God knows," interrupted Mrs. Stevens.

"You used it for years," continued Mr. Lloyd. "It was perhaps a mercy that God did not quite give you up, and prevented your enjoying it, by a troubled conscience. You say yourself that you have never known peace. Why is this? Plainly because your conscience was uneasy. You cannot be a true member of Christ unless you are a partaker of that grace which is given us in the Sacrament He has ordained. You cannot present yourself at His table with your heart and hands unclean. How then will you stand before Him on the Last Day? If you are really in earnest and wish for an

untroubled conscience, give up that which has caused you to sin. Our Saviour tells us to cut off our right hand or pluck out our right eye, if they offend. It is better to enter into Heaven maimed, poor and naked, than to be cast into Hell.”

Mr. Lloyd spoke earnestly. Perhaps Mrs. Stevens thought him very hard and severe. For many persons think if they do but confess themselves wrong and talk of themselves as being sinners, this will stand in the place of that habitual obedience which they have neglected. But this is only going half way. If we have received that which we ought not, we should render it back again; if we have stolen goods, we should give them up; if we have spoken evil of our neighbour, from envy and illnature, we should confess that we spoke falsely, and compel ourselves to do justice to them, as publicly as we injured them. If our sins are those of drunkenness, or any other bodily indulgence, we should give it up and impose on ourselves acts of mortification and self-denial, as regards innocent pleasures, to prove to ourselves that we are in earnest. If ill tempered, we should confess it to those whom we have hurt, and seek occasions to make it up by a double effort to please others, and deny ourselves. If indolent, we should impose tasks on ourselves in proportion to the indolence we confess with our lips. Not that these efforts can avail unless our Saviour pleads for us. Through Him alone can we be forgiven. But after having turned from Him, after having wilfully quenched that spirit which He shed into our hearts at our Baptism, how dare we again appear before Him, unless we *do all that we can*, little as that is, to prove our sincerity?

All this Mr. Lloyd said to the widow, and much more besides, and then he thought that perhaps it was better to leave her to think of it. So saying he would shortly call again he mounted his horse and rode off.

Mrs. Stevens sat like one stupified. She spoke not, she moved not. She had not looked for this!

Many many thoughts crowded on her. She thought of the disgrace it would be, that the Stevens who had so long been reckoned respectable and well off should so publicly acknowledge themselves wrong, by giving up all they had! How every one would wonder and triumph over them, or perhaps laugh at their folly! From being rich and independent to become all at once poor! Ah! these thoughts were prompted by the Devil who is always at hand, holding up the world's opinion to us and working on our pride and love of comfort that he may draw us to himself. But unless we are so lost as to have altogether forfeited God's grace, there is also, another spirit ever by, ready to prompt good thoughts, pointing to a single and trusty Faith which looks not to the world, which weighs not consequences, but simply obeys God, leaving the issue to Him. And as the widow, in her

distress, said fervently, "Lord help me!" so these thoughts stole in, and she remembered that Christians must not look to be thought well of by the world, that God who sees all our struggles, will abundantly comfort us, and that if we are poor, because it is our duty to be so, He will provide for us. She thought of the blessing of a mind at peace, of once more receiving the Lord's Supper, and living wholly for the next world. And then she prayed!

CHAPTER III.

As the mother looked at her son and thought of his disappointment, her heart nearly sank within her. She felt ready to punish herself to the uttermost, but her child, it was hard and cruel to make him suffer!

Mr. Lloyd, felt very much for her. But still he could not say otherwise, than he did before. The property had been gotten by sin, and in order to repent truly of that sin, it must be given up. In the course of his many conversations with Mrs. Stevens, he learnt that she had married, knowing her husband to be a man of no principle. She had been better taught than most persons when young, and had been blessed with pious parents, perhaps it was through their prayers that, though she had gone astray, she was by suffering and a warning conscience recalled.

Mr. Lloyd tried to make her see, how taking one false step, for one moment wilfully acting against principle, leads us into a course of sin. She had no right to marry a man of no religion, no principle; but she did so. The consequence was, she became less attentive to her religious duties. She neglected the Holy Communion, and no wonder then that she was henceforth unable to resist temptation. Her soul was weak from want of nourishment, and when the tempter brought a prospect of comfort and wealth before her, she only feebly lifted up her voice and she yielded. And all she now suffered, all her unhappy hours, was but the natural consequence of thoughtless wilful departure from the right path.

But I cannot tell you all that passed in her mind, or all Mr. Lloyd said to her. It was a severe struggle, but prayer at last prevailed, and she was enabled to say, that she was ready. Mr. Lloyd, promised to speak to Robert. Mrs. Stevens dictated a letter to the man who had bribed her husband, telling him she could no longer retain it; and that she gave up Apton Farm to him, as it was his money which had purchased it. She retained some few head of cattle which Mr. Lloyd thought did not exactly come under the same concern, but everything else she consented to give up, hoping that God would forgive her great sins and absolve her from her offences.

After this letter was written, and Mr. Lloyd was gone, the widow felt easier than she had for some time. She thought how much happier she should be in a poor hut, than she had ever been here, where she had seen the black snake beside her, and where she had felt so miserable under an accusing conscience.

That night, long after Robert was asleep, she rose and went into his room. She knelt by his bed and offered up a prayer for him, that God would give him blessings above that of wordly riches, and make him a good man. She shed bitter tears to think that through her, he was to feel such disappointment, and in her grief she seized his hand and entreated him to forgive her, and to spare her reproach from him. Robert awoke and was in great alarm at seeing his mother by him and in such agitation. He strove to comfort her, and she told him that it rested with him to restore her peace of mind. She told him all - all that he had not heard before, and then on her knees besought him to join with her in giving it up. Robert thought his mother was mad, but he tried to soothe her and said he would do all she wished. And as he worked in the fields the next day, those fields of which he was so proud, Robert thought again and again of the subject. He could scarcely believe that Apton would really be given up, but as his mother's words came into his mind, and all that sad story which she had told him, he thought to himself that his duty was very plain, and could he but see his mother composed and cheerful he should be rewarded. It was a hard struggle, and Robert wondered how he should ever get through it.

His mother had said "God would enable them", and this led Robert to wish that he had thought more of God, and knew better how to pray for that strength he now so much needed.

And he wished he had time to think of these things, but as he collected his tools to return home, he said to himself, "now I must work harder than ever; I must wait a bit till I'm old before I can read much."

CHAPTER IV.

MANY persons wish, like Robert, that their lot was so ordered that they had more leisure, more quiet time to think of God; and roused by some sudden thought, they pray that they may be enabled to dwell more on these subjects. And it may be that God grants the prayer, though in a way not expected. What is usually termed "chance" perhaps changes their mode of life. They become acquainted with some person; are moved into a different sphere of duty; become richer or poorer, or are visited with pain and disappointment. And to the world in general, this is looked upon as nothing unusual, but as in the common course of things. To the true

Christian to one who is watching with his eye turned Heavenwards - all these accidents of life, these chances, are seen to proceed from the Almighty.

Our prayers, if they are sincere, are granted, and we are made more alive to our own sins and to our own responsibilities, though in a way we knew not of, perhaps even the very opposite to what we expected or wished.

About a week after this, Robert was bringing in some foals, and received a kick on his leg, which had been hurt in some way a few weeks before. It gave him much pain, and he was obliged to return to the house.

“Never mind, mother,” said he, seeing her look anxious and frightened; “never mind, it is nothing; just bathe it a bit and it will be all right again to-morrow.”

The morrow came, but Robert could not move, and many days passed and still he was on a bed of sickness. Many remedies were tried, but all in vain; it threatened to be a serious matter. Wonderful are God's ways, and full of mercy.

During this long and painful illness, Robert had time to think; and Mr. Lloyd, who constantly visited him, opened his mind to truths which he had never before realised. Robert was by nature amiable, and had been a very good son. What was wanting in him, sickness and suffering were, by God's grace, to supply.

During this time he became alive to his privileges and duties as a baptized Christian.

Mr. Lloyd showed him how he had been pledged to bear the Cross at his Baptism, and how impossible it is for any one to reach Heaven without it. He urged him now to receive it cheerfully.

And Robert not only consented to act with his mother in giving up Apton, but said, that he felt it was right to do so. O! how thankful did the widow then feel. She felt indeed that in giving up riches, God had enriched her child with that which is better than silver and gold. Out of evil God had indeed worked good unspeakable.

CHAPTER V.

IT was about three months from the time this story began, that directions came from the man who had bribed the Stevens, for Apton Farm to be sold. He remonstrated by letter with her at giving it up, and feared she might break her promise and disclose all she knew, but finding she did not mean to do this, and she herself knew but little of the facts, he laughed at her folly, but very willingly consented. Not liking to shew himself he sent an agent to sell the property, and Mrs. Stevens and her still sick son,

removed to a hut in the settlement.

Poor Robert wept as he passed for the last time through the neat yard, and turned his back on that garden which he had felt such pride in. But he felt that his heart had been set on all this, and he acknowledged that it was a mercy it had been removed.

The poor mother busied herself to make everything comfortable for him, for he was still very ill. Her attention and kindness never failed, and when Robert saw how much better and more cheerful she looked, it comforted him.

And now they lived poorly compared to what they had done, and they were no longer the owners of Apton Farm, but the peace of God was with them both.

Robert's trials did not end here. Added to other mortifications and all that was said of them by neighbours, Janet grew colder and more distant. When first he was taken ill, she had been as kind as before and came to see him and spoke cheerfully and pleasantly, but when he told her that Apton Farm no longer belonged to them, she was much upset, and from that time she came less often and showed a great difference in her behaviour. Poor Robert felt this bitterly, but he still hoped if he got well again, all would be right, for he could then work and support a wife very well, and he could not think that Janet only valued him for what he possessed.

However, time wore on, and he grew worse instead of better. In fact it was evident to all, that he had not long to live.

Mr. Lloyd often visited him, and prayed by him, and after much grave thought and prayer, Robert for the first time, received the Holy Communion; and his mother, she too partook of the Lord's Supper - with her dying son she received it!

"And now," said Robert, after it was all over, "I am ready to go, whenever it pleases God to relieve me! I have done with this world. I am very thankful to you sir," said he to Mr. Lloyd, with tears in his eyes. "I feel easy in myself; but two things trouble me, one is, my poor mother being left so lonely, and the other," added he, hesitating, "is about, Janet Maclean: she is thoughtless as I was. I should like to see her once more!"

But this wish was not fulfilled. Robert heard from a neighbour, that Janet was going to be married to young Green, by license. This young man had been a suitor before, but Janet preferred Robert. Now that Robert was poor she encouraged young Green, who was not at all a steady or respectable character, and without thought or reflection, she consented to marry him.

Robert made no answer, when he heard the news. He remained quite

silent all that evening, but his mother saw tears trickling down his cheeks.

On the day that a bridal party was seen before the church all gay with white ribbons and new dresses; - on that same day, the widow knelt by the side of her only child's bed and heard his last sigh. The young one was taken his health and vigour, the old and feeble one was left. Yes, she was left in the world for many years after. She lived to thank God for all He had done - to say "The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away; Blessed be the name of the Lord!"

And as she repented here and was truly penitent, we may hope that she was again received into the fold of Christ's little ones!

Let any of us who read her history, try to follow her example. Let us bewail our own sinfulness and confess ourselves to Almighty God, with full purpose of amendment of life. "Being ready to make restitution and satisfaction according to the uttermost of our powers." Then, and then only are we fit partakers of the Holy Communion, and if we are unfit for this, let us remember, we are unfit for Heaven. And let us also be thankful that God has appointed Pastors over us, so that if we are in trouble of mind from past sins, we may apply to them, and in virtue of their high and holy office, we may be advised and comforted.

David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the Lord, And Nathan said unto David, The Lord also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die. 2 Sam. xii, 13.

WHEN bitter thoughts, of conscience born,
With sinners wake at morn,
When from our restless couch we start,
With fever'd lips and wither'd heart,
Where is the spell to charm those mists away,
And make new morning in that darksome day?
One draught of Spring's delicious air,
One steadfast thought, that GOD is there.

These are thy wonders hourly wrought,²
Thou Lord of time and thought,
Lifting and lowering souls at will,
Crowding a world of good or ill
Into a moment's vision: even as light
Mounts o'er a cloudy ridge, and all is bright,
From west to east one thrilling ray
Turning a wintry world to May.

Would'st thou the pangs of guilt assuage?
Lo here an open page,
Where heavenly mercy shines as free,
Written in balm, sad heart for thee.

Never so fast, in silent April shower
Flush'd into green the dry and leafless bower,³
As Israel's crowned mourner felt
The dull hard stone within him melt.

The absolver saw the mighty grief,
And hasten'd with relief; -
"The Lord forgives; thou shalt not die;" -
'Twas gently spoke yet heard on high,
And all the band of angels, us'd to sing,
In heaven, accordant to his raptur'd string,
Who many a mouth had turn'd away
With veiled eyes, nor own'd his lay,
And all this leafless and uncoloured scene
Shall flush into variety again,

Now spread their wings, and throng around
To the glad mournful sound,
And welcome, with bright open face,
The broken heart to love's embrace.
The rock is smitten, and to future years
Springs ever fresh the tide of holy tears⁴
And holy music, whispering peace
Till time and sin together cease.

There drink; and when ye are at rest,
With that free Spirit blest,⁵
Who to the contrite can dispense
The princely heart of innocence,
If ever, floating from faint earthly lyre,
Was wafted to your soul one high desire,
By all the trembling hope ye feel,
Think on the minstrel as ye kneel;

Think on the shame, that dreadful hour
When tears shall have no power,
Should his own lay th' accuser prove,
Cold while he kindled others' love;
And let your prayer for charity arise,
That his own heart may hear his melodies,
And a true voice to him may cry,
"Thy GOD forgives - thou shalt not die."

2. See Herbert's Poems, p. 160.

3. See Herbert's Poems, p. 160.

4. The fifty-first Psalm.

5. Ps. ii, 12. "Uphold me with thy free Spirit." The original word seems to mean "

ingenuous, princely, noble.” Read Bishop Horne's Paraphrase on the verse.

THE LITTLE COUSINS.

PART I

“I am but a little child: I know not how to come out or come in.

Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart.”

I. Kings, iii.

CHAPTER I.

ONE summer evening in England, when the fields were scattered with hay and the hedges gay with flowers, a carriage drove slowly through a small hamlet. The cottages were for the most part empty, as all the men and women were in the neighbouring fields making hay. The gentleman who drove, seemed to be admiring the scene around him and he sometimes pointed to the little gardens so gay with monthly roses, or to the spot from whence came the cheerful sounds, which they now heard. It was the laugh from the hay field. Men, women and children were there: old and young seemed to find something to do, and as the day was far spent, and evening closing in, here and there the hay makers were seen resting.

The gentleman stopped his horse, and he and his wife, for so she seemed to be, looked at the merry scene before them. After they had been there a few moments, they saw two little children running towards the gate. They ran very fast wishing to see the carriage, but when they got near, one of them stopped and hid her face with her hands, the other ran on and looked up at the lady.

“What a lovely little creature,” said the gentleman.

“What is your name?” asked the lady, kindly.

“Jane,” the child answered.

“Have you been making hay?” said the gentleman.

“No, but mother has.”

“And is that your sister?” asked the lady.

“No, she's my cousin, she's called Kitty. “How old are you Kitty?” said the gentleman, but Kitty just put down her hands for one moment, to steal a look at the speaker, and then, throwing her pinafore over her head, turned away.

Just then a woman came up the road. She stopped, seeing the carriage, but Kitty sprang forward and threw herself into her arms.

“Is that your child?” said the gentleman.

“Yes sir,” was the answer.

The lady gave each of the little girls six-pence. Jane, as she called herself, took it with a smile and a curtsy, but Kitty snatched at hers, in a rough manner, and when her mother told her to curtsy to the lady, she did it so awkwardly that Jane began to laugh.

“O sir, she's always so shy and rough like,” said the poor woman, as if to apologize for her child, and then dropping a respectful curtsy, she walked on.

“Well,” said the lady, “what a contrast those two children are! One might almost call them ‘beauty and the beast,’ one so pretty and gracious, and the other so unfortunate looking.”

“She was very plain, certainly,” returned the gentleman, but I will never consent to her being the beast, though the other may be the beauty. Her eyes spoke her thanks quite as well as the other's pretty curtsy. “

“The woman appeared in sorrow. I thought there was something very interesting about her,” said the lady. The little carriage drove on: the pretty and the plain child, and the sorrowful looking woman, formed a subject for conversation, when the gentleman and lady reached their home. They were strangers to that part of the country, and were travelling about for health. But as they passed through other villages, through other scenes, they forgot the hay-field, or perhaps recollected it only as a pretty spot, where the blue eyed child had struck their fancy.

CHAPTER II.

MEANWHILE, the woman proceeded towards the group of haymakers, followed by the two children. She sat down on a bank and talked a little while to those around, but soon they all dispersed, and she was left alone in the field. The two children were gathering honeysuckles, and laughing and chatting, but she sat resting with her head on her hand, quite still and silent, and tears trickled down her cheeks, for she thought of times past, when she, with her husband, had helped to make hay in that field, and she had then joined in the laugh, and was as merry as any of them; but now she was alone. Only seven years had passed, but every thing was changed to her. She had now no husband; she was a “lone” woman, but not a widow. For her husband was yet alive; he had fallen into temptations, and had broken God's commandments, and the laws of his country, and he was therefore taken from his home, his wife and his young child, and was transported to a far land. He had brought disgrace on his family, and many a miserable hour had his wife spent. But she had been well brought up, and in all her affliction she had trusted in God, and striven to do her duty.

And those good lessons which she had been taught as a child, and had through God's grace, taken root, now sprung up, and put forth blossom and fruit. She was very poor, very lonely, and the wife of a convict, but she was every day further towards her journey's end; and this thought comforted her!

HOW many there are to whom this thought is no comfort! who drive it from them, as being full of terror; who express regret as years pass by, and say, that with youth perishes all hope, all pleasure!

But this is because they are conscious that they are living for this world, because their treasure is here, and not above!

CHAPTER III.

AND now, as the little girls chatted to each other, they looked up, and the exceeding brightness and glory of the sky, where the sun had just gone down, caught their eye. Jane said, "O, what beautiful colors! but I must go home, and show mother my six-pence, and I wonder what it will buy," and away she ran.

Kitty stood still with her flowers in her hand, staring at the sky, then she sat down by her mother, and pulling her sleeve, said, "mother, look, isn't that grand?"

And the mother looked up, and she dried her eyes, and said to her child, "ah! I never see the sun set, without thinking of my dear master's words. He was very learned and clever, and had gone about in different countries and I mind once his telling his children, that is the young ladies I took care of, that in some places as the sun went down, all the bells chimed in the churches, and prayers were said, and in this place, if you were out in the country riding or walking, you might see all the people take off their hats, and bow their heads, at sun set, for though they were working people, and could not go into church, they saw the sun, and that was a signal to them, and they could offer up a short prayer wherever they were. And I thought it was a good practice, and I always minded my poor master's words, and when I see the sun set, I try to think of God, and say a short prayer."

After a short time, Kitty, said, "I don't like to go away mother, I don't like to leave Jane, and the village, and the fields, and go in a ship, to a bad place."

"Why do you call it a bad place?" said her mother.

"O, Jane, and Eliza, say it is a bad place, where wicked people are sent. Why did father go, and why do you go?"

"Your father was sent there because he did wrong, but I hope he is sorry

now, and that God has forgiven him; and he is very lonely there, so you and I Kitty, will go out to him, we can get work there, and we shall be all together again, and if it please God, we shall be much happier.”

Kitty said nothing, but presently she put her six-pence, into her mother's hand.

Her mother said, “Why didn't you make a curtsy, and thank the lady for it, and what made you stand staring in that fashion Kitty? you should not do so.”

“Why I was running with Jane, to look at the carriage,” said Kitty, “and when we comed close, I was ashamed, for the lady looked so beautiful and kind, I thought she'd think it rude to look at her, so I hid my face, and then all sorts of things came over me and I was glad when you came. The school mistress and Mr. White, and every one says I'm such a rude, odd girl; I wish I wasn't; I wish I was like Jane.”

“Jane is a pretty behaved child, certainly, said the mother, but come Kitty we must go home.”

CHAPTER IV.

MRS. RIGHT and Kitty did not sail from England nearly so soon as they expected. There were many delays, and it was full a twelvemonth after the time alluded to in the foregoing chapter, that they left their native village. Kitty was now twelve years old, though short and small for her age She was a clumsy looking girl, and moved and did every thing very awkwardly. She was extremely shy too, which made her manners uncouth and odd, and people generally took her to be younger than she really was. The evening before they left home, Kitty went out to wish some of her young friends good bye. She stayed rather late, and her mother went to see for her. As she ap proached her sister's cottage, who was the mother of Jane, she heard a great bustle, there was loud crying and a buzzing of voices, and at last one loud voice reached her ears saying, “she's like a wild beast, she should be put in a straight waistcoat.”

Another said, “I would soon tame her with a good stick.”

Something struck the mother's heart, and she hurried on. And there was Kitty, with her bonnet torn, her clothes half off, crying, and almost screaming, her face red, and her eyes flashing with passion. Jane was working at doll's clothes, quite unconcerned, and her mother, Kitty's aunt, was ironing, while two or three neighbours stood round, some amused, and others making remarks like those which Mrs. Right heard.

The moment the child saw her mother, she darted towards her, and hid her face. A death-like paleness came over her countenance, as her mother

asked "what was the matter?"

"Never did I see such a girl as that," said Jane's mother, "never! Nothing in the world was said, that I know of, to put her in to such a tantram."

"I wish you good luck with such a spirit," said one of the bystanders.

"Bedlam would be the place for her," said another.

"Come home Kitty," said her mother, "for shame, couldn't you control yourself the last night here?"

Kitty's tears now fell fast but silently; she turned round suddenly, and threw her arms round Jane's neck. "Speak to me Jenny, only one word, I'm very sorry."

Jane looked up and said. "why, you ought to be sorry and ashamed; you're like a wild beast; you've no manners like a Christian at all."

And Kitty went back with her mother, and there was the trunk packed up, and the kitchen quite empty and desolate looking, and they were going to leave, going to a very far country. And Kitty sat down on the box, and cried bitterly. She was not thinking of her journey or the voyage, or leaving her friends, she was thinking of her late passion; her late violent disposition, and of how she had offended the Almighty God.

CHAPTER V.

WHEN Kitty's mother talked to her and questioned her about the sad scene at her aunts, she learnt that it arose from a speech made by one of her neighbours, who in rather a jeering and rude manner, had taunted Kitty with going to Botany Bay. Kitty had borne it at first, but when others joined, in and her aunt and Jane too had spoken of her father, as a "rogue" and a "bad man, and that her mother was quite mad to follow him." She made some hot and sharp answer, and it ended in her being in a violent rage.

"Ah Kitty," said her mother, "always the same; always from a baby you've had these sore fits. You'll bring yourself and me to sorrow by it, and it is very sinful; you too who know so well and have been taught. But never mind now, 'tis over, come and take some supper, and let us go to bed," added she kindly and soothingly, for she saw how miserable and pale her child looked.

"No mother, no supper, and don't speak to me. I don't deserve it; I can't sleep; I cannot forgive myself, and God is angry with me, O how can I learn to stop myself. They said I was mad, and a wild beast, and that I should do some horrid thing, and it is true. Poor Jenny, I frightened her, and I shall never see her again."

All that night Kitty lay awake. At first she thought of having offended

her cousin Jenny, and of her going so far from her, and then she cried to think how wicked she was, and how every one disliked her, every one except her own mother, and then she thought of God, and of all she had learnt at the Sunday school. At last she crept out of bed very quietly, for fear of disturbing her mother, and she knelt down, and in the dark she prayed that God would forgive her, and strengthen her against her infirmities, and after this she prayed that God would forgive all who had spoken unkindly to her, and she felt quite ready to forgive them. And comfort stole over her heart, as she lay down again, still repeating the words of her prayers, as if she could not say them too often, and so she fell asleep.

CHAPTER VI.

IT IS time now to say something about Jane Stone. We have seen that she was pretty and well mannered, and thus far very different from her cousin Kitty; but some circumstances in these girls' way of life were much alike. Both were only children: both had been at an early age deprived of a father. In Jane's case, death; and in Kitty's, just punishment had removed their fathers from them. Their mothers were sisters, and their two children had been born in the same village, baptized in the same church, and taught in the same Sunday school. But whatever Jane did, seemed to be right. At school, at home, or in the village, Jane Stone was spoken of and praised; she was of a quiet and docile temper and very steady, which made her learn well. She often heard her mother and others compare Kitty with herself, and had received praise for being kind to that "poor unfortunate girl." Kitty was older than Jane by a year, and though she never spoke so prettily, or behaved as nicely or learnt as well as herself, still, Jane had secretly a great feeling of respect for Kitty. She knew that Kitty was a lover of truth, and that nothing would tempt her to tell a lie, and she saw that Kitty was always trying to amend and do what she was told. All this made Jane look up to Kitty; and yet, notwithstanding this, Jane felt herself at liberty to say very harsh things, and to assume an air of quiet superiority; and this was because Kitty was so passionate. When those fits of anger came, she said and did things which afterwards made her so ashamed, that she felt humbled to the dust, and then Jane, thought of her own quiet, easy temper, and her civil manner of speaking and she persuaded herself that she was in the right path and Kitty in the wrong. And yet it is quite possible, to be easy in temper, not soon provoked, to be orderly and well behaved, and still not to be living in the fear and love of God. There are some persons to whom is given the talent of being

popular, that is, generally liked, who are able better than others to behave graciously, and excite admiration and love, and who are almost sure to be praised for all they do. This is a talent given them. Such persons have a wide field for doing good and influencing others, and it is sweet to us all to be loved and to obtain praise. But there is a deep danger of this talent being abused, and being turned to their own everlasting peril. There is a deep danger that the heart may grow pleased and satisfied with itself, lulled into a dangerous sleep by the pleasing sound of praise and approbation. Jane Stone was in this state. It was all fair and sweet without, like a tree full of blossoms in the summer season, but which when autumn came shewed no fruit, and was therefore worthless. On that same night, when Kitty prayed in great sorrow and distress, that her fault might be forgiven, Jane went to bed more than usually comfortable, and pleased with herself. She had made no hasty answer to Kitty: she had felt quite unprovoked: she had finished some needle-work very nicely, and had carried it to a lady, who praised her neat appearance and good manners, and said that her mother was very fortunate in having so good a daughter. She heard her mother again compare her with Kitty, and speak of her cleverness to the neighbours, and though Jane had been silent, when a kind word might have softened poor Kitty, though she had joined with the others in saying what had hurt and provoked her cousin, though she had in fact been selfish and unkind; she hurried over her prayers, she scarcely felt that she had any confession to make, and though her lips repeated it, her heart felt it not. She lay down in her own strength, thinking of a plan which her mother proposed, of sending her out to service. As she slept, her face looked quiet and beautiful - very different from the disturbed and sobbing sleep, into which Kitty at last fell.

CHAPTER VII.

MRS. RIGHT and Kitty started the next morning in a neighbour's cart, which was to take them to meet the coach six miles off. Mrs. Right begged the man to put her down for a few moments at the parsonage. She could not leave without saying farewell to her clergyman, and thanking him for the last time for all his kindness to her. They were shewn into Mr. White's study, and he soon came in and spoke cheerfully and kindly to them. He said that Mrs. Right was doing her duty to join her husband, for though he was from circumstances, over which she had no control, separated from her, and many persons made this an excuse to follow their own inclinations, it was in reality no excuse. Man and wife were bound together "for better for worse," and she was quite right to cleave only unto

him, and leave her native home and country to follow him. "Perhaps," added Mr. White, "God may enable you to win over your erring husband to the right path, and thus reward you for this sacrifice: but even if a reward does not follow, even if the end seem to turn out badly, do not be cast down, for we must ever remember, that our reward and rest, is not to be here. Look up my good woman and trust in God, and may He bless your undertaking! You will have great comfort in your child, I hope." Mrs. Right's eyes filled with tears, for a moment she could not answer.

"Kitty, go round to the breakfast parlour, Mrs. White wishes to see you," said the clergyman. Then turning to the mother, he said, "here is a letter I have written for you, giving my opinion of your character, ever since I knew you. You may find it of service in a strange country. "

"Thank you kindly sir, it will do me much good. Sir, you were speaking of my child, I have a weight on my heart about that Sir, God knows, she's a kind natured, feeling girl, ever ready to do my bidding, but she's stern of temper, or rather I should say violent. Oftentimes I take great comfort in her, and O Sir, it would melt your heart to hear her saying her prayers when she's alone, and thinks no one knows, and yet for all this she gets such terrible fits of passion that it breaks my heart, and every one calls her "bad, and wicked, and mad." She's like a raging lion if she's provoked, and yet at other times she's meek as a lamb. I often wish'd it had pleased God, to give me a girl like my niece Jane Stone."

"Well, I have observed these two girls very narrowly," said Mr. White. "Kitty is slow at learning and awkward and rough in manner. She is too, as you say, very passionate. Jane is quick at learning, with a gentle and taking manner. Her temper is easy and mild.

"I was travelling once, and I came to a road in the mountains, it was a rough and dangerous road; huge pieces of rock stood overhanging the path, and sometimes lay quite across. I left off looking about at the scenery, and devoted all my attention to the road. By watching, I soon found how to avoid the difficulties, and at last came to the end in safety, and turned down a level green path, which looked smooth and inviting. There were no bare sharp rocks, no precipices, the sight of which made one giddy, but it was all fair and easy. I thought myself quite safe, and began to look about me and enjoy myself, leaving the reins loose on the horse's neck. I was soon lost in thought, and in the enjoyment of my fancied security, when I suddenly found myself violently thrown. I was strained, and on recovering my senses, I discovered, that along this green smooth path, lay a deep though narrow gulley; the grass had grown so thickly that without *watching*, the gap was scarcely perceptible. I had not been watching, and my horse put his foot into it, and threw me. And now Mrs.

Right, some people are like these two paths, and I, for my part am apt to think, that the safer of the two, is the rougher one. Kitty will by the blessing of God, watch and guard herself against her rocks. This training and discipline will strengthen her, and, I trust, if she buckles on the right armour, she will conquer her enemy; but Jane having no rude rocks or angles, will be apt to think no armour is needed. However I am detaining you. Don't despair of Kitty, she is rough outside but she has a heart within, she will improve, and remember," added he in a solemn tone, "remember that the best thing a parent can do for a child, is to pray for her. And now Mrs Right, God bless you, we will remember you and Kitty on Sunday, in church, that you may be preserved in your travels by land and by water."

Mrs. Right curtsied. Her heart was too full to speak, but she silently and earnestly begged the Almighty to bless her pastor, and she joined Kitty, and having uttered a broken good bye, to Mrs. White and her children, they again mounted the cart.

It rattled on, Mr. Trotman's grey mare went briskly, he whistled, and the birds sang, and the morning was bright and beautiful. The sun lighted up the edges of the church spire, as Mrs. Right turned to give it one last look, and it seemed to point to Heaven, and bid her take comfort. It spoke of hopes which were beyond the world; it spoke of the Almighty and His Church, it brought back old familiar words to her mind, words she had heard Mr. White repeat every Sunday, for many years. And she felt strengthened and refreshed!

CHAPTER VIII.

THE travellers reached Red Town, safely. They were to start in a night coach, and would reach London on the following morning. It was all new to Kitty and her mother, and Mrs. Right's heart was nearly sinking, as Mr. Trotman put out his hard hand, and gave her a hearty squeeze. "Good bye neighbour, and God speed ye," said he, leaving half-a-crown in her hand.

"Trotman, I can't take this, you work hard and have a family," said Mrs. Right.

"They've never wanted yet thank God, and won't want the sooner for helping a fellow creature. I wish I had more. Sorry to lose ye, but no doubt 'tis for the best; good bye;" and the kind man turned off, wiping away the tear which came, with his jacket sleeve. Mrs. Right's heart was near sinking; the bustle, the noise, and then the rapid motion of the coach confused her, but she held Kitty's hand, and put her trust in God. And very soon Kitty dropped asleep; but the mother could not sleep. Her thoughts

rested on all Mr. White had said, and his grey head and cheerful kind face, came before her. He had married her and her husband; he had baptized her two children, and returned thanks for her safe deliverance; he had read the burial service over her first child, and had spoken words of comfort to her, when she returned to her childless home. He had taught Kitty at the school. He had advised and sympathised with her; and she had looked up to him with reverence and love. Now she had left him! and this was a bitter thought, and yet she well knew that even now she would not be forgotten, and that he would think of one who was absent out of his flock and pray for her.

Who, among those who will read this story, has felt the tie which binds a clergyman to his people? Who would enter into Mrs. Right's feelings at parting from her pastor?

None can, who do not begin with reverencing the holy office, seeing the hand of God in it. If they do this, they will by the blessing of God, grow to love the minister set over them, and in all their troubles and necessities they will find a friend. But the beginning must be, not merely a personal liking, but a respect for him, who is ordained by God to administer His Sacraments.

If there were more of this lowly, this Christian temper of mind, what a bond of union would there be between the clergyman and his flock, "like the dew of Hermon; which fell upon the hill of Sion. For there the Lord promised his blessing and life for evermore."

Mrs. White had given Kitty five shillings to lay out in any little thing she might happen to like. Her mother pointed out some nice warm handkerchiefs which would be comfortable on board ship, but Kitty shook her head.

"I want to get a Prayer Book, with a pretty outside to it, like Miss White's," said she; and they found one with a pretty outside, it was red leather, and had gilt letters on the back, Kitty took her treasure back to the house they lodged in, which belonged to an old fellow servant of her mother. She begged for a pen and ink for an hour she was very busy. She at last showed her mother an ill written and badly spelt letter, with many blots on it, for Kitty's tears would fall on it as she wrote. It ran as follows : "To my dear Jane, with her sorrowful Kitty's love. O Jane, I shall never forgive myself, that my last words were bad to you; no not the very last; but you didn't forgive me! I looked for you as we started, but suppose you was asleep. We stopped at the Parson's and Mrs. White gived me 5 shillings, and this is it; the prayer book is bought with it, for dear Jane, from her poor Kitty. Please to try not to be angry with me if you think of me; I am so ashamed. I got a prayer book, because you might think of me,

when you pray; and now no more from me, but good bye, and God bless you. Kitty Right.”

“Poor Kitty,” said Jane, with momentary emotion, when she received the parcel, “I’m sorry for her!” Then in a moment she added, “when will she learn to write decent and neat! I’m glad of the book though, for I was thinking mine was very shabby to take to Mrs. Prestons. It is a pretty, gay color, and looks genteel, doesn’t it mother?” and the book was folded in paper, and laid in Jane’s drawers.

PART II: THE COUSINS GROWN UP

Meek souls there are, who little dream
Their daily strife and Angel’s theme,
Or that the rod they take so calm
Shall prove in Heaven a martyr’s palm.

CHAPTER I.

IT was a rainy day in Sydney: such a day as no one would have chosen to be out in, unless obliged.

A female, badly dressed, was seen hurrying along the streets - She knocked at the door of a large house, and said she heard the mistress wanted a servant. The foot man smiled at the state of the speaker’s clothes, all splashed with mud, and her hurried manner too seemed to amuse him. He said “Wait here, but it aint a bit of use, we don’t want such as you I’m thinking.”

After waiting about half an hour, the lady came, and it was at last decided, that the young woman should undertake to clean the house and help in the kitchen, in fact, do all the rough work, for “you are evidently only suited to such a place,” said the lady.

Again the wet dirty streets were trodden; swinging one arm, as if to assist her speed, and not heeding the puddles, into which every now and then she trod on, and on she went: coming to a miserable looking house, in one of the bye streets, she stopped, and shaking off some of the water which streamed from her bonnet, she entered.

“What luck?” asked a woman, who was standing over a wash tub, “Have you got a place?”

“Yes, thank God - And how is she, has she had another faint?” and she nodded her head as she spoke, looking towards a door which was partly open. “Indeed she’s but poorly,” was the answer. “She is very bad - I guess she’s not long for this world.” A half suppressed groan, burst from the dripping girl - throwing off her bonnet and shawl, she went into the

next room.

A sickly looking woman, lay with her eyes closed on a small bed. Hearing a noise, she said in a low voice, "Kitty, is that you?"

Kitty took her mother's hand, and said, "How d'ye feel now, mother? cheer up, for I've got a place, in a large grand looking house. My heart nigh failed me, but some thing emboldened me, and I didn't mind the man who came to the door, nor the lady, though I did feel ashamed when she looked at my dirty old gown, and I saw what she thought. But please God if I can work, I'll not be dirty, when she sees me again, be I ever so poor."

"And when are you to go?" feebly asked the mother.

"On Friday, that is two days hence - O, if I could but leave you better!" Kitty now made a cup of tea for her mother, and after the poor woman had taken it, she poured more water on the scanty supply of tea leaves, and without sugar or milk, she drank it. And as she eat her bread, she talked to her mother. "I'm glad 'tis on a Friday, I am to go."

"Why?" said the mother.

"O, because, - why, - Fridays I always think of home you know, Wednesdays and Fridays. Don't you know mother, they'll be in church that day? and Mr. White will say the Litany, and pray for those who are in tribulation, and old John Wheeler, and Dame Evans, and Susan Neale, and some others, and Mrs. White and the young ladies, will make the answer. They will say 'We beseech thee to hear us Good Lord,' and may be God will hear them: I wonder if Jane goes to church, now she's left school, or if she's gone out to service." And this speculation about Jane, led Kitty on to other thoughts, and she was silent for some time.

"Kitty," said the mother, "take my Sunday gown, and cut it shorter to fit you. By the time I am up again, we may be able to get another. God forgive me, but I can't bear ye should go so very bare. That will serve for afternoons, till you can buy another."

Kitty unwillingly obeyed, she could not bear to take it from her mother, but indeed it seemed a matter of necessity, for with all her patching, her own would scarcely hold together. She worked at it, till it grew dark. They could not afford a light, so Kitty, knelt down by her mother, and repeated the 23rd Psalm aloud. Mrs. Right said, "it is strange you mind so many verses and prayers, when you used to be so slow to learn, and never could read well, Kitty."

"I can never remember them, to say to any one, but myself and to you, when it is dark," said Kitty. "But, somehow, what I've heard Mr. White read, and what Jane used to say so pretty, comes easy to me."

"'Tis a cold night," said the mother, "come and lie by me Kitty, you'll not hurt my leg at all."

"I'd rather stay here," said Kitty. "I've got a fine mat, and my old cloak over me, and I'm tired, and shall sleep sound, I'm sure."

And rather than run the risk of hurting her mother's leg, she lay down on the floor. She was cold and hungry, for Kitty allowed herself only just what would support her. By doing thus; she managed to get a little sugar for her mother's tea. Mrs. Right did not know it. No human being knew it!

And Kitty had sweet and pleasant dreams, while the mother exerted herself to lie quietly, that her sufferings might not disturb her child. And in that humble room of poverty and suffering, abode a calm and holy feeling. And without effort, old familiar words came into the mother's mind.

"When I am in heaviness, I will think upon God. I will say unto the Lord, Thou art my hope, and my strong hold; my God, in Him will I trust." And how soothingly came those other verses, as if Heaven answered her silent meditations. "He shall call upon me, and I will hear him: Yea, I am with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and bring him to honor."

CHAPTER II.

IT is necessary in some measure, to account for the state of suffering and poverty, in which we find Mrs. Right and Kitty, five years after the time we first knew them.

The clergyman had warned Mrs. Right, that perhaps the sacrifice she was making, for the sake of duty, might shew her troubles, and not bring any visible or outward reward. And so it had proved.

Her husband, once a small farmer at home, who had courted and married her, from her master's house, had turned out very differently from what she then expected. He had done very wrong, and was convicted. This of course brought sorrow, and in some measure, disgrace on her. But from being well known, she was still respected in her native village, and she had always found work enough to support her and her child. When she heard of her husband, having obtained his ticket of leave, she determined to follow him; though she deeply grieved over his faults, her attachment to him was nearly as strong as ever. But Samuel Right, had gradually gone deeper and deeper, down the slope which leads to everlasting misery.

He was a weak man, ready to be led by every one. And after the first misery of parting from his wife and child, he resisted any feelings of penitence, which might have come over him. He hardened himself, and affected to consider his punishment no disgrace. When he arrived in this colony, and was assigned out, he boasted with his fellow laborers, of being "sent out," or he boldly expected the same advantages and indulgences

which others, who were not convicts, enjoyed. He called it a "misfortune," not a punishment. And thus, his punishment, which might have been blessed to him, was turned into a misfortune. He grieved the Holy Spirit, and it forsook him. He was given up to himself, to his own foolish devices, and sin took him for a prey, and the devil who is ever going about, seeking whom he may devour, he was with him.

These words sound harsh and dreadful. And yet who can live in this country, where so many are sent for punishment, and not feel that those who withstand the correction of God and man, who grow prouder and harder under chastening, instead of turning to God in penitence and sorrow, and meekly bearing their deserved reproach, who can help feeling that such are in the perilous, and awful situation of Samuel Right!

And the wife found that her long lost husband, was an altered man! She struggled on, bearing about a broken heart, for some years.

Samuel Right could earn plenty of money, but he spent most of it himself. Mrs. Right and Kitty worked hard, and managed to keep out of want for some time. There was one comfort which the mother had, and that was in seeing her child improve, in seeing her hot and angry passions become every day more and more under control. At last, after much previous misery, her husband left her altogether. She heard of his being in Sydney, and resolved to make one more effort to save him. She proceeded to Sydney, but after many days, found her search in vain; she heard no tidings of him. The bad living and long walk, for she performed her journey on foot, brought her a sore leg, and after exerting herself to wash and work till she could hardly stand, she found herself stretched on a bed of sickness. Their clothes were all sold one after another, and very little now remained. Fortunately, the woman in whose house they were, was well disposed, and kind, and allowed them to remain, although they could pay her no rent for lodging. Day after day poor Kitty went out to try and get a place; but from her awkward shyness, and otherwise plain and poor appearance, she could not succeed. However, the constant effort to speak out and overcome her natural manner, did good. She found it easier to tell her story, and as we have seen, she was at last rewarded by finding a situation. But it was a sore trial to leave her sick, perhaps dying mother. And added to this was her dread of being a stranger in a new house, perhaps unable to please her master and mistress.

Kitty felt how unable she was to do things well, or to give satisfaction. But she prayed that God would supply all that was wanting. And she trusted that if she tried to do her duty, she should be supported by Him who is ever ready to hear a cry for help, and who "despiseth not the sighing of a contrite heart."

CHAPTER III.

AND now let us turn to England, and see how these five years have passed with Jane Stone.

She is not at home with her mother. She too has left her native village, and her clergyman, and the old church where she and Kitty had knelt together, and said the same words.

She is living at Sir John Howard's, and is lady's maid to Lady Howard and her two daughters.

Soon after Kitty and her mother sailed, Jane went to live at a lady's in the neighbourhood, called Mrs. Preston. And she went on very well, that is to say, she did her work well, and was civil and obliging to her master and mistress. Here she learnt to do many things she did not know before, for her mistress was kind in teaching her, and Jane became very "handy," and worked well, and knew how to do many little things which were useful in a house. But her master lost a great deal of his property, and her mistress gave up visiting, and at last became weak in health. They removed to a smaller house and lived in great retirement, with few servants. Jane very civilly told her mistress that she wished she would suit herself, as she wanted to leave. The lady asked "why?" for Jane had the same work to do, and the same wages as when they lived in the large house. Jane said her health was not good in that place and she wanted to see her mother. So she left, just at a time when she might have repaid her kind mistress some of the trouble she had in teaching her. However, Jane expressed her gratitude very nicely in words, and looked so sorry to say good bye, when she left, that her mistress said to a friend, "what a loss she is to me! I am very sorry to part from Jane. I believe she was attached to us. I wonder what made her leave."

The lady was deceived; for Jane was not attached to her, nor grateful to her. And perhaps Jane was deceived also, about herself. She persuaded herself that it was right and prudent to try and *get on* in the world: to try and get a better place, with grander people, and have higher wages. She had always given satisfaction, and took away with her a good character. So she held up her head in quiet self approval, and forgot that to leave *undone* what little good she could do, was as bad as doing that which she ought not to do. And that "getting on" in the world, will not hereafter weigh against one secret deed of kindness to another. Self interest will not stand in the balance with one honest attempt to sacrifice *self* for the good of others. Jane forgot this. Many persons forget it, and consider that a care for self, so often called "prudence," is the end and aim for which they are to live.

But when this world is passed away, with all its accidents of station, wealth and honor, what will all our prudent or rather selfish care avail? look at the New Testament and see what it says and what He does, who is our great example!

Jane's mother was very glad to see her, and as she was not so strong as she used to be, she wished her daughter to remain at home and help her. At first Jane liked the novelty of showing all her earnings, her nice stock of clothes, &c. and many an eye was turned on her, as the little congregation lingered in the church-yard after service, and they called her "pretty Jane," and expressed their astonishment at how she was grown, and improved. The clergyman too, as he came out of church, stopped and welcomed her back to her home, and Jane heard his daughters remark to each-other, "what a nice modest looking girl that is." All this was pleasant, but Jane did not like the little cottage and rough fare, and determined to go out to service again. And her mother did not oppose her, for she thought it very natural that the girl should like to "better herself."

CHAPTER IV.

JANE had to go to the same town to which Mrs. Right and Kitty went to meet the coach. She also went in Mr. Trotman's cart, but it was young Edward Trotman who drove this time.

Edward and Jane had long been coupled together by the villagers. He was a fine specimen of an English peasant. A well favored, well spoken young man. They had known each other since they were children. They had grown up together, and many a fresh nosegay had Edward arranged early on Sunday morning for Jane to wear to church. Many a pleasant walk had they taken through green lanes and meadows, and then returned to take a cup of Dame Trotman's tea, at the white house.

When Jane went to live at Mrs. Preston's, they could not see so much of each other, but whenever the evenings were long enough, Edward borrowed his father's grey mare, and trotted out to Beach Hall, and if Jane smiled and seemed glad to see him, he returned to his home and his work, with a light heart. He loved Jane truly, and the thoughts of her, made him steady and industrious, and he was very careful, so as to lay by a little every year, to set them up as man and wife.

Now Edward felt low and sad. He thought Jane might have been contented to remain in the neighbourhood. He wondered how she could like going so far away. But Jane said she should get higher wages, which would enable them to marry the sooner, and Edward's kind attentions to make her seat easy and comfortable, and the tasty little sprig of sweet briar

and moss rose which he gave her, tied with a blue ribbon, and which he said, was the last nose gay he should tie for many a long day, - all this touched Jane's heart. She began to feel not quite so easy at taking this long journey, and when they parted, she said, "Edward, I shall soon be back again."

Poor Edward watched the coach till it was out of sight, and then he drove back in a melancholy humour. He felt as if all he cared for was gone, and as if he was very lonely and wretched. But Edward was not selfish, he could not long together, dwell on his own feelings, whether of sorrow or pleasure. He cheered up, as he thought that perhaps it was better for Jane; and what was best for her, must be best for him.

And then as his father's house came in sight, and he saw his mother with her snow white cap and apron carefully driving in her brood of chickens, and knew how glad she would be to see him with a cheerful look, he exerted himself, and drove into the yard with a contented air, and his voice sounded cheerfully and pleasantly to his mother's ear as he called out. Dame Trotman had been feeling very anxious all the day. She dreaded Jane's leaving for her son. She quite dreaded to look at him, for fear there should be an unhappy and care-worn look on that merry face, which she loved so well. So great was the relief to find it otherwise, and the family party sat down to their frugal supper with contented hearts, insensibly drawn all the closer together, from feeling that one among them had a cause for grief, but out of affection for them, was wearing a smiling countenance.

And now, having given this slight sketch of what had passed, we will return again to the time before alluded to, namely, when Jane was living at Sir John Howard's.

It was in the winter, when Kitty had taken her wet walk through Sydney streets in search of a place. It was at the latter end of May.

On that very same day, Jane sat in a comfortable room which looked out on a sloping lawn, over beautiful trees in their soft and bright spring dress, and the sound of busy rooks and the songs of birds, and the gentle hum of bees fell on her ears. She was working for her young mistress, whose wedding day was at hand. And preparations were going on in Sir John Howard's house, for his eldest daughter's marriage to a very rich man, a General in the army.

Jane was a favourite in this family, particularly with the young ladies, she had been two years with them, and now the younger of the two, Miss Bessy, came in and taking up Jane's work, she examined it.

"Is'nt it beautiful, Miss Bessy," said Jane. "Dear me how elegant Miss Howard will look, and the favors and all! and I hear her house that is to be,

is fit for a King, so grand and fine!”

Miss Bessy sighed. After a moment's silence she said, “Yes, it is all very grand and very fine, but it will be a sorrowful day to me. I hate weddings!”

“La, now why should you say so,” exclaimed Jane. “If Miss Howard had married Mr. Morley, you might have said so, for it was not a match fit for her, but now sure it is quite another thing.” “I wish that she may never repent having given up poor Frank Morley, for the sake of being Mrs. General Fitzroy,” said Bessy. “But I can't bear to think of it,” added she, “and it is all over. They say it is more prudent, and a better match, and all that, but carriages, and jewels, and fine houses, will not make up for the want of a real true love.”

Here Miss Howard came into the room and put an end to the conversation. And for the next few days, Jane was very busy packing up the bridal finery, and she heard Lady Howard talking to a friend who was looking at all the beautiful presents. Lady Howard said, that she and her husband were much pleased with their daughter's good sense and prudence: that the former affair was a very foolish thing. People could not live upon love. And by accepting General Fitzroy she was securing her future happiness, as well as helping on her family. There was rank and fortune, added to the General being so elegant and accomplished a gentleman." The lady ventured to remark, that she had understood Mr. Morley had something of his own, quite enough to enable him to marry. But Lady Howard answered, that she wished her daughter to live at least as well as she had been always accustomed to, and that Mr. Morley's fortune was too small for that. She added, that it was great nonsense to give way to feeling, that a marriage without so much love, founded on common sense and prudence was far the best.

Jane heard all this. Her heart was prepared to receive it. And these random words spoken by her mistress to her friend, helped to decide Jane's future life.

CHAPTER V.

SIR JOHN HOWARD'S steward, who managed all his business for him, and was considered a man very likely to rise in the world, was looking out for a wife. So every one said; and the improvements made from time to time in his pretty cottage and trim garden, and Mr. Collins coming out in unusually smart dress, and paying frequent visits to the housekeeper's room, seemed to afford some ground for the saying.

On the evening of General Fitzroy's and Miss Howard's wedding day,

there was a dance on the green, given to the servants and tenantry. And Mr. Collins was there, and paid great attention to Jane Stone. She was much envied by many of the young women, and she heard many remarks made about Mr. Collins' "sweet pretty house," his gig, and how much money he had in the bank. Mr. Collins was a plain, straight-forward man; and having made up his mind that Jane was a well behaved, discreet young woman, one who would keep every thing nice in his house, and one he should like for his wife, he without much preface asked her the question. Jane felt proud of the offer, but she said that she must have some little time to consider it. This was a further proof of her good sense in Mr. Collins' eyes, and he willingly consented to wait a day or so for her answer.

The bride and bridegroom's health was drunk in the servant's hall, and nods and smiles went round, and it was hoped that before long another bride and bridegroom's health would be drunk.

Mr. Collins hoped so too in a whisper to Jane; and as he spoke, he offered her a beautiful bunch of myrtle and roses, which he had picked out from some of the decorations.

Jane took it and placed it in her band, but it brought back old times, when Edward Trotman gave her flowers, and she felt uneasy, and her heart smote her.

When the party was over, and Jane was alone, she set about considering what was best for her to do. She did not wish to act hastily, but to weigh the subject well in her own mind.

And this is in itself a right thing to do, provided we have the right standard by which to measure. And what is this standard, the *right* standard? It is not what is most profitable or most pleasing; it is not a cautious, wordly spirit of prudence. No, the Christian standard should be *Duty* - Duty to God and our neighbour. We should measure and weigh our actions, not with reference to this world, but according to what will stand good here after.

Now fair and respectable as Jane's outward conduct had been, I much doubt, if this had ever been her standard in little things, and therefore it was not likely to be so in great. But we must leave her to decide for herself, and once more come back to this country.

CHAPTER VI.

"MA'AM," said Kitty one day to her mistress. "Can you please to spare me this evening for an hour or so?"

"Indeed I don't think I can," said the lady. "The furniture ought to be

rubbed, and there is much to be done.”

“I'll rise early and do that Ma'am,” said Kitty. “Mother is ill, and I want to see her.”

As she spoke her heart was so full that in trying to keep down her agitation, her manner was odd and blunt. Her mistress said “Well you can't go to night. Some other evening you may do so.”

The master who was in the room said, “Nonsense, why not let the poor girl go and see her mother.”

Kitty was leaving the room with a heavy heart, thinking it was not right to remain, but she heard her mistress say, “O, she only wants a holiday. I don't believe about her mother at all. Those sort of people don't care so much as all that.”

And this cut into Kitty's heart, and made her feel very angry. The color came rushing to her face, and she was deeply hurt. She could have made some very sharp and violent answer. But she went to the room where her bed was, and throwing herself on her knees, she remained still and silent for some moments. She did not dare to utter words of prayer, till her excited, and wounded feelings were quieted. It would but be giving vent to her bursting heart and would not be fit for prayer. But this very feeling of fear to offend God, this feeling of shame at herself, calmed the angry spirit. The Almighty God saw the struggle - saw and pitied her distress; and as she knelt, she thought of our Lord's example - how He bore reproach and contempt - how He was despised and reviled. And then Kitty was able to pray. In sorrow, but with hope she prayed, and her tears fell fast. She knew that it was untrue and unkind to think as her mistress did; but she found excuses for her, recollecting how very often it really was the case, how often false excuses were made, when some of her servants wanted to be idle. It was hard to be so judged; but a Christian must learn to bear being thought little of, and by constant exercise in taking it meekly, he will at last fulfil the Apostle's words, when he says, “Therefore I take *pleasure* in infirmities, in reproaches.”

Kitty soon went down stairs and began to rub the furniture Her thoughts wandered to her poor mother, whom she had not seen for a week, and who she had heard was worse; but she knew it was her duty to submit to her mistress, and that cheerfully, not sulkily, so she worked on. As the evening closed in it made her think of a pretty evening hymn, that one of the Miss White's once gave her to learn, and she repeated it to herself. It was this : -

I.

Father! by Thy love and power
Comes again the evening hour.
Light has vanished, labours cease,
Weary creatures rest in peace.
Thou whose genial dews distil
On the lowliest weed that grows;
Father! guard our couch from ill,
Lull Thy creatures to repose.
We to Thee ourselves resign,
Let our latest thoughts be Thine!

II.

Saviour! to Thy Father bear
This our feeble evening prayer;
Thou hast seen how oft to day
We, like sheep, have gone astray;
Worldly thoughts, and thoughts of pride,
Wishes to Thy cross untrue,
Secret faults, and undescried,
Meet Thy spirit-piercing view.
Blessed Saviour! yet through Thee
Pray that these may pardoned be!

III.

Holy Spirit! breath of balm!
Fall on us in evening's calm :
Yet, awhile, before we sleep,
We, with Thee, will vigils keep;
Lead us on our sins to muse,
Give us truest penitence,
Then the love of God infuse,
Breathing humble confidence;
Melt our spirits, mould our will,
Softener, strengthen, comfort still!

IV.

Blessed Trinity! be near
Through the hours of darkness drear;
When the help of man is far,
Ye more clearly present are;
Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
Watch o'er our defenceless head!
Let your Angel's guardian host
Keep all evil from our bed,

Till the flood of morning rays
Wake us to a song of praise!

“I ask not wealth, I ask not length of days
Nor joys which home, and rural sights bestow,
Nor honour among men, nor poets' praise,
Nor friendship, nor the light of love to know
Which with its own warm sun bathes all below,
Nor that the seed I sow should harvest prove;
I ask not health, nor spirits' gladdening flow,
Nor an assured pledge of rest above,
If only Thou wilt give a heart to know Thy love.”

CHAPTER VII.

“FINE weather this,” said Jane Stone's mother to Dame Trotman, as she walked into the neat kitchen of the latter. “Very fine weather, but rather hot for walking.”

“Sit down, Mrs. Stone, you seem heated, sit down,” said Dame Trotman, putting a chair forward; “ye've walked fast, hey?”

“Have you heard any news?” enquired Mrs. Stone in an important manner.

“Not I. News is slow a coming up here. We all have much to do, and don't hear much” said Dame Trotman.

Here Mrs. Stone rummaged in her pocket, and at last took out a letter. “Well, I've news to tell ye. This morning, Jack Thorn comed in and brought me this letter. It was brought by his cousin, who lives near up by Jane.”

“Jane!” said Dame Trotman, stopping her knitting and looking up with an expression of interest. “News of Jane! Come, my Ned will cheer up I hope: poor fellow, he's quite down-hearted. And why did'nt she write before?”

“Why there's been grand doings there, on account of one of the young ladies' marriage, and a sight of work, Jane says. She got a good share of presents too. Indeed she's a lucky girl; she's born to be the making of the family. 'Tis clear she'll do a deal better for herself than ever I thought; but I'll just read her letter to you. I'm afraid Edward will be disappointed; but, you see, what can we do! It would be a sin to turn one's back on such good fortune.” “If she thinks that any good fortune will stand her, instead of my poor boy, I'll not mourn for her. He deserves a truer heart. - No no, neighbour,” said Mrs. Trotman earnestly, with the tear in her eye;

“when young folks have given their love to each other as they two did, 'tis much that should go between them. Has'nt my boy worked hard, and laid by, so that they should have a little to set up with; and aint they young and strong, and able to pull together! No no, neighbour; there's no good fortune will bring the happiness to folks, that a true heart and contented mind will. I and my man had only the furniture of our house to begin on, but we've reared a large family in comfort, thank God. We've had rubs, and a few hard times, but la! then we bore up with one another, and I never wish to see child of mine marry in any other fashion. But God forgive me, I'm hasty.” And she wiped her face, and leaning her elbows on the white deal table, she listened to Mrs. Stone reading Jane's letter.

“Dear mother, - Hoping this will find you well, I take the opportunity of Eliza Thorn's returning, to write you word. We've been very busy, and I've had a sight of sewing work. Miss Howard was married a fortnight ago, to General Fitzroy, and there was grand doings; and she's a happy young lady, and much better off than if she'd married poor Mr. Morley, of whom there was talk. I heard Lady Howard commend her conduct. For she said, what was the use of marrying into trouble and misery. And I think so too. I think people grow wiser as they get on in years, and repent of much folly. For my part, I have made up my mind to give up such ways. I'm grown prudent and steady, and keep an eye to the long run. Tell Edward Trotman I can't think of keeping his company any longer; he must not think of any thing that's passed between us. Tell him it's all folly, and as Lady Howard says, only fit for books and poems, and not for life. People must have an eye to live; so tell him I've thought better of those foolish hours we've spent together, though I think they were pleasant. I'll not forget him. I wish him very well, and all his family, but I don't wish to keep myself bound. I've a lot of presents, from the cast-off clothes of Mrs. Fitzroy. Some of them I have sold, and got some pounds for them, and others I have kept. The General made me a handsome present, and I send you a shawl, and please to keep up appearances. I wish my family to be every way respectable. I'm in good health and happy, but don't expect long to remain here. By the bye, I may as well tell you, for I can't write again yet, I'm going to be married to Sir John's Steward - Mr. Collins. A steady, good man, with fine house, and a lot of money. When I'm married I'll let you know, and you shall come up and see me. My mistress allows me to get married from here. So you see I have good reason for what I said above to Edward Trotman, and he will of course be convinced of the reasonableness of it. And now I've writ a long letter; and, with love to all friends, no more from your dutiful daughter, Jane Stone.”

“P.S. - Lady Howard gave me a rich dark silk, for my wedding gown. I

wish you and all could see it, you'd say I had done well for myself. “

CHAPTER VIII.

There was silence after Jane's mother finished. Mrs. Trotman did not raise her head as it rested on her hand. Mrs. Stone folded and re-folded the letter, and moved her feet in a fidgetty, nervous manner. At last she said, clearing her voice, “I'm afraid poor Edward will feel it!” and then, as no answer came, she added, “but you see neighbour how it is; it is natural, and not to be wondered at in Jane. Besides, you know - but -” “Mrs. Stone,” said Dame Trotman, looking at her steadily, and speaking calmly, though her lip quivered. “Mrs. Stone, you hesitate. I, for my part, hate ‘buts.’ If a thing is right, 'tis right; if wrong, 'tis wrong. I'm a plain body, and I can only see two ways. If it is wrong for two people to give their faith to one another, and look to be man and wife, why that's another question. But how it can be right to do this, and then for the sake of money-or other advantage, to be false, I don't see. Jane has chosen her part. I feel for my child, but I cannot be sorry she's not to be his wife; she is not worthy of him.”

“Why, as to that,” said Mrs. Stone, with a slight toss of the head, “as to that, Jane need'nt go a begging. I don't wonder at her wishing to better herself.” Here she stopped. The fact was, Mrs. Stone's mind was not easy. She had a great respect and regard for the Trotmans. She was conscious to herself, that her daughter was not treating Edward well; but, like many others, Mrs. Stone wished to persuade herself that “wrong is right.” Therefore, though naturally a very easy tempered woman, she now felt much inclined to take offence.

Dame Trotman rose and looked at the clock, and then stirred the fire. At last she said, “I suppose Ned will be home directly. I should not like him to see you; the bad news must come, but it shall come as easy as it can from my own lips.”

“O, certainly,” said Mrs. Stone, “I'm sure I don't wish to intrude. I see how 'tis. I'm not wanted. However, I don't take offence, and I wish you good bye neighbour.”

“Good bye,” said Dame Trotman. “Don't take offence at me; I've been too free to tell my mind, I know. God forgive me,” added she to herself as Mrs. Stone closed the low gate and turned down to the village. “Aye, well may I say so; poor sinning creatures that we are. Even when on the right side, ever ready to be too hot and too angry!” Seeing her husband coming in from the yard, she hastened to meet him, and they talked long together.

“Ah,” said Mr. Trotman, “I always said Kitty was the best of those two

girls. Poor Kitty”

“But who would have thought it of Jane, with her pretty, gentle face! But her heart must be as hard as the nether stone, to cut our poor Ned,” sighed Mrs. Trotman.

And now Edward's whistle was heard. The mother looked up with an expression of pain and anxiety. She swept the hearth and bustled about, for in truth she could not sit still. And Trotman himself, taking up a hammer and a few nails, went out of the kitchen, and he took himself to mending a box with great energy. After about ten minutes work, he stopped. He looked up for a moment, as if listening; then throwing down his tools, and rubbing his hand across his eyes, he walked away, muttering to himself “I can't stand this - my poor boy!”

CHAPTER IX.

“No, Mother, I cannot believe it - no, I'll never believe it till I hear from her own lips,” said Edward Trotman, his pale and fallen countenance, however, showing that he did believe it but too well. “Where's her letter,” added he.

“Mrs. Stone took it away. Don't ask to read it, Ned: and yet, surely, if you did, it would make you care less for her. It was a heartless, foolish letter. Poor misguided creature! I wish she may never rue it,” returned his mother.

“And she said - you are sure, mother - she said she was going to be married. Did she say those very words?”

“Those very words, as I believe,” said Mrs. Trotman. “And now, Ned, you've always been a good son, God knows it, and now cheer up for your father's and my sake. Poor master, he could'nt stand it. See, he's ago out in the field, he's quite broken-hearted. But Edward, keep up. I don't ask you to forget her in anger; no, 'tis the Lord's doing, to chasten us, and we should be sorry for her, and I hope I shall pray for her good; but if you can't forget her, my son, try to do God's will. 'The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away;' and 'tis even so now.”

As she spoke, Edward sank his head on the table, and wept aloud. And the mother looked at him and said, half to herself, “Aye, weep on, it will do you good; the heart is overcharged! but O, 'tis a cruel sight for a mother.”

But we need not dwell on this scene any longer. Before the father returned, Edward had settled to go to see Jane once more, and hear from her own lips what she meant to do. “And then,” he said, mournfully, but with something like a smile, “then I'll come back, and you need not fear mother but I'll be as well as ever, please God.” He said this with effort, but it comforted his mother.

And the next day the cart was once more in requisition, and father and son drove into Red Town. Edward started by the coach, and Trotman returned to his home.

CHAPTER X.

WHEN Edward reached the market town of Ireton, he was told that Sir John Howard's place was five miles off, and being shewn the direction he set off on foot. It was a beautiful morning, but poor Edward was too anxious and sad to look at the scene around him. He walked on, full of his own thoughts. He thought of Jane, as she used to be when she was a girl at home, and then he thought of himself, how he had built upon having her as his wife, how he had set his heart on having a nice snug home, and living comfortably and happily. He stood for a moment and rested on a gate. Just then the sound of village bells fell on his ear. At first he hardly noticed it, but presently it carried his thoughts back to his home, and the church there, and this made him recollect what he heard Mr. White say last Sunday in church. It was about Christians setting their affections on things above. Of the danger there is to every one, in being religious and good only so far as it is quite our interest to be so in this world. Mr. White spoke of this, and also said that he feared it was the case with many persons. And he spoke of a real and true submission to the will of God, which was one way of proving whether our affections were set above. All this Edward now remembered, and he applied it to himself. Just as he whispered to himself "may God help me to set my heart above, and not on any thing in this world," just then, the bells set up another merry peal, and a troop of children ran up the field, and came to the gate where he was. "Make haste, make haste," said one, "or we shall be late." "Come on, Susan," shouted another; but Susan could not run so fast, and when she saw her companions leave her she began to cry. Edward Trotman asked what was the matter, and she said "I want to see the wedding, and I shall be too late." So Edward took her by the hand, and walked quickly. And he learnt that the bells he heard were for a wedding, and that Sir John Howard's steward was going to be married that morning, and that the servants at the house had a fine breakfast.

Edward had not heard from his mother who it was Jane was going to marry; so that when they reached the churchyard gate, and saw a gay wedding party coming out, he merely stepped back to let them pass, little dreaming who it was. However, some one behind Edward's shoulders said "wish ye joy, Mr. Collins, with all my heart."

This made Mr. Collins look round and half stop, and she who was leaning on his arm turned also, and Edward had a full view of her face. It was Jane! Jane, now Jane Collins! She did not recognise Edward; she was smiling, and looking quite pleased. And they passed on, and the crowd of children and other by-standers passed on; and Edward was alone. He hardly knew what he did, or even what he thought. His heart beat fast; his legs seemed to shake under him. He walked on mechanically, and went up to the church. It was open, and he walked in. The calm and holy look of the beautiful building, soothed him without his being aware of it. His tears now fell fast, and he silently begged God to help him to take this bitter trial in a meek and cheerful spirit. He prayed that he might remember in gratitude, all the blessings that still were his; and that he might, from that very hour, be more careful to lead a religious life, and be watchful to keep his heart from being set on any thing in this world. And now Edward turned, to go back again to Ireton. He needed not to see Jane now! All was confirmed; and he thought it would be wrong in him even to try to see her. It would be putting himself in the way of temptation, and it would be uselessly annoying her. So he walked back, intending to take his place in the coach, and return home immediately. Perhaps it may sound strange, when I say, that he felt far happier and calmer than he had done in the morning, as he walked on the same road. Were not all his hopes destroyed - even the hope he had of persuading Jane not to give him up? Yes, these hopes were gone; but a meek and cheerful submission to God's will, brings a peace which passeth all understanding; and many comforting thoughts were in Edward's mind. He did not put away his trial, and turn his back upon it, affecting to be above the chances of life. No, he knew it was permitted by God - he knew it was to wean him from his faults, and from the world - to sober and steady him, while it led him to other and brighter hopes.

CHAPTER XI.

WE must now come back to Kitty, who, the day after that on which she had asked to visit her mother, and had been refused, obtained leave to go out in the afternoon. How eagerly she hastened to the house where her mother was, the same house in which she was before. And how her heart beat, as she opened the door and saw the kitchen empty!

There was a stir in the room beyond; that room which contained all that was dear to Kitty, the only being in the world who loved her!

With a trembling step she went in, and found Mrs. Price supporting her mother's head, and another woman standing by bathing her temples with

water.

“You're just in time,” said Mrs. Price - “she is dying.”

“Dying!” said Kitty - “no not dying - she must not die. Send for a doctor - tell me where there is one - I can pay him - I shall soon have my wage - tell me where to find one.”

The other woman said she would go to see for a doctor, and Kitty might sit down.

“She does not know me!” said Kitty, “mother, mother, I'm Kitty, speak one word,” - but Mrs. Right heard not. One fit after another had come, and for some hours, Mrs. Price had thought every moment would be her last.

In about a quarter of an hour, the other woman returned with a medical man. He gave her some medicine, which revived her, and she opened her eyes, and said “Kitty.”

“Thank God for that!” fervently exclaimed the poor girl.

But the doctor said the amendment was only temporary. He did not see that anything could recover her. He was very kind, and sat some time with them. When he was gone, and Mrs. Price and her neighbour went out to get a cup of tea, Kitty took hold of her mother's hand. Her tears fell fast on it.

The mother said, “I was hoping you would come, dear, but I feared I should scarcely be spared to see you again. Kitty, I have laid dead like for hours, but sometimes I was able to think a bit and I prayed for you. I think and hope that my troubles are nearly over. I trust that my sins will be forgiven me, and I pray that you my poor child, may be able to keep your temper under. Many's the time I've prayed that! Kitty, don't forget all ye learnt at Mr. White's Sunday School. Love and fear God.” Here her strength failed and she paused. Kitty sobbed aloud, but could not speak. She sank on her knees, with her mother's hand pressed to her face.

“I have thought how lonely you'd be,” continued her mother, “when it pleased God to take me away, and that has pained me; but now, somehow, I feel happier about it; I seem to see plainer than I ever did before, how God shelters the poor and destitute. I have had pleasant thoughts, and I seem as if I was leaving you in good keeping. And - and, Kitty - there's one thing more I want to say, if God gives me breath - if you ever do come across your father - tell him I thought of him, and prayed for him, and that I freely forgive him all his faults to me, as I I hope to be forgiven through my Saviour. And now, dear, could you read a bit or say some verses?”

Kitty cleared her voice and tried, but it would not do, and she burst again into an agony of tears.

“O God comfort my poor child,” said the mother, and with these words came a convulsive spasm and a rattling, and after a few short quick sighs, the struggle was over, and Mrs. Right's soul had returned to Him who gave

it.

It would be impossible to describe Kitty's feelings. Her deep, deep grief and desolation of spirit, struggling with her feelings of submission to God, and fervent desires to prepare herself to follow her mother.

It was not till morning that she recollected her mistress, and how strange her long absence would have appeared. She knew that she must go back, and that she must tell her story. She hoped her mistress would have pity, and excuse her, for she had incurred a debt in calling in medical assistance, and then there was the funeral to be provided for. Such thoughts forced themselves on her, and she felt that she must leave that still room, and go back to her work. Her mother's journey was ended, and neither duty nor pleasure could have power on her. But Kitty's task was yet in hand; and that she might perform it so as to join her mother, clothed in righteousness, not her own, was her earnest and last prayer over her dead parent.

CHAPTER XII.

MRS. BROWN heard Kitty's story, and was willing to believe and receive her, and Kitty worked hard and tried to please her mistress. She had a great deal to do, and not much time to think, but now and then when she was allowed to go to church, Kitty managed to run to the burying ground, and take an earnest look at her mother's grave. And at such times she felt comforted, and remembered her mother's dying words, that God careth for the poor and destitute.

She found less temptation to be violent and angry than she used to do, but she could not always give satisfaction to her mistress, and she sorely felt the want of some one to love. One comfort which she had was in the lady's little girl, the only child, and Kitty had managed to gain the child's affection. Often she came and stood by when Kitty was doing her work, and when ill as she sometimes was, she used to cry for Kitty. The girl who was in the nursery, was very glad for Kitty to take care of little Agnes whenever she would. So Kitty often made haste to finish her work, that she might have half an hour to spend in this way.

One day, this girl, Betsy, asked her to come and stay ten minutes in the nursery, as she wanted to go out to see a friend. Both Mr. and Mrs. Brown were gone out, and Kitty having finished her work, readily consented.

She talked to little Agnes about England, and about the pleasant time of haymaking there, and the child listened, well pleased, and put her arms round Kitty's neck and kissed her. Instead of ten minutes an hour passed, and Betsy did not return - it got dark, but still she did not come. Agnes grew tired, and Kitty ran down to get a candle and see if Betsy was there to

put her to bed. Just as she was returning with the light, she heard a knock at the door, and she thought it must be her master and mistress. She was going to open the door, when a heavy fall and a loud scream up stairs frightened her.

She ran into the nursery, and found little Agnes lying on the floor, quite pale and apparently faint. In trying to lift her, however, she again screamed. Kitty was much frightened, and hardly knew what to do. How she wished Betsy would come! Then she heard her master's voice, and presently her mistress came up stairs. She passed the nursery, and was going into her own room, but Kitty called out "Miss Agnes is hurt Ma'am, please to come here." When Mrs. Brown came in, she saw directly that her child's arm was broken, and there was also a deep cut in the head. She turned to Kitty to know how it had happened. Kitty said she did not know, and told the truth about having gone for a light. But Mrs. Brown said she was quite sure she was deceiving her, and called her a careless bad girl, and that it was owing to her clumsiness in some way or other, that the poor child was suffering. In scolding Kitty, Mrs. Brown seemed to forget to ask where Betsy was, or to do anything to relieve the child. At last she said, "And now why don't you move - why do you stand there gaping? can't you call your master. You have done mischief enough I'm sure." Kitty with a bursting heart went down, and was sent by Mr. Brown for a medical man. Poor little Agnes' pale face made her forget herself: she hoped the dear child would not die, or suffer much, and she blamed herself for leaving her alone for a moment. She had not thought of this before, but now it seemed so unthinking of her, that she felt quite as if she deserved all Mrs. Brown said.

When she returned quite out of breath, and all her limbs trembling with fear and excitement, she found the doctor had already reached the house, having driven very fast. Betsy was also in the room, bathing little Agnes' face with something. Mr. and Mrs. Brown were standing by. Directly Kitty came, the latter said.

"There she is! do Mr. Brown send her away at once. Such a good for nothing girl as she must be. To tell such stories too!"

Betsy colored up but said nothing. Kitty followed Mr. Brown who desired her to come with him.

"You may take your wages and go at once," said he, your conduct has been very bad, and we can never place any confidence in you again."

"Sir," said Kitty, but sobs choked her. She could not speak another word.

"Don't attempt to excuse yourself," said her master. "Don't tell any more lies. We excused you once, when you said you were with your mother, that night you absented yourself, we believed you, but I fear that was of a

piece with this.”

“Sir - what have I done? O, Sir, I'm sorry I left poor Miss Agnes. I mean't no harm; but let me tend her, let me do anything for her. I'll work hard Sir, and for nothing, if you'll keep me.” She could not say more. She did not understand what her master meant about her mother at all, nor did she quite know what she had done. She fancied it was all owing to her having left the nursery for a moment. She was quite ready to blame herself, but she did hope they would overlook it, and let her stay. It would break her heart to leave Miss Agnes!

Kitty was slow at perceiving things, and always found a difficulty in understanding people. So she left the next morning at day light, for Mr. Brown would not keep her, perfectly ignorant of the real reason of her dismissal. Her not explaining herself, or asking more about it, perhaps tended to confirm her master in his opinion, that it was all as Betsy had said.

She put up her small bundle as she was desired, and as she passed the nursery door she burst into tears, and said half aloud, “Good bye my darling, you'll forget poor Kitty. Ah, that ever I should have let you hurt yourself that way. O dear, O dear!” The cook who let her out, said, “why did'nt you speak up for yourself, you silly girl; sure you've got a tongue in your head! Good bye to ye; you'll soon get another place I don't doubt, there's plenty to be had.”

Kitty shook her by the hand and hurried on, though where she knew not!

CHAPTER XIII.

BETSY was a bad girl, and just the opposite of Kitty. She saw and understood everything in a moment. She was one of those clever, sharp people, who do appear to get on in this world, and, for a time, to accomplish their ends.

Betsy came into the house the back way, just as Kitty left it by the front door when she was sent to fetch the doctor. She learnt from the cook something of what had happened, and finding Kitty was away, she told a plausible story of her wanting to fetch in some clothes which were hanging out, and having begged Kitty to stay five minutes with the child, adding, “but dear me she's always wanting to be out, I dare say she was at the street door when it happened.”

Mrs. Brown recollected having heard a scuffle and noise inside, just as they reached the door, and immediately felt sure that Kitty was there, and ran away on hearing them come.

Mrs. Brown was prejudiced against Kitty, from her awkwardness and

clumsiness in doing her work, and although she had now lived many months with her, she had never taken the trouble to enquire about her, in fact, like too many mistresses, she only cared if her work was done, and seemed to forget that a fellow creature with feelings and infirmities like herself, a member of Christ's Church, was, by being her servant, especially under her care. Mrs. Brown forgot this, and she knew nothing whatever of Kitty's real disposition and character. And owing to this neglect of duty, a friendless girl was now turned out in the wide world - perhaps to ruin. But no, Kitty, dull as she was in some things - stupid as she appeared in not defending herself - was, in one respect, wiser than many others. She knew that God was with her; she knew she must obey Him, and trust Him. And under the shadow of His wings, the seemingly friendless and destitute girl was defended, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wing.

Before Kitty was aware where she was going, she found herself by her mother's grave. It was quite early in the morning - no one was near. She laid down her bundle, and seating herself close to the mound she cried bitterly.

In about an hour's time an elderly looking woman dressed in black came into the burying ground. She walked about slowly, stopping every now and then to read the inscriptions. At last she came near Kitty, and seemed half startled. However, she passed on. And Kitty watched her, and thought to herself, "she looks forlorn, too; perhaps she has no friends - perhaps she has some one buried here too."

The lady took another turn, and as she passed she looked at Kitty, and said, "It is early for any one to be here. Have you any friend buried here my poor girl?"

Kitty pointed to the grave, and just managed to say "my mother."

Then the lady seemed to take pity on her, and she talked gently and asked her name, and how long she had been in the country. And after a little while Kitty found she had told all her story, and had expressed her wish to get a place.

"Well," said the lady, "you may come to my house in an hour's time, naming the street. Ask for Mrs. Robertson, and I will try if I can do any thing for you." Kitty thanked her, and as she watched her go out of the gate, she felt how true it was, that God can raise up friends for us when we least expect it.

CHAPTER XIV.

MRS. ROBERTSON could not take Kitty herself. She was poor, and only kept one servant. But she recommended Kitty to a friend of hers, who

wanted a house-maid, and Kitty was very thankful to agree with Mrs. Simpson.

She was more comfortable on the whole than she was at the Browns. They were kinder people, and Kitty thought them very religious and good. But she missed little Agnes, and often did she long to know how she was, and to see her again.

One of her fellow servants who slept in the same room with her, used very often to read to Kitty out of the Bible, and from other books; she was very kind, and Kitty looked up to her a good deal, and wished she knew so much about religion, and could talk so well as Susan.

One Sunday afternoon they went to church together. It was rather a pleasant walk home, as Mr. Simpson lived a little out of Sydney. It was a lovely clear day, and the distant view of the smooth water and shipping, would at any other time have caught Kitty's eye, but on this day she did not notice it, she was thinking of what she had heard in church. The sermon was on the duty of almsgiving. The clergyman had spoken of the provision made by the church, that, on the first day of the week, every one should lay by according as God has prospered him.

In this way every one, rich and poor, high and low, could humbly and quietly offer back to God a portion of what He had given them. The poor man's penny, like the widow's mite, would here be accepted. The money collected in a holy place, and offered up to God with solemn prayer, was to be devoted to charitable purposes, such as relieving the poor and sick, or in building and adorning churches. The clergyman spoke of the great benefits arising from the custom, and he said that he wished to institute it in his church. He ended by an earnest exhortation to his congregation, to come forward willingly and cheerfully, each according to his ability - the rich giving abundantly, and the poor not being ashamed to offer pence. I have not space to repeat half that Kitty heard. She did not understand it quite all, but she was pondering in her own mind how she was to obey and follow what she heard, and wishing her poor mother was alive to tell her how to do it, when her thoughts were disturbed by Susan exclaiming "well, Kitty, is'nt he a fine preacher! Dear me, I cried nearly all the time. I shall never forget it, when he said about the widow's mite; don't you remember that?"

"Yes," said Kitty, and she longed to ask Susan what she intended to do; but just then some one else joined them, and Susan and her friend went on, talking together till they reached home.

CHAPTER XV.

DURING the next week, Kitty's thoughts often wandered to the sermon. It had never before struck her, that she, a poor servant girl, was in any way called upon to give alms as a regular thing. If she saw a case of distress or want before her, she would certainly have given something of her earnings; but it had not struck her, that it was a positive duty, to lay by a certain portion of whatever God gave her, as an offering to Him, shewing that all is His, that every thing we possess comes from Him.

The clergyman had mentioned Abel's offering, and God's command, to His people Israel, when he said, "Speak to the children of Israel, that they bring Me an offering." And he had spoken of our Saviour's confirming it, by teaching us how to perform this duty in an acceptable manner, in His sermon on the Mount; and that it was enjoined and practised by the Apostles, and by all good men, in every age. All this the clergyman had said, and Kitty remembered, and she tried to reckon up how much she ought to lay by, out of her wages for this purpose. "A tenth part of our substance," she recollected were the words used. But Kitty was a bad hand at counting, and could not make out very well what was the tenth part of £9 a year, which she received. At last she thought of giving sixpence every week. She fancied this was rather more than a tenth, but she felt anxious to give all she could, and she reckoned this up, and found it amounted to £1 6s. a year. This would oblige her to go without some things she had resolved to get, for she still owed money to Mrs. Price, on her mother's account.

Sunday came again, and again Kitty and Susan went to church. When the sermon was over, the clergyman went to the altar, and in a solemn voice read some of those sentences found in the Prayer Book. Meanwhile the churchwardens walked quietly through the church, each with a basin, and when all the offerings were collected, they were placed on the communion table, by the minister, who offered up that beautiful prayer for Christ's Church on earth, in which we pray God to accept our alms, and receive our prayers. It struck Kitty as being very solemn and holy: and she was glad that both she and Susan had given something.

Time passed on, and Kitty kept her resolution to lay by sixpence a week. She felt rather surprised to find however that Susan preferred remaining at home, to going to church, and one evening she heard the butcher say to her, "that he had no notion of going to church, and having to give money, so he had left it, and now went to some other place of worship."

Susan said, "well she began to think it was not very pleasant to have to refuse; it looked so! and besides it was hard to expect people who worked for their bread, to give away."

Shortly after this, Kitty went with Susan to a shop, as she wanted some

materials for a cap. She had once intended treating herself to a handsome edging and nice ribbon, but she now chose a common and plain border, and only just enough narrow ribbon for strings. Susan laughed at her being so careful of her money, and she bought herself a very handsome shawl, which made Kitty wonder, for she thought "surely, if Susan has so much money as all that, she might give something to the plate, and perhaps a plainer shawl would have done quite as well. She surely must have forgotten the sermon!"

Now had these two persons, Susan and Kitty, been talked to about their religion, Susan would have answered by far the best. She would have given the best account of the sermon, and she would have understood it the best. Susan knew her duty, and Kitty did it. Susan liked religion very much, so long as it did not run counter to her own wishes; when it did, then she tried to persuade herself that "such and such a duty was needless, and would not be required of us, or no one else did it," and such like very false excuses. Kitty tried hard to understand all she was taught in church, she tried daily to realize in her own practice that "one thing only is needful," and as she believed our Saviour's words, that "narrow is the gate, and straight the path, which leadeth to eternal life," she was not inclined to be startled, at finding some duties hard, and even distasteful at first. She tried simply to obey God, and be a faithful member of His Church, that she might through her Redeemer, be among the "few who find it;" - find that narrow but safe path.

CHAPTER XVI.

KITTY had now been several months in Mr. Simpson's family, and very comfortable she was. She had learnt to do her work very well, and her mistress was kind, and often asked her about her friends, and seemed to feel for her a good deal. She was able to go to church regularly every Sunday, and by dint of being very careful, and dressing very plainly, she was able to pay off her debts by degrees, and keep her resolution of putting sixpence a week into the plate. One of her great pleasures was the seeing of Mrs. Robertson, every now and then; for some times she came to visit Mrs. Simpson, and if Kitty chanced to open the door for her, or be in sight, she was sure to get a kind and gentle "how d'ye do Kitty," which warmed her heart. And often she watched Mrs. Robertson, till she was out of sight, and would think to herself, "ah! 'tis all owing to her I'm here, and am not starving in the streets! and then as her tears came she wished she could shew her gratitude. Then perhaps other thoughts would come; that it was God who prompted Mrs. Robertson to be kind to a forlorn girl; that it

is from Him we derive all our blessings, our comforts, our life! And very often Kitty used that prayer, which our church has provided expressly for a thankful heart, in which we pray that we may have “that due sense of all God's mercies, that our hearts may be unfeignedly thankful, and that we shew forth God's praise, not only in our lips, but in our lives.” And Kitty felt the real and sure proof of her being grateful, was to “give herself up to God's service,” and to “walk in holiness and righteousness all her days.” Therefore, after seeing Mrs. Robertson, she was careful to be even more diligent than usual to do her work, to be quiet and orderly, in all her ways, to say nothing unbecoming one in the presence of the Almighty; to wish for nothing, but to do his will; and above all, she tried to be gentle in temper, for here she knew was her failing, and although she very seldom now ever gave way to passion, she often felt her color rising, and her heart beating, if any thing provoked her.

One morning her mistress called her into her room, and said, "Kitty I believe you are satisfied with your place, and you suit me very well. I shall be sorry to part with you, but" -

“Part! ma'am! I'm very sorry if I've offended you; don't go to send me away if you please ma'am.”

“You shall do just as you like about it,” returned her mistress. “But I think when you know all, you will wish to go. Your kind friend Mrs. Robertson, who has long been in delicate health, is now very much worn, and is suffering extremely. Her servant has just given her warning. She has been unfortunate in this respect, but I think that Mrs. Robertson would like to have you.”

“O ma'am,” interrupted Kitty, “if I could but serve her!” and she hid her face in her apron, much as she used to do when quite a child.

“Then I am not wrong in supposing that you would willingly undertake Mrs. Robertson's situation,” said Mrs. Simpson; “and though I am sorry to lose you, of course I will not make any difficulty.”

In about a week after this, Kitty left the place in which she had enjoyed so many comforts, and went to live with Mrs. Robertson. Her heart beat high with expectation and hope. To be able to attend upon this lady, and perhaps in some degree, administer to her comfort; would she thought be almost too much happiness.

CHAPTER XVII.

MRS. ROBERTSON was a person who had seen a great deal of what are called the troubles of life. She had buried husband and children, and was now living without any relations far away from her native country, and

with a very confined income. She had a few friends, among whom were Kitty's former master and mistress, Mr. and Mrs. Simpson. There was a softness and kindness in her manner, which generally took people's fancy, but like many others, Mrs. Robertson had allowed her trials to sore her temper. The pleasing manner gave way to murmurings and querulousness, when she was at home. Thus though kind to the poor and ever ready to help those in distress, her servants never staid long with her; and Kitty found as day after day came and went, that she seldom pleased her mistress. She sometimes almost wondered if this could be the same person she had seen in the burying ground, and afterwards at Mrs. Simpson's. But we will take a peep into Mrs. Robertson's room, and judge for ourselves. She is seated in a great chair, and looks pale and ill. Kitty is making some toast for her, and the tea-things are nicely arranged on a small table.

“Come do make haste; one would think you were baking the bread, you are so long! Ah! me! really no one cares at all for my comfort. It is very strange, I can't have my tea at six o'clock,” said Mrs. Robertson. “Please ma'am,” returned Kitty, as she buttered the toast, “it is now striking six; but now then 'tis all ready ma'am; tomorrow I'll get it earlier.”

“The clock must be wrong, I am sure,” said her mistress. “And dear me what horrid toast you have made! Do you think I can eat this,” and she pushed back the plate, angrily, and leaning back in her chair, gave a long sigh. Kitty was going to make some more toast, but Mrs. Robertson said, “you needn't trouble yourself any more; my appetite is quite gone.” O dear! when I think of my poor mother at home, how comfortable she used to be, and well cared for; it does seem hard; here I am in this place, in a wretched house, with no comfort, friendless, and in pain, and not a soul who cares for me.”

As she said this, tears came into her eyes; and Kitty earnestly wished she knew how to give her any comfort. She could not help thinking of her own mother, who in all her sickness and distress, had never uttered a complaint; but she supposed that Mrs. Robertson had been more used to comforts and luxuries, and therefore it came harder upon her. And this was true; Mrs. Robertson had been used to comforts. She had been well off, and she had been blessed with a very kind husband; but while these blessings were hers - while the sun shone upon her, she had gone on carelessly, enjoying her comforts, and resting securely on her naturally good temper and high spirits. She had not kept herself pure from the world, and had not thought it necessary to prepare to do God's will, should it please Him to deprive her of what she then enjoyed. She acknowledged in a general way, that all came from God, but in practice seemed to consider

it as her right, and what would always be hers. Now in her affliction, she felt that she had to learn *where* to look for support; all was new to her. It stunned and upset her. She wondered that her spirits should so completely give way, and her temper become ruffled.

If we rightly receive and use our blessings, we shall be more prepared to bear trials and disappointments when they are sent us. The same spirit which makes us humble and self-denying, and constant in prayer and meditation, when we are in health and vigour, surrounded by comfort, and all smiling about us; the same spirit will strengthen and comfort us in sickness, poverty, and distress. The more we cultivate it in prosperity, the easier shall we find it in our hour of need. Trials would not then sour the temper, or depress the spirits. Our hope, our hiding place, our star of promise would be the same!

CHAPTER XVIII.

KITTY lived a twelvemonth with Mrs. Robertson. It was a disappointment to her, to find how very seldom she seemed to please her, but then Kitty did not look for this; she always thought herself unable to do what others did in this way. This opinion of herself, however, did not cause her to give up trying. It only made her strive harder and harder. When found fault with, she did not console herself with "well, do what I will, it is always the same!" or get angry and offended, and say she was unjustly blamed. Kitty was so much alive to her real faults, and was so sure that many things about her wanted improvement, that when she was blamed for one thing, it carried her back to her imperfections, and by constantly encouraging this habit, she grew daily in Christian stature. The being with Mrs. Robertson, was still a pleasure to her, and the disappointment she felt, made her only cling still tighter to that earnest hope she had, of being one day where there would be no more sorrows, no more infirmities!

And Kitty's goodness had its effect upon Mrs. Robertson. She was really attached to Kitty, and felt how much the girl did for her comfort; but it was not easy to alter her manner all at once, though she tried. And by degrees, her mistress heard all Kitty's story, and what her mother had borne with so much patience; and often she thought of it as she sat alone. It made her wish and try to imitate the cheerful patience and full trust in God, which she heard of; so that Kitty was in a way she knew not of, and little expected - enabled to be of service to her mistress.

Let no one, however humble their station, forget that, in some way or other, they influence others, for good or evil. Every one, high and low, rich

and poor, young or old, bears witness either for or against Christianity. They either in their hourly conduct and temper, exemplify what is that lovely, high character, or they bring shame and disgrace upon their profession - that profession which they made when they were baptized, and were enrolled as the children of God.

A year after Kitty went to Mrs. Robertson's, she was going down stairs in the dark, one evening, when she stumbled over a bucket. It gave her a good deal of pain at the time, but as her mistress was ill, and required much attention, she did not mention it. She went about her work as usual. In a few weeks' time when her mistress was up again, she observed how lame Kitty was, and then found that it had become a very bad place. Mrs. Robertson asked the medical man about it, and Kitty, much against her inclination, had to lay up for it. Her mistress was very kind, and when she was well enough, she read to Kitty, and tried to comfort her, by saying a few days' rest would set it all to rights. But it had been left too long for this, and after three weeks nursing, Mrs. Robertson feeling again ill, Kitty was obliged to go to the hospital, and Mrs. Robertson to engage another servant. Her mistress however, promised that as soon as she was well, she should come back again, and said she was sure the medical attendance she would get at the hospital, would cure her. Poor Kitty did not think it would. She felt very ill, and she recollected her mother's leg. She sometimes fancied that her time was come, and that she should die, but this did not alarm her; she rather thought of it with pleasure. Very patiently she bore the pain, and the operations which were performed; but after a long period of suffering, she found that though her life was spared, she was quite a cripple, and wholly unfit ever to go into service again. She could walk with crutches, and she determined to support herself by needlework.

Mrs. Price, the woman who had been so kind to her mother long ago, wished her to board in her house, and Kitty would have gladly done so, but for one reason. The house was so far from any church, that in her crippled state she could never reach one. So she agreed with a decent though poor couple, who had a large family, to live with them, paying so much a week for lodging, but finding herself in every thing. This place was within an easy walk of the church.

Here then, Kitty lived, supporting herself, though but poorly, by needlework. Her fare was coarse, and her dress often shabby, but she felt really thankful for having the necessaries of life. She was sorry not to be able, as formerly, to put her sixpence every week into the church plate, but she very seldom was without a penny or a halfpenny, and sometimes if she had had more work than usual, she had two, and three pence to give.

The clergyman and his wife were very kind to her, and often visited her.

They knew that she was good, though Kitty could not talk as many others do. And many other people remarked the poor cripple, who was so regularly in church, and they were glad to give her work, or if she was ill to send her food. Even those rude, noisy, and unthinking young people one so often meets in the streets, they became silent as they passed Kitty, and shewed her respect. The man in whose house she lived, never used bad words before her, which had been his habit before. Kitty looked paler, and more delicate than she used to do. The peace which dwelt in her heart, shone in her countenance, and cast a charm over her which interested the good, and awed the wicked.

Perhaps the following beautiful lines may express all that I wish to say.

“ 'Twas not the play of high-toned sense
Nor keenly-eyed intelligence,
Which have a power I know full well
To charm us; - but a deeper spell,
A something in a holy life,
Which unapproachable by strife,
Sheds its own halo round the spot,
That care awhile herself forgot,
And Passion could not there intrude
Upon her holy quietude.”

CHAPTER XIX.

HAVING in some measure compared the two cousins together, at the commencement of this little story, it will be as well to look back once more upon Jane.

We left her married to Mr. Collins, having given up Edward Trotman's love, for the superior wealth of Sir John Howard's steward. Before, however, we visit Mr. and Mrs. Collins in their pretty cottage at Woodbridge, let us take a passing peep at the Trotman family.

Dame Trotman looks very much as before, hardly at all older, and as neat and nice as one occasionally sees a respectable farmer's wife in England.

Her husband, who had always been a very hard working man, shows more wrinkles and is considerably bent. He has given up the management of his farm to his son, and only works a little in the garden, or does an odd job or so. His youngest daughter often reads to him as he sits by the fire, or the young children of his eldest daughter come and amuse “Grandfather.” They are still a united and well ordered family, trying to practice towards each other, all that is enjoined in the Bible. Edward is still unmarried. Since his great disappointment, he never felt any inclination to

marry. He is much graver looking than he used to be, and has not so many jokes and smiles for passers by. He now prefers sitting at home quietly and reading, to riding the grey mare, or even taking a gun, and trying how many small birds he can bring down. His tastes are changed; but, if we may judge from his even spirits and his cheerful smile, he is happy and hopeful. He very often repeats to himself these lines, which he met with in a book.

“There was one whom I made my stay,
But Thou didst set her far away,
That I might courage take on Thee to lean;
And lest I hang on earthly love,
Thou didst with sorrow me reprove,
And badest me to fix my love on Thee unseen.”

From all this we may hope that Edward's trial was properly used, and therefore turned into a blessing.

And now let us, as before proposed, visit Woodbridge, the name of Mr. Collins' place.

And a very pretty, snug place it is. A neat, well built house, well backed with out buildings and a nice paved yard. In front, a little garden with a green paling round it, which in summer was always full of flowers, and in spring shewed a great number of bright crocuses, and soft snow drops, to the admiration of every one who saw it. But at this time there were no flowers, except indeed a handsome shrub of lauristinus, with its glossy green leaves and white and pink blossom. It is winter; a time of year when, in England, there is much suffering for those who are poor. And we who are here surrounded with wood, and can always command a cheerful, blazing fire, would do well to remember how many in our mother country creep to bed in the cold, scarcely able to afford a handful of fire to dress their meals on; and this in the midst of snow and ice. But the bright fire which burnt in Mr. Collins' grate, the neatly furnished room, with polished table and substantial chairs, told a tale of plenty. The kettle sang on the hob, and Mr. Collins sat reading the newspaper and sipping his home-brewed ale. Mrs. Collins having put her little ones to bed, had taken out her work, and kicking the white cat as it lay in her way, she placed her chair opposite to her husband.

“By the bye, Jane, here's a letter for you,” said Mr. Collins. “Tom is just returned from Ireton, and brought it. He says the snow is wonderfully deep on the road.”

In the mean time, Mrs. Collins opened her letter. It was from Kitty, written just after she left the hospital, and had taken up her abode in the

lodgings. She had written twice before to Jane; when she first landed, and then again after her mother's death. Jane had written once, telling Kitty of her marriage, &c.

When Mrs. Collins had finished the letter, she gave it to her husband, saying, "poor unfortunate girl! Really that family seem doomed to misfortune: some people seem born to it! And they never had any notion of managing for themselves either!" Then, after a moment she added, "I'm sure I don't see what is to be done for her. Why did she go to that country on such a wild goose chase! Mother always said how it would be."

When Mr. Collins had finished reading, he said, "well, I feel for that girl! It is a very proper letter: no begging or complaining. My dear," added he, as he stirred the fire, "I don't see why we should not have her home. How much would the passage be, I wonder."

"O, a great deal I am sure," said his wife.

"If it was not quite out of the way, we could manage it I think," returned Mr. Collins. "And then when once here, it would be all right. I am sure my dear, if you like it and think it proper, I am quite ready to do all I can."

"Yes, you are always ready to put your hand into your pocket, Collins. You're too easy by half. But we have our children to care for, and it is our duty to lay by for them. Charity begins at home, say I. Besides, really without at all considering the expense, really I don't know if it would do one much credit to have any thing to do with Sam Right. Though he is my uncle by marriage, he is a disgrace to his family; and though poor Kitty may be well enough, and a good creature at heart, (though by the bye, she used to be very hot tempered,) still she is Sam Right's daughter. Indeed Collins, hard as I strive to keep up our credit for the children's sake; this would undo it all. Besides, I'm sure she doesn't expect such a thing. If I write her a kind letter, Kitty will be just as much pleased as if I sent her a bag of gold, That's the way she was always."

Mr. Collins had a very high idea of his wife's good management and good sense; so he contented himself with saying, "well, do as you like about it, but remember if a few pounds will serve your cousin, I can easily raise it."

The next day was Sunday. Mr. Collins had sent a man to sweep away some of the snow which had drifted into the path. And he and his family walked to church, which was at an easy distance. Lady Howard stopped and spoke to Jane when they came out of church, and said they intended to pay her a visit on the next day, if the ice was thick enough on the large pond for skating. There was a large party staying at the "great house," as it was called, and Mr. Collins's cottage was near this pond; so they proposed resting there, and tasting Mrs. Collins's ginger-bread nuts. Jane smiled, and

said she was greatly honoured, and with a pretty curtsy, joined her husband.

“What a nice looking woman!” said a young lady who was with Lady Howard.

“Very,” said Lady Howard; “I always say that Collins and his wife are patterns for every one. They always look so respectable and manage so well. I flatter myself that it was all owing to me that Mr. Collins obtained his wife. She was a servant of ours, and had been engaged I believe to some poor man in her own village. She has since told me that it was owing to something she overheard me say, that she accepted Collins. It is very fortunate she did so, and she makes him a very good managing wife.”

It is regretted that the conclusion of this Tale will not come within the limits of the monthly number. It will therefore be reserved for the next.

CHAPTER XX

“I wonder why the Browns don't go to church,” remarked Jane to her husband, as they walked home. “Really it is a pity. It looks so! I always think it has a respectable appearance to come to church regularly. By the bye, Collins, how is Joe to day?”

“He is no better I fear. He is growing old; but I think my dear we can spare him that room; I should hardly like to turn him out, hey? what d'ye think?”

“O give him five shillings and turn him off, now pray don't cumber the place with those who can't work. Why can't he go to the poor house? Besides, he is always chewing tobacco, and I shall be glad to have him out of the kitchen. Really you don't know what an annoyance it is to any one who prides themselves on a neat and clean floor, to have a dirty old man always in the chimney corner!”

“Jane,” said her husband, after a short silence, “what did you think of the sermon? It struck me a good deal.”

“It was very good no doubt, and true too I dare say,” answered Jane. “I couldn't help thinking of Mrs. Jacobs, and wondered if Eliza Parker was listening to it. I should think it would strike home to them.”

“Yes, perhaps it did,” said Mr. Collins.

“But, my dear, that part about the Lord's Supper, didn't it strike you? we never attend that, perhaps we ought to think about it. It struck my conscience that part of it, and I remember my poor old father and mother

said the same thing.” Jane did not answer directly; but presently she said, “Well I don't feel myself to be good enough for that. When a person has a family and other concerns, taking up their thoughts and time, they are not religious enough to take the Sacrament. I hate hypocrisy, and don't wish to set up for being better than my neighbours. When my children are grown up will be time enough for that.”

And here we will leave Jane.

Fair and goodly as was her heritage, it is melancholy to think that she, a wife, mother, and mistress of a family, a baptized Christian, should so speak and think. What must be the hopeless state of heart, of those who coolly confess themselves unworthy to present themselves at the Lord's Table! who confess this, and then turn again to their pursuits and their pleasures, without an effort to break the chain which binds them to this world!

CHAPTER XXI.

PERHAPS some among those who read this tale, may wonder why Kitty, who was so evidently the better Christian of the two, should have so many troubles; and on the contrary why Jane should find life so smooth. We leave Kitty poor, with scarcely sufficient to support her, though she worked hard all day, often in pain from her leg and otherwise broken in health. Her mother dead, and her father if yet alive, living in sin and wickedness.

We leave Jane, surrounded with every comfort, with a kind and indulgent husband, and possessing the world's good opinion and praise.

Why is this? Many will perhaps shake their heads and say, it is a pity to take such a case for a story. Some may still prefer Jane's lot, not seeing beyond the outward part. I hope that a few may really desire to be, even as Kitty was. And that if they admire her character, they will follow her example, by striving to conquer their faults, and take up their daily cross.

To those who really cannot quite understand as they look round them, why we so often see the good suffer and evil prosper, I would say, read the 73rd Psalm.

David says there “my treadings had well nigh slipt. And why? I was grieved at the wicked; I do also see the ungodly in such prosperity. * * * * They come into no misfortune like other folk; neither are they plagued like other men.”

Then he goes on to say, “Then thought I to understand this; but it was too hard for me.”

And now let us mark well, how David - Holy David, came at last to undersand this. “Until I went into the sanctuary of God; then understood I

the end of these men.”

And we too, if we go into the sanctuary of God - if we try earnestly and unceasingly to serve God, in the way He has appointed, by devoting ourselves to Him from infancy, renouncing the world and flesh, and believing the articles of the Christian faith, being humble, obedient and selfdenying, every hour of our lives, - if we try to do this, then we shall by God's grace "understand."

The true, practical Christian, looks at events in this world with quite a different eye from one who only serves God with the lips and not with the heart. If all honor, and all wealth, and all that this world can give, were heaped on a true servant of God, still he would not rest here, still his hopes and his treasure would be laid up above.

And were poverty, and disappointment, and pain to be his portion, he would perhaps only the more earnestly look for the "glory which is to come."

If we wish to "understand" this - to know how trials may be blessed to us and how wordly comforts sanctified - we must be lowly in heart, obedient, showing reverence for sacred things and for God's ministers - constant in prayer, watchful over our thoughts, words and actions; not resting on any thing here, but looking to that time when the Almighty says, "Behold, I come quickly; and my *reward* is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be."

THE GOOD SISTER AMY; OR, THE SKILFUL NURSE.

“To think what others would desire,
And their desires to make our own; -
There's nought on earth that we require
But this sweet love alone.

Seek not for others to love you,
But seek yourself to love them best;
And you will gain the secret true,
Of joy, and peace, and rest.”

CHAPTER I.

“Do one of you girls go in and sit with Willie a bit, he's as cross and fretful as can be!” said Molly Bright one day to her daughters, as they sat on a bench outside the hut, working and chatting merrily, and every now and then taking a bite of a fine water melon.

“Oh, 'tis so hot within, ” said Harriet, “besides I can't please Willie, you go Amy, you have the knack of managing him, I'm sure I can't stand the heat, now mother is ironing.”

Why Amy was to be able to please her sick brother, or to stand the heat better than Harriet, no one but Harriet herself could well guess. However, Amy rose very cheerfully, and folding up her work, went to the bedside of poor Willie. He was a lad of twelve, and had injured his leg in the dray wheel, it gave him a great deal of pain, and had kept him some weeks to his bed, nor had they much hope that he would ever recover the use of that leg again. He was naturally of a high spirited, rather impatient temper, and had found it very hard to submit to the long weary confinement, and sometimes from pain and weakness, he was rather difficult to please. His mother was laundress to Mr. Stafford's family, on whose farm they lived, and she had too much to do, to be able to attend to him. Harriet, the eldest girl, who was between fifteen and sixteen, came now and then, and seemed to wish to be kind to her brother, but he was always glad when it was Amy's hand that bandaged his poor sore leg, and felt cheered and pleased, if it was Amy's voice he heard, speaking softly and cheerfully to him. Now, as Amy entered the room very softly, for poor Willie could not bear a noise, she asked him how he felt that evening.

“I'm very bad,” said he, “I can't bear myself, it is so close and hot,” and then he began to cry, for he was very weak.

Amy put the door open, and seeing that the setting sun, shone hotly through the little window, she took a thick dark shawl and stuck it up with two forks so as to exclude the rays of the hot sun; then she very gently smoothed his pillow, and put the sheets straight, and wet a rag in a little vinegar and water, and bathed his temples; all this was done without bustle, and without asking questions, for Amy saw that Willie could not just then bear to be spoken to. He seemed soothed and refreshed, but he did not speak, and then Amy took a branch of gum tree, and waved it about to drive the flies from him.

At last he said, "thank you, that'll do," but Amy thinking he only said so for her sake, went on. "That'll do I say, do be quiet Amy said he," rather crossly.

Amy was quiet in a moment, and she felt sorry for her brother, and she wished she could make him better; she did not tell him "how cross he was, and that there was no pleasing him!" as Harriet did, but she looked good tempered, and yet shewed that she felt very much for his pain. "I'm very thirsty, I should like a cup of tea, Amy," said he. "Well then, I'll make some directly," said she, cheerfully, but her mother said there was no milk, and Willie never would touch it without milk. Mrs. Stafford had allowed them a little every day, and now Amy took a can, and ran as fast as she could to beg some. "You can't get none to day," said the cook.

"Mayn't I have just a spoonful for my brother," asked Amy, "as the mistress allows?"

"No, not to day, there's company expected, and I've got to save all I can; there's mighty little any how, at this present. So you see you can't get it to day."

Poor Amy returned much disappointed, and Willie tried to drink the tea without, but did not like it, and was going to cry again; but Amy talked to him about a new horse she saw the groom riding, and this made Willie wonder what it was, whether the master had bought it, and what it cost, and meanwhile Amy made some nice smooth gruel, and poured it into a clean white basin, and it looked so good, and Amy looked so kind that Willie could not help tasting it; and then he eat a few spoonsfull, just to please Amy, as she had taken the trouble to make it, and he said "I don't know how it is, but you always make everything comfortable and nice, I always like you to be with me, I don't think I should be cross, if I saw no one else but you, but the others, make such a noise, and always answer me if I say a quick and hasty word, and then that makes me worse."

By this time the sun had passed away from the little window; it was just sinking behind the distant hills, which looked so blue and shadowy, and Amy pulled down the shawl, and helped Willie to sit up against the

pillows, that he might look at it.

“I wonder how many more suns will rise and set before I get well,” said Willie, with a sigh.

“Not many I hope,” answered Amy, “but God knows best, you will get well when He pleases, and that is sure to be the right time.”

CHAPTER II.

THE next morning, Willie's brother Ned came to talk to him before he went out to work. Ned had never been ill at all, so he did not know, how many little things annoy a sick person; he shook the bed, and talked very loud, and at last as he sat on the bed, he hurt the poor lame leg; this brought tears to Willie's eyes, and Ned was sorry, for he was good natured, and did not mean to give him pain, but he said, “well now don't be a baby; I only just touched it, and I didn't mean it.” This made Willie angry, to be called a baby, and to be told it was only a touch, when he felt such sharp pain from it; he gave some peevish answer, and Ned left the room. Just then Harriet came in to sweep the dust away, and put things to rights, for they rather expected the doctor. She raised a great dust, which was of course very unpleasant, particularly to a sick person, and Willie begged her to be quiet, and complained of it several times, at last she threw down the broom, and said “the room might stay dirty, for she couldn't help making a dust if she was to sweep it.”

Amy coming, and seeing how annoyed Willie was, offered to do it as, she said, "she had learnt from the nurse at the house, how to clean the floor without raising a dust."

“Well as you like, but you're spoiling the boy, to give in to his whims so; such nonsense, people should learn to bear pain patiently, and not set every thing and every body upside down, for them and their items!”

Amy fetched a duster, and an old tin dish, and went down on her knees; she carefully wiped the dust, catching it up in the cloth, this she shook off gently in to the pan, and then went on again; in this manner, all the dust was removed quite nicely; the floor was freshened and clean, and no disturbance made, which is a great point to study when people are ill. The bustle and dust made by cleaning out a room in the usual manner, is often worse for them, than leaving it as it is; but if people try, they may often find the way, as Amy did. Amy did not wish to spoil Willie, as Harriet had said, and she said to him, “she wished he would try and not answer Ned or Harriet so pettishly, for” said she, “they often mean to be kind, only they don't know how.”

“Well,” answered Willie, “I will try Amy, and I wish Mr. Neville would ride this way sometimes; 'tis a long way certainly, but I think he would do me good, and tell me what I should do.”

“Well, next Sunday, if we can get to church, any of us, we'll see and ask him,” said Amy, “but if you like it, I can read to you a bit.”

“Do then,” said Willie, and Amy read some of the prayers and psalms to him. They neither of them understood it all; but they could make out a great deal, and particularly the second prayer at the end of the litany; Willie asked her to read it over and over again, till he could say it to himself, and he knew what his infirmities were, and he felt that he righteously deserved this evil that had come upon him, and he prayed very heartily that he might be enabled to put his trust and confidence in God, and that if he ever got well again, he might “serve God in holiness and pureness of living,” and this he knew meant keeping God in all his thoughts, being obedient and humble to all who were set over him, not forgetting his prayers; not to say bad words or tell untruths, and to keep his temper under control. Amy had work to do for her mother, so she could not stay with Willie all day; he had to spend many hours alone, and he was too ill and weak to read to himself, indeed he was but a bad scholar, and knew more about horses and cattle than about books. His father could not let him go much to school, but had kept him at home to look after the bullock team. That evening when Ned returned from work, he passed by a wattle tree, all out in blossom, and he thought that Willie might like a branch of it, so he picked out a fine one, full of rich golden blossoms, which he thought smelt very nicely, and so it does in the open air; but poor Willie could hardly bear it in his little room, which was always so hot of an evening. He recollected what Amy had said that day, however, and he said “thank you Ned, it is very pretty,” but he felt quite overpowered with the strong scent. Amy luckily was by, and she always seemed to understand in a moment what every one wanted. “Give it to me Ned,” she said, “to put it in the large jug over the dresser, it will look finely there, and when the door's open Willie can see it.”

This pleased Ned, and relieved poor Willie. While Amy was settling the branch of wattle blossom, her father came in tired and thirsty after a hard day's work. “How hot this place is to be sure,” said he.

Poor Mrs. Bright too, seemed quite overcome with heat, and Harriet said “it was too much trouble to do any thing that weather.”

But Amy had a bright thought in her head; she carried out the bench to the shady side of the hut, placed a little table before it, and laid their evening meal in order. “Come out father,” said she, “and see how pleasant 'tis outside, the sun is nigh down and the bush and blue hills yonder look so beautiful.”

“Well, this is a good thought Amy,” said her father, and he enjoyed his tea and damper very much. They all grew quite cheerful in the cool shade, and laughed, and talked merrily. Amy recollected that the voices would sound in Willie's room, and that he would feel lonely and sad not to be with them; so she went in and sat by him, and told him all that father had been saying about some bushrangers who were taken up; this interested Willie, so Amy managed to make every one pleased that evening.

CHAPTER III.

AT last Willie's leg grew better, and he was able to sit up, keeping it on a chair. This was of course a pleasant change for him, for it is a weary thing to remain in bed day after day, in one little room; but Willie found that it also brought trouble to him. He felt his weakness more, and was as much annoyed as ever by bustle or noise, but now that he was dressed and sitting up, people were apt to forget this, and some neighbours often came in and talked loudly, and all the washing and the steam from the tubs, made his head-ache. He was quite helpless, and obliged to ask for everything he wanted, and sometimes they were all busy and he had to wait a long time. His appetite too was bad, and he could not relish the coarse food which the others eat, and yet he was sadly weak and wanted something.

One day the clergyman, Mr. Neville, came to see him. He spoke very kindly, and said he hoped he would soon be able to move about with the help of a crutch. Willie looked very sad, and Mr. Neville asked if he suffered much pain.

“Not so much as I did sir, but, somehow, I think I'm more ill,” and the tears rolled down his face.

Harriet, who was ironing at the table, said, “He *ought* to be cheerful, now that he's up. He was cross and fretful enough when he was in bed, and now one can't speak a word without his crying. Indeed sir, I wish you'd tell him how wrong he is to give way so. So much as we all do to please him!” Now all this might be true, but this was a very wrong way of saying it. Sick people ought to be patient; but those who are in health, ought to be forbearing and sympathising. When we see a person weak, and inclined to be low and fretful, it is not right for us to speak harshly and perhaps fretfully to them. We can only see the effects, but we cannot see how much there is to excuse them, and that perhaps at that very moment they are struggling against it, though the flesh is weak. We should rather make every excuse, watch even the turn in their countenance, to anticipate every want; and remembering that a “soft answer turneth away wrath,” we should

not appear to notice the tone of querulousness, but try if a patient, cheerful spirit in ourselves, may not induce something of the same kind in them. Mr. Neville saw that poor Willie, was exceedingly weak and low, and that this was not the time to bring up his faults, he said, "You should make allowances Harriet, for I believe people always suffer most, just as they are recovering; he is weak and cannot bear much just yet, but in a day or two, I am sure he will be very different."

"Yes sir," said the mother, "he is weak God knows, but he won't taste any food, so he'll get weaker and weaker."

Mr. Neville asked a few questions as to what sort of food they gave him, and then took his leave. He proceeded to the house, and mentioned to Mrs. Stafford that the boy was in great need of some nourishing light food; for salt meat and damper, in his present state he could not touch.

Mrs. Stafford, who was a good natured person, immediately ordered a bread pudding to be made; and in the course of half an hour the cook came with a little pudding in a basin, covered over with a plate. It was a welcome sight to Willie, and Amy gladly agreed to go every day to the house, for something of the kind till he was better. Every day, a pudding or some soup, or perhaps a slice of nice fresh meat, came for the sick boy, and it did him a great deal of good; he soon picked up his strength, but many months passed away, and still his leg was useless. Willie could never drive bullocks or ride again, but he learnt at last to be patient and cheerful. One of the government men promised to teach him how to make baskets, and this employed him, and also enabled him to earn a little money. He could move about on a crutch, so as to help himself a little, but nothing more. Amy still continued as kind and attentive as ever, nor was it to Willie only that she shewed this spirit. She thought of every one else, what they felt, and what they liked or disliked, and never thought of herself. This made her gentle, when others were rough - polite and courteous, when others were rude and uncivil. This made her so tender and skilful a nurse to those who were sick, and so cheerful and kind a companion to those who were well.

This is the temper of mind which brings peace and happiness to the houses of the rich, as well as to the huts of the poor. It is the spirit of Christianity, which St. Paul speaks of when he says, "but the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." It is this "lovely" spirit, which St. Paul includes in that verse in the last chapter of his Epistle to the Phillipians, when he tells them "to think on these things."

It is that "charity," which he writes about in the 13th chapter of 1st Corinthians.

Let every one who reads this little story try to cultivate this temper. It does not depend upon riches, or comfortable houses and fine rooms, nor upon dress and fashion; it is not confined to those whose birth entitles them to the name of gentlefolk. Christian gentleness and forbearance, the being courteous one to another, careful not to offend others feelings, and anxious to please, because God has told us to be kind to one another; this ought to be studied, as much in a bark hut in the wild bush, as it should also be studied in king's palaces; for it is what our Lord himself taught us by precept and example. And no one who does not try to aim at this, can be a true follower of Christ.

LITTLE ANNIE AND HER NURSE; OR, THE EFFECTS OF PAIN.

“Wish not, dear friends, my pain away -
Wish me a wise and thankful heart,
With God, in all my griefs to stay,
Nor from His lov'd correction start.

Were it not better to lie still,
Let Him strike home and bless the rod,
Never so safe as when our will
Yields undiscern'd by all but God.”

CHAPTER I.

REBEKAH DAVY had been nursery maid in Captain Ward's family for several years. She possessed many very good qualities; she was faithful and trustworthy, strictly honest and careful of her master's interests. She was moreover attached to them, and readily agreed to go with them when they left England to settle in this country. With all this there was something wanting in Rebekah, as this little sketch of her will shew. Her great darling was the youngest child, little Annie. She had nursed her from an infant, and was sincerely fond of her, and wished for nothing so much, as Annie's love and affection in return. Annie was the only young child now under Rebekah's care, as two little boys had been left in England, and the other girl was thirteen years old. Annie, from being made a great pet of, was rather wilful and troublesome; she was very lively too, and never could keep still for five minutes together. When Annie came jumping into the room to beg Rebekah to put on her frock, that she might go with her mamma, Rebekah would say, “bless me! never quiet one moment. There never was such a troublesome little plague as you are, - don't sing so, - do be quiet.” Then if Annie said, “is not this pretty?” as she held out a book her sister had given her, the answer was, “no, I think it is very ugly, it makes my head ache to look at it, I can hardly stand I'm so bad.” “Do lie down then,” said Annie, “do lie down, Beckey, and I'll make your head well.” “Oh no, how can *I* lie down, that have so much to do! No one asks whether I'm ill or well!” and then she would sigh deeply. Sometimes she would pass whole days, scarcely speaking a word, and looking quite sulky and angry; and if her mistress remarked it to her, she always excused herself with saying she was in great pain and very ill.

Mrs. Ward, who was a very kind and feeling person, was always ready to

make allowances for this, and having seen so much of Rebekah's good points, she put up as much as possible with her faults, though she often told her it would be better, and kinder to others, to say at once that she was ill, that they might know the reason of her dismal looks. Rebekah herself knew that she was wrong. No one knew her duty better than she did, but she made one great mistake, in supposing that pain and sickness is really an excuse for peevishness and sulkiness. When she felt a little better, she tried to curb her sourness of temper, and very often this very trying to check herself, made her manner more odd, and perhaps people misunderstood her, and did not see the struggle it was to her; and then this made her very unhappy, and she sometimes said, "the more she tried, the worse it was." But this is not the case. We must not look for being rightly understood always here. It is enough for us to know that God sees us, sees the struggle, knows the temptation, and will accept our imperfect endeavours. Besides, persons who have for any time given way to any bad habit of temper, and then set about trying to overcome it, cannot expect that it should be easy all at once. Particularly is this the case, when under the influence of pain and sickness, people think they have a right to be rather irritable and impatient. They have given way to the habit, so the next time they try to subdue it, there will be an awkwardness and difficulty about it.

CHAPTER II.

ONE morning, little Annie and her sister Elizabeth were sitting together in the nursery; Rebekah also was there. It was a very hot day indeed, but Rebekah seemed to be shivering with cold. Elizabeth shut down the window without saying anything. Presently Rebekah remarked "how close it was! she was sure this country would be the death of her."

Annie began to laugh, and said, "why just now you were cold, and now you are hot, you're very funny Becky."

"Poor Becky is in pain," said Elizabeth, "and that makes her feel so." Annie immediately ran across the room, intending to kiss Rebekah, but in her haste she fell over a little stool, and it fell on Rebekah's foot. It was very painful, and she pushed away Annie quickly and groaned. Poor Annie stood in great distress, and Rebekah said she was in pain enough before, without this to add to it! and she went into the next room.

Annie said "Oh, how cross Becky is, I don't like her a bit; she's always as black as thunder."

Rebekah having left the door a-jar, heard this, and it made her very miserable. She would have done anything for little Annie; she had watched by her night and day when she was ill, and this was the return! Then

she wept bitterly, and thought what a miserable, unfortunate creature she was, always in pain of some kind, never in really good health, obliged to be a servant, and therefore exert herself when she wished to lie still, and not loved by any one! How she wished she had some money, to be independent, or for good strong health; and then she remembered all the disagreeable things in this country - the excessive heat, the insects and other annoyances, forgetting that she was not a bit more contented or happy in England. It was not a change in her circumstances that was wanting, but a change in her heart - in her temper!

CHAPTER III.

ONE day little Annie gave a sort of party. Some other little children who lived near came to spend the day, and her dolls and little dinner set were taken out. She was very happy, and in good spirits. Elizabeth helped her to dress it all up with flowers, and it really looked very pretty, and all the servants came to look at it. Annie wished to go and call "Becky," but she thought that it would annoy her, for she knew she had a headache, so she didn't go to the nursery. Rebekah knew all the other servants had been, and she partly guessed why little Annie had not called her; but she felt uncomfortable and weak, and she fell into her old way of encouraging discontented, peevish feelings. There she sat, quite angry at not being called, though all the time she knew if Annie had called her, most likely she would have said "no." Presently her mistress came into the room; she said, "well, Rebekah, have you seen the feast, and how prettily the children have managed every thing?"

"No, I wasn't asked, ma'am," said Rebekah!

"Not asked! I'm sure Annie did not intend to forget you. Come don't be cross, go down, it is very pretty I assure you, and the children look all so happy, it does one good to see them!"

"It woud'nt do me good," sighed Rebekah, "I could not bear it. Poor little creatures, 'tis well they don't think what is in store for them in this world of trouble! In a few years, all their happiness will be gone. Ah, me!"

"Oh, no, we will hope not," returned Mrs. Ward. "There are trials, no doubt, but there are also many blessings. The Almighty has given us much to be thankful for. All around us there are sources of pleasure, if we will but look for them, and to every one there is abundant reason for gratitude and thankfulness."

"To some," said Rebekah, "but not to all. Those who are in health don't know what it is to be always in pain: it is easy to talk."

"I grant that ill health is a severe trial, Rebekah," said her mistress, "but

you might be worse than you are. You have kind friends, who are ready to do all they can for you; you have good food and clothing, while some have to suffer pain in the midst of misery and want. Do try and conquer your gloomy temper, Rebekah; read some of the Psalms, and see what a cheerful spirit they are written in, though often in the deepest trouble and trial. Think of God, and that He orders all. It is he who afflicts you, and for some wise and merciful purpose; and do not waste this opportunity given you, perhaps in order that you may show your love for God, by being patient and resigned to His will. Troubles are intended to teach us good things, not to make us cross and discontented.”

When Mrs. Ward went away, Rebekah took out her Prayer-book and read in the Psalms. How many, many verses did she find, which spoke of adversity and trouble drawing one closer to God. “Oh, what great troubles and adversities hast thou showed me! and yet didst thou turn and refresh me.” “It is good for me that I have been in trouble, that I might learn Thy Statutes.” And as she read these, she felt that it was her own perverse temper which prevented her from feeling this support and comfort, and she prayed against it. Then she went down into the children's room, which was a great exertion to her, and after just the first moment, she was very glad she did, for the children seemed glad to see her, and she forgot her pain and uncomfortable feelings as she looked at them.

CHAPTER IV.

ABOUT a week after this, Mrs. Ward and little Annie were to go and see a widow lady who lived about twenty miles from them. She was in very bad health, and Mrs. Ward feared was in great trouble about her servants. Mrs. Norman, for that was her name, had been acquainted with Mrs. Ward for many years in England, so that Mrs. Ward was very glad to be so near her in this country. Rebekah was to go with them, partly because Mrs. Ward thought the change of air would do her good, and partly that she might set Mrs. Norman's kitchen a little to rights, for Rebekah was a clever servant, and understood all these things very well. Mrs. Ward had also another reason; she knew what a patient sufferer Mrs. Norman was, and she thought the sight of this might do Rebekah good.

I have said that Mrs. Norman was a widow, and she was also without children. One son alone remained with her, and he had turned out very badly. For some months she had heard nothing at all of him. It was indeed peace and joy for her to look at the graves of her other children, compared with the thoughts of this only son; and she often wished that he could have been buried by her, with like hope. She had meekly and cheerfully resigned

three daughters and a husband to God; but it was a harder task to bear the misconduct of her boy. It had cost her many a bitter hour, many a struggle; and had so acted upon her delicate frame as to make her a confirmed invalid. Her sufferings were at times acute, and always heavy and depressing. Besides these troubles, she was now in some distress about her property: much had been squandered away by her son, and what remained being under the management of overseers, was every year decreasing in value

When they arrived at Canwell, the name of Mrs. Norman's place, the door was opened by a dirty, trolloping looking girl. She said her mistress was better, but not down stairs. She was the only servant in the house, the others having left suddenly when poor Mrs Norman was suffering from one of her bad attacks. Every thing in the parlour looked very uncomfortable and dusty, with crumbs on the floor, just as if it had not been swept for some days. Mrs. Ward left Rebekah and little Annie, and went to her friend's room. She found her sitting up in bed. Her face was very pale and drawn, from the pain she had suffered, but she had a pleasant smile, and said, "how good it is of you to come to me!"

It gave Mrs. Ward pain to see how uncomfortable every thing seemed, and she remarked, "I fear you have been sadly neglected!"

"Yes, it was unfortunate, certainly, that my servants should have just then taken it into their heads to play me such a trick; but I was too ill to care much, and Betsy is very kind-hearted, and has tried to do all she could poor girl."

"Well," said Mrs. Ward, "I have brought Rebekah, who is a capital nurse, and we shall, I hope, soon get things to rights and see you better." Mrs. Norman was about to make some answer, when a sudden fit of pain prevented her. It was very severe, and after it was over she appeared quite exhausted.

Mrs. Ward, who knew of old the nature of the complaint, went to see for some refreshment for her; and from what the girl said, she thought it wonderful that her friend had got through it at all. It seemed she had not had common attention!

CHAPTER V.

REBEKAH soon took her place in the sick room, and quietly and skilfully arranged every thing, so as to comfort and refresh the poor sufferer.

She smiled, and said she already felt relieved.

Rebekah slept on a couch in the same room with Mrs. Norman, and she

saw how constant and how severe her sufferings were.

“Yes,” said she, when Rebekah remarked how much she bore, “at one time I remember I shrank with fear and horror at less pain than what I now suffer. I was naturally much afraid of pain; but it is now seven years since I have had it, almost a constant companion, and God has mercifully taught me how to look upon it! Sometimes I take it as a punishment for all my sins; and the hope that it may so chasten me as to save me from further punishment hereafter, gives me strength to bear it. And then again, sometimes I almost look upon it as a privilege. Our Lord himself suffered, as never man suffered; and most of his followers, in some way or other, went through bodily pain and agony. I am sure that there is a spirit of receiving it which will not only make it bearable, but turn it into a privilege! “

And as she spoke, Rebekah felt that her pale face expressed this even more than her words. And Rebekah was also often surprised to find, that instead of making this illness and pain an excuse for self-indulgence, Mrs. Norman seemed even afraid of what was actually necessary, in the way of rest or comfort. She was ordered nourishing and strengthening food, but she seemed as it were jealous of herself, lest, by indulging her appetite, she should lose a habit of self denial. The medicines and remedies which were prescribed for her, she seemed glad to take, not with any hope of their affording relief, but as a sort of counterbalance to the delicacies which were also recommended, and which Mrs. Ward now took care should be always ready for her. Sometimes Mrs. Norman was able to sit up for a few hours in a great chair, and she always liked to have it near the window that she might see the trees and the garden. Her greatest amusement seemed to be in seeing little Annie racing about with a playful puppy which was her companion at Canwell; and when the child's joyous shouts reached her, it always made Mrs. Norman smile and seemed to cheer her. And if Mrs. Ward had any good news to tell her of friends, she was always ready to rejoice with them heartily.

Now this was so different from Rebekah's feelings that she could not help noticing it. She knew that the sounds of cheerfulness and joy grated on her, when she was in trouble; she had rather hear of sorrows and misfortunes, and was always ready enough to say, “poor creatures! well, to be sure, this is a life of trouble!” and so on. But if she heard glad tidings or saw a merry face, she felt inclined to turn away, having no sympathy with them, and had always some dark and gloomy forebodings which she said she was sure would soon come and destroy their happiness.

This was selfishness - for it is selfishness when we cannot see or hear any thing without reference to ourselves. It is something like wearing a pair of

dark spectacles, and then being angry because others find the sky a brighter blue, or the trees a more cheerful green, than we do.

Then persons are apt to say, "O, but it is my nature to be more melancholy and to see the dark side of things, and others are born with a cheerful spirit!"

But should we not recollect that at our "new birth," grace was given us to overcome natural infirmities? Do we not know that we are bound to fight against the flesh? and what is this but resisting our own natural bad tempers?

And are we not as children taught that we are "bound to do and believe this?" and do we not say that "by God's grace, so we will and we heartily thank our Heavenly Father that He has called us to this state of salvation through Jesus Christ our Lord?" And it is through Him - through and by our Saviour alone - that we can do it; but "His grace is sufficient."

Mrs. Ward often read to her friend, and if Mrs. Norman was worse than usual, she liked nothing so well as the service appointed for sick persons in the Prayer Book.

And indeed it is extraordinary and much to be wondered at, that people do not oftener use this. It seems so exactly suited to one in pain and sickness, so very comforting, so simple, and yet with so much of solemn warning in it.

CHAPTER VI.

One day Mrs. Ward remarked that Mrs. Norman should give way more, and do every thing that pleased her most, just now; but Mrs. Norman said "it is just that which I am so anxious not to do. Ill health naturally brings excuses for indulgences. Invalids are exempted from many exertions, and every one is anxious to please and indulge them; so they should be doubly careful and watchful over themselves, not only to be ready to bear what is sent them, but even voluntarily stretch out their hands for more. There are divers ways in which God draws us to Himself," continued she, "and no one but those who experience it, knows how effectual bodily pain is to this. It throws us upon God; it brings us, in some mysterious way, more directly amongst that holy assemblage, who, through sufferings and blood, won their crown. It exercises patience and faith, and is a friend, inasmuch as it does not fail to teach us to look away from this world. God will not afflict us beyond measure; He knows what we are able to bear! and I can not describe to you what blessings I have felt, even at the most extreme pain; and yet, to all outward appearance, I was, as you would say, neglected; but I humbly thank God, that I now look upon His

chastening as a mercy; that I do not pray for its removal, but only for more and more grace, more and more strength and power to sustain, and cherish love for the Hand that chastens!”

“But it must have been long before you felt this,” said Mrs. Ward, deeply interested in her friend's conversation.

“Yes; at first I did not receive it in this way, I could not flee from it, and therefore I bore it. I believe I was what is called patient, but it was in a cold and half sullen resignation that I took it; but as month after month, and year after year has passed, and it has still been my companion, I have learnt wonderful things. In my sleepless nights, God has put such good thoughts into my head, that I saw every thing in a different light. Oh! I wish every one to whom is sent pain and sickness, would embrace it cheerfully and willingly, - make it their own as it were, use it as an exercise of the christian duties of patience, faith, and self-denial. This throws a charm, if I may say so, over the sick bed, - it lulls the pain! It is, in one sense, like Jacob's ladder, and by its means, Heaven itself is shown us by glimpses!”

Rebekah heard this, and she compared her way of receiving the cup which God had prepared, with Mrs. Norman's. She felt abashed and humbled in her own eyes, for what but her own temper and perverse heart, had hindered its having the same effect on her! In the one case, it had soured the temper, and acted as a cloud dimming and darkening all around. In the other, it had brought forth patience, - a cheerful, gentle patience, and had cast a bright hue over the most trifling things; it had brought the thoughts of God to dwell in every thing.

There are indeed two ways of bearing pain. To the true and sincere Christian, it will afford no pretext for indulgence, for giving way to natural irritability, or other faults of temper. It will be rather received as a warning against former sins and bad habits, and will be received as a just and merciful punishment. Thus, if it pleases the Almighty to continue it, it will at last, through prayer and faith, and by that grace which is sufficient for us, turn into a privilege - for is it not a privilege to be counted worthy to suffer; that we, in our poor and limited way, may faintly bear our testimony to the power of the Gospel - to our high and holy calling as baptized Christians - children of God - heirs of Heaven!

But a cold, heartless, forced reception of pain, will never effect this. Heathens can do this. It will still be pain it will throw its shadow over us, and it may at the last, in its agony, cause us to fall away!

Nor will a gloomy, impatient spirit, ever shew us the blessings that the path of pain and sickness is intended to lead us to. Those who give way to all their natural faults, and indulge themselves in listless inaction, will go

on, tossing on the bed of sickness, - they will turn and turn and find no rest. The cross will press heavily and sharply on them without bringing relief.

CHAPTER VII.

AND now, Mrs. Ward, little Annie and Rebekah returned home again. When Rebekah was undressing Annie, the child said, "Becky I am very sorry to come away from Canwell."

"Why?" said Rebekah, "Don't you like being at home again?"

"Yes," answered Annie, "But Canwell is a nice place, and the puppy was so funny, and then you know Becky you were so brisk there, and not always sad looking as you are here; and then, I like Mrs. Norman so much, she is so very kind I shall never forget her."

"Nor I neither Miss," said Rebekah. "I hope I shall never forget her, And now Miss Annie you'll see Becky will try and be something like Mrs. Norman; I mean cheerful and good tempered, please God." And as she spoke, Rebekah colored up, and tears started into her eyes, for this was an effort, though she spoke cheerfully.

And from this time forth, Rebekah did try very hard to correct her faults. If she felt inclined to be very desponding and gloomy, she went about some active work, and then the satisfaction which this exertion gave her, made her feel pleased and cheerful afterwards. And when she really was unwell, and was obliged to sit still, she tried to think about other people, and to count up all her blessings instead of her trials. This was not always easy, for Rebekah had got into the habit of talking and thinking of herself as a person, very severely tried indeed, and it was a kind of pleasure to her to think so. Now, however, she found that this had led her into much harm, for if we allow ourselves to think we are tried more than others, it is very apt to make us less humble. And after all, who does not really feel that they are spared much which they righteously deserved? Who has suffered sorrow or pain according to the measure of their sins?

A few months after Rebekah's visit to Canwell, and while she was as far as we can judge, trying hard to overcome herself, she became very seriously ill. She suffered now really severe pain, and after that passed away she was for many, many weeks wholly unable to do any thing but lie still. Indeed it was some months before she was able to take her place as a servant again. Mrs. Ward was very kind to her, and she was tenderly nursed and cared for. Annie's sister, Elizabeth, often read to her, and little Annie herself brought her flowers or any thing she fancied would please Becky. Rebekah bore her pain with great patience, but when she was getting a little better and yet not able to move about, she felt it very

difficult to be patient and cheerful. She did not like to see others doing her work, and not be able to do anything. She told her mistress she felt a useless creature, and she would not care when once she was up and about again.

“But Rebekah,” said Mrs. Ward. “You must try and be patient. God has sent you this trial. You cannot now do your work about the house; but He has appointed you another task - you must now submit to be useless - you must submit to receiving attention from others, and doing nothing yourself. When you are well again, and inclined to wish you could be idle, instead of having to exert yourself when not feeling quite strong, then remember this time. The present moment is all we can command, and whether it be to labour or to stand and wait upon God, let us do our best.”

“Ah! that's very true,” sighed Rebekah. “I have been ailing for years and often very unwell, but I never had a severe illness like this. I hope ma'am you know I am very grateful for all your kindness, and I am sorry to be so much trouble. I see it is a punishment to me for grumbling as I used to do, because I could not give up more.”

Rebekah did not say more then, but she thought of it all a great deal and the more she thought, the more did she see the mercy and goodness of God who had spared her much, and who had opened her eyes to her faults. She now really tried hard to put a check on her temper, and to be cheerful. It was of course uphill work - it was a constant struggle, but in the end, by the grace of God, she conquered, so far that she could be thankful to the Almighty and her friends for all the blessings still within her reach; and she prayed earnestly that the time might come when she could say from her heart, practically and cheerfully, “Father, not my will, but Thine be done.”

“That thou may'st pray for them thy foes are given,
That thou may'st look to God I bring thee pain,
I bring thee cares that thou may'st look to Heaven,
I bring thee fretful friends that thou may'st train
Thy soul to patience; what thou deemest gain,
When closest wreathing chains around thy Soul,
I rend from thine own bleeding heart in twain,
That He who bought may have thy spirit whole;
Spurs that may give thee pain, but urge thee to the goal.”

SUSAN'S DREAM

PART I.

“O'er our thoughtless heads aloof,
Hangs the Heavens o'er arching roof;
Distinct therein our shadows pass,
As in a molten looking-glass.
And around in silence dread,
All unseen above our head
Like an amphitheatre,
Stand the Angelic inmates there,
Watching how we do our part,
Hands and feet and wandering heart.”

CHAPTER I.

SUSAN FLETCHER and her husband lived in a slab hut which they had put up themselves, and they cultivated a small piece of ground which they had cleared round it.

The hut faced the road, indeed they had placed it near the road on purpose, that they might see any drays that might chance to pass - they thought it was more cheerful. Behind them was all thick bush, but on the opposite side of the road was more cleared land, and they could see the smoke from two or three other huts. About two miles from them there was a school house, and once a month there was divine service. The Fletchers had a large family, no less than eight children, and the eldest was only thirteen years old. Their increasing family and bad times brought hardships to them which, for the first few years of their marriage, they had not known. The produce of their land fetched so little, it was scarcely worth taking any where to sell: to be sure Tom might have got work now and then, for he was a good labourer, but alas! he had one great fault, which rather prevented people from employing him, for when he had earned a little money he soon made away with it - Tom Fletcher drank.

His wife, when he married her, was a brisk, tidy girl, good tempered and cheerful; her smile was very pleasant to look upon, it flitted across her face like a gleam of sunshine, but at other times Susan was grave and thoughtful. She had always lived with good people, and her parents, though very poor and simple, had taught her some of that wisdom which is from above. I think I may say that Susan was a conscientious and pious

person, and that from a child she had kept the thoughts of God in her heart.

For some years things went smoothly with Susan. Her husband did not then drink, and they had plenty to eat and drink, and good clothes to wear. True she had little daily trials. Sometimes Tom fell into a passion, and used bad words; sometimes the children got into mischief, or disasters happened to her dairy and poultry, by which she tried to earn a little; and sometimes Susan herself felt cross and impatient, and perhaps said and did things which, when she came to say her prayers, pressed on her rather hard. But take it altogether, as I said before, things went smoothly with Susan, and perhaps she wondered at others looking anxious and unhappy, and perhaps she thought a little too much of her own cheerfulness and content, and fancied she could bear troubles better than her neighbours.

CHAPTER II.

THE first really heavy trial that pressed on Susan was her husband getting intimate with Bob O'Brien, who very soon induced him to drink. One evening as Susan sat mending her husband's coat - it was on a Saturday evening - that he might go "decent" to church the next day, Tom was brought home by another man in a dreadful state of intoxication. They laid him on his bed, and Susan with a bursting heart shut the door and sent the children out.

The next morning Tom had recovered, but refused to go to church. He sat in the chimney corner not saying a word and looking very sulky. Susan, who had been crying all night, was ashamed to go to church with such red eyes, and besides, she thought it was better not to leave Tom and the little ones. She sent off the two eldest, and remained at home - very sorrowful was she.

At last Tom remarked "how cross she was," and said "he could not stand her black looks; no great harm for once, he should think, being a little the worse for a glass."

"Tom," said Susan, "this is the first time - let it be the last, and you'll never hear me speak of it. Look at our children, and promise me you'll give up Bob O'Brien promise me this Tom."

Tom would not promise, he was uncomfortable, and knew he had done wrong, but would not acknowledge it, so he began to scold her for interfering, and said he had a right to go with whom he pleased.

From this time forth Tom was an altered man; he often drank, got very cross and violent, and also very idle. The hut was allowed to get out of repair, no fresh whitewash was put on to make it clean and nice looking. It soon looked as if tumbling down, and was remarked as people passed the

road, as a wretched hovel. There was now no pumpkin trailing along the fence, which had before been Tom's and Susan's pride, and was so useful to feed the pigs, to say nothing of a little mashed nicely with a bit of Susan's butter, which used to be a relish to the salt beef. All this and other little comforts were gone! Poor Susan, with a young infant and so many other young children, had enough to do to keep them from dirt and starvation. She toiled all day, and never now enjoyed a quiet evening's chat with Tom, or walked out with her baby in her arms into the shady bush with Tom. The smile seldom came now, and when it did at something the children said, it looked faded, and came slowly - it was now a melancholy smile. It is said that misfortunes never come singly, and it certainly was so with Susan. Her own health gave way, she was now often ill, never very well, and sometimes in much pain; and very soon after her eighth child was born, a sad accident happened to the little boy next to it. His mother was obliged to go into the bush with her eldest boy to look for fire-wood - Tom was away, and had been missing for two days - while she was absent, little David fell into the fire and was dreadfully burnt. When Susan returned, she found that a neighbour who had heard the children's screams as she passed, was doing what she could for the poor child: but for days and weeks he was in a dreadful state, and Susan hardly hoped he could live. It pleased God, however, to spare his life, though he was a piteous object, and quite a cripple.

Tom had returned, but was now so confirmed a drunkard that all remonstrances were vain; he sometimes even struck his wife. Starvation seemed to stare them in the face. Susan sat down in despair: she said in her heart, what have I done to deserve all this! surely God has forsaken me! it is more than I can bear!

Her young infant just then looked at her, and smiled with that unconscious, innocent startle, which only babies have. It seemed to soothe and soften her bitter grief, and brought tears to her eyes. "I will go tomorrow to Randall, and see if I can get a bit of washing or work; the child is so quiet I can surely do something as it lies, and Betsy must stay from school and mind the others. "

This resolve comforted her; she began to make a damper, and observed to her children "it was the last grain of flour, and they must all see and do something or they must starve." Tom came home that night from Bob O'Brien's, who kept a sly grog shop, quite tipsy. His poor wife shrank from him in sorrow, and his children crowded round their mother as if afraid of him. Alas! what wretchedness, what misery does this dreadful vice bring with it! Who would have thought, ten or eleven years ago, that Tom Fletcher, a good looking, steady man, could be the wretched looking

being who now reeled into the hut - who would have thought that he could ever bring such trouble on the sweet, modest, and neat little body he then called his "pretty Susy?"

CHAPTER III.

THE next morning the remains of the last damper were consumed, Tom taking no inconsiderable share. But Susan comforted herself with the hope of getting some work, so she said nothing. Having cleaned out her rooms, and very carefully put out the fire, being now always afraid of accidents, she tied on her bonnet, and told Tom, who was mending their cart harness, "that she was just going to step over to Mrs. Randall's and see if she could hear of a job of work," adding, "I'll not be long missing."

Tom asked "where he should find some dinner, as he meant to take a load of hay somewhere and would take it with him."

"There's just a bit of cold meat on the shelf, and you know as well as I do that we have nothing else left, and sure if God doesn't change you Tom, we shall all be starved."

Tom told her to go about her business and not stay prating, and that she ought and must find work.

Susan turned with a sigh, and charging Betsy, her eldest girl, to be steady and mind poor David, and not go beyond the fence, the mother proceeded on her errand. She had not gone far before she was sensible that a fierce hot wind had set in. She was weak and out of spirits, and she had at least six miles to go before she came back, so she thought she would ask Anne Clarke, whose hut she should presently pass, to keep her child for her until she returned, for he was a heavy weight to carry so far on such a day.

Anne Clarke, who had a daughter thirteen years old who could nurse him, very readily consented. She was a very kind, good natured woman, and seeing how unhappy Susan looked, she asked her "if Tom was no steadier."

"Worse and worse ", was the reply. "God knows what I shall do; and I am ill myself, and the children are in rags."

"Well now," said her neighbour, "time was when you used to twit me for my saying we were all born to trouble. Goodness me! how lively you were then, Susan, do you mind it? But you see I was older than you, and I told you that you'd see trouble, and that the stoutest heart gets bent at last."

Susan could not answer. She gave her baby to the girl and said, "I'll not be long," and then turned to go out.

"Did I do so?" said she to herself bitterly. "Yes, I believe I did, and I could have borne much, and yet have kept up as poor mother did before

me! but this is beyond me!” and with these thoughts she walked on. When she reached Mr. Randall's she was quite tired, and she sat a few moments on a log outside the slip-rail before she went in. A woman came out of a hut near at hand, and hung up some clothes to dry. She sang loud and merrily, every now and then breaking off her song to answer some one who was speaking inside the hut. And then came a loud, ringing laugh, and presently a little child came out with a large piece of bread in its hand. Apparently she was not hungry, as she began to crumble it about and let the fowls pick it up. Now all this fell on poor Susan's heart very heavily. She was once as free from care as that woman seemed to be; - and then the bread! her children might soon be crying for bread, and this child was throwing it away!

Then she went to the house and asked for work of any kind. Mrs. Randall said “she had all her washing done at home, and just then she had no needlework,” but seeing Susan's look of disappointment and distress, she added, “that in another week, if she would call again, she would try and prepare some. She should then have some shirts to be made. Mrs. Randall further told her to go into the kitchen and get something to eat, for she seemed so exhausted.

Susan sat down for a few moments, but the fire and the smell of the dinner, and the moving to and fro of the servants made her giddy; she asked for a cup of water, and having taken it she set off homewards.

CHAPTER IV.

THE wind seemed hotter than ever! Susan had borne it as she came, reckoning on bringing home some work; but she had none, and she felt hopeless and very tired.

“Next week!” said she, “and where shall I get bread meantime? I will try at the store down at the settlement, but they don't like trusting, and they know Tom drinks; and I have no fowls, and no eggs to sell, and the cow has strayed away, and Tom would not go to fetch it in, and the boy couldn't do it, so my bit of butter is gone! We must starve 'tis clear!”

How Susan's head throbbed! and the glare made her eyes weak, and the wind seemed to scorch her skin as it blew. At last, coming to a little pool of muddy water, round which grew a clump of swamp oaks, she stooped down to wet her temples, and then seated herself under the trees.

Quite worn out and exhausted, and lulled by the sweet soft sound which the air made as it rustled through the thin wiry branches of these musical trees, poor Susan fell asleep. At first it was a broken, half-conscious sleep, which, though it kept her lying there, allowed her to think of her

baby and want to go home, and she thought she heard it crying, and then fancied she was running on very fast and had got her baby, but that her foot slipped and they fell together, and then this made her start. Then visions of her children's faces, looking thin and crying for food, and Tom swearing and staggering about, came over her; but by degrees the sleep became heavier, her head fell quite back on a tuft of soft grass; the sun being behind she was under a little shade, and Susan slept on; and as she slept she dreamt, and her dream I must try to tell, though it is very difficult to put dreams such as Susan's was into words.

CHAPTER V.

WELL, Susan dreamt that she felt something pressing her heavily and weighing her quite down, she felt uncomfortable, and looked round to see what it could be. Then she thought she saw a figure standing by her; at first the face was turned away, and seemed to be looking upwards, though at the same time putting the weight on her back; but as it turned, it was bright and beautiful beyond any thing she had ever seen. It smiled compassionately while fitting this burden on her, which was pressing so heavily, and Susan thought that the angel, for so she deemed it to be, spoke and told her to look around and she would understand.

And she turned, and presently she thought she saw a vast multitude of people, of all ages and all ranks, and at first the numbers and the hum of voices seemed to amaze her, so that she hardly distinguished anything clearly; but the angel gave her a glass and told her to look through it, and then she thought that she saw all about her, glorious and bright beings like the one who stood by her, and they each carried a wooden cross, ⁶ and seemed to be coming from heaven; and she saw that they came near to the people on the plain, and gave them each one.

6. See the picture of "Angels bearing Crosses" in the Baptistery.

Then Susan thought that some of these people took it willingly at first, and walked on stoutly, and then seemed to grow faint and restless under their burden, and she thought she heard some saying that it was too large and too heavy, and that they could not carry it. Then the angel pointed upwards, and Susan looked too, and there she saw a figure with flowing white robes, who had on her head a crown on which was written in precious stones, "Mercy;" and she was carefully measuring and weighing these crosses before the angels took them to the people. And Susan thought she watched this for some time, and saw that every cross

was fitted to the person who was to bear it. And to some she thought a great many small crosses were given, instead of one larger one, and those to whom these were given seemed more annoyed with their burden, generally speaking, than even those who had seemingly very much larger and heavier crosses. Susan thought that some people dropped theirs altogether, and others took a great deal of pains to hide them with fine dresses and showy mantles, and they danced and sang as if bearing no weight; but then, as she watched them further, she always saw them in the end retire into a dark corner, and writhe as if in agony at the weight, whereas, on the contrary, those who bowed their heads and knelt down while their cross was put on them, and who did not try to shake it off or hide it, seemed to gather strength as they proceeded, and walked more and more erect, as if they felt it grow lighter and lighter. And Susan thought that she saw two roads in this plain; one went branching off with many turnings, and looked smooth and inviting at the entrance. There were no hedges, but gay gardens, with bowers and fountains by the side. And some who had striven to hide their cross in fine attire, went on here, where there was dancing and music. And Susan thought that those who kicked very much against the cross, or who were very anxious that it should not appear, were led aside by spirits which looked at first sight like angels, but which had hideous countenances, and these bad spirits took off the cross, and then with a frightful sound led them on into these gay looking places, where there were crowds of people.

Besides the pleasure gardens, there seemed to be large warehouses, and many turned aside into these; they did not wear gay clothing, but looked care-worn and anxious, and seemed to work very hard. Susan thought she heard them counting money, and some tried to hide their crosses with money bags. Others again there were who did not go straight on towards this wide road, but made a few steps towards the narrow path, but instead of walking on, they lingered and knelt down, and seemed to Susan to beseech earnestly that their cross might be removed. And then Susan thought that the angels came sadly and mournfully, and seemed to look upwards before they put out their hands, and at last, as if they received some signal, they withdrew the cross. And Susan thought the people thus delivered of their burden did not long remain in that road, but were soon enticed into the other by persons who had written on their foreheads, "Ease," "Comfort," "Rest," "Wealth," and various other names.

And Susan thought that, as she looked onwards on this wide road, it became darker and darker, and ended in a terrible blackness, and every now and then from behind this black cloud, flames of fire flitted up for a moment and shewed very terrible faces, and scenes which Susan could not

look upon.

This road seemed to look bright, glaring, and dazzling at the commencement, but as the crowds went on they were lost in darkness.

Very different seemed the other road; this appeared narrow and rough, and it looked darker and more dreary. There were no gay gardens or arbours, but there were instead old and grey buildings, some with pointed spires, and as Susan looked she thought they were churches; and those who turned aside here the oftenest came out much refreshed, and Susan thought she saw beautiful angels following them silently, and sometimes if the path was rougher than usual, these angels put out their hands and supported the cross, and they pointed to the top of a hill where Susan saw through a thin white cloud which floated like a veil over it, the figure of the Lord Jesus Christ on the cross, and as the people looked on it they took courage and walked faster, for, beyond this, in the same direction, was seen a glorious light.

And besides the angels who seemed ever at hand to help those in distress, Susan thought that very often the people helped one another.

And some there were who seemed to bear no great cross; they had received one as infants, but this was very small and light, more like an emblem of a cross than a real one. And these appeared to look earnestly at this emblem and then at the cross on the hill, and then they seemed to try to make crosses for themselves as they went on, gathering the materials from anything that came in their way.

All those who continued on this road, and had crosses of some kind or other as they proceeded, were lost to Susan's sight in a glorious, soft light, - for on this road it grew lighter and lighter, till at last the people were hid in a cloud of light which was in the form of a wide-spreading mantle, with many folds; and behind this cloud of light appeared angels with golden harps, and now and then there was a burst of soft and solemn music.

And Susan thought she could see written on a few of those crosses near her, "Poverty," "Pain," "Loneliness," or "Disappointment," &c. and some of the little crosses had written on them, "Weakness," "Cross-tempered Relations" "Unkind Husbands or Wives," or "Discomforts," and many other things. But while Susan was trying to read more of these inscriptions she awoke.

She started up and rubbed her eyes. There were the trees still whistling in the wind, but with a lower and fainter sound, for the wind had much gone down, and a refreshing cool breeze had sprung up, and the frogs were croaking in the pool of water, and on a tall white gum tree opposite to her there were two magpies, singing their evening song, which sound I suppose awakened her.

CHAPTER VI.

AND now Susan hastened home, but as you may suppose, her dream was in her thoughts, and as she again remembered her own sad prospects, she was led to think very particularly of the first part of it, when she felt the heavy weight bearing her down and turned and saw who it was that was doing it. And she doubted not but that this weight was her cross, and that it was one with "Poverty and Disappointment" written on it.

And, as she approached home, and dreaded to come to it, and thought how she was to get bread, she again remembered the angels and the bright, glorious light, and then she thought of those who had prayed to have their crosses removed altogether, and how they had turned into the wide road ending in darkness. And, as she recalled the angels' pitying look, and the horrid scenes she caught glimpses of at the end of the road, she shuddered, and she inwardly prayed that her cross might be made lighter to her by thinking of Him who gave it her, and who bore a cross such as never man bore, and was crucified on it for our sakes - not that the cross should be removed, lest she should follow those who were lost in the darkness!

Susan called for her baby, and had the satisfaction of finding it all safe. The other children were assembled at the fence looking out for her return, and her boy Andrew, halloo'd out "good news mother, I've found the cow, and she was down in the hollow after all!"

This cheered Susan, for the cow was a good milker, and she gave her boy much praise for finding the truant. The calf was properly secured, and Mrs. Daisy herself feeding close to the hut.

The poor mother's face darkened again, however, as she went into the hut and made up the fire that the kettle might boil, for there was no bread, and, except a cup of tea, the children must go to bed supperless. But she remembered her cross, and felt sure that it was measured according to her strength, and when the younger children were in bed, and Betsy was rocking the cradle, Susan took out her Bible and read a chapter. Our Saviour's words, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow me," struck her more than it had ever done before.

She told her children something of her dream, though she said "I can't put it into words, but I thank God for sending me such comforting thoughts, and sure with His help I'll try and not complain again. But O! if Tom would but be as he used to be - that's the hardest part!" and tears came as she spoke.

Andrew and Betsy were good children, and they caught their mother's spirit, and if they did not quite enter into her dream they felt that she was

right, and that God sent them their trial, and would enable them to bear it.

Andrew resolved to be a man as soon as ever he could, that he might work for his mother, and he lay awake that night for some time, thinking of driving a plough or helping in the harvest, and so earning some money. And Betsy who was quieter, and not so hopeful, prayed that God would make her patient and able to bear trouble meekly.

PART II.

“Preach, read and study as we will,
Death is the mighty teacher still.”

CHAPTER I.

TIME wore on, and still Tom neglected his home and his duties, and whenever he had a little money, spent it at Bob O'Brien's. Not a sixpence did he ever bring to his wife, nor did he attend to the cultivation of their little piece of ground. He preferred seeking a few day's work out, which as he was a clever fellow, he could generally obtain, and then as long as the money lasted, Tom indulged himself in idleness and drinking. Susan had obtained some work from Mrs. Randall, and now and then she got a little from others, but as you may believe, they lived hardly enough. Their hut too threatened to fall down on them. Everything was going to ruin about it.

A short time before it was remarked as a neat, comfortable place; but houses will go to ruin unless attended to. They constantly require a nail here and a nail there, and fresh plaster and whitewash, without this they decay and fall to pieces. And this should teach us a lesson; for we too, unless we are constantly renewed and attended to, our weak parts strengthened, and our hearts defended from blasts of passion and wordly mindedness, must go to ruin. There is always something wanting mending in us, and the longer it goes undone the more difficult it is to repair. Poor Tom Fletcher and his hut were much alike, both in a very sad and hopeless state. Passers-by said if the hut was not soon mended it would all come down, and surely if Tom did not soon mend himself his end would be total ruin! Susan had almost left off saying any thing to Tom about himself; when she did he flew into a violent rage, and she thought perhaps it only made him worse. She tried to be patient and not reproach him when he came home, and there was one thing which she never failed to do for him, and she taught her children to do so too - to pray for him! And after the day's work was done, and evening dosing in, his wife and children knelt down in prayer. They prayed for patience and submission, for forgiveness of all their sins and infirmities, and they prayed for him who was now so

estranged from them - who was perhaps at that very time doing wrong, and spending money which he ought to have brought for their support. They prayed earnestly that God would rouse him and bring him again in to His fold, and that great as was his sin, he might be forgiven through the mediation of Jesus Christ.

This heavy trial brought much sorrow and trouble on them all, but perhaps it was the means of making them more serious and thoughtful, and more anxious to do their duty. Andrew who was naturally so high spirited and careless, and might in prosperity have been tempted to forget his prayers and other duties - he was now made to think more of the dreadful nature of sin, and as his mother to the best of her ability, shewed him how necessary it was to check the beginning of sin, to try while young to resist little temptations, he felt that every day and every hour, must either lead him a step towards the right way or a step towards the wrong. Thus though he had faults, and made a few backward steps sometimes, on the whole Andrew was improving every day and growing wiser and better in mind, as he grew taller and stouter in body. And the consciousness of trying to do his duty, made him feel happy and light hearted, in spite of ragged clothes and bad fare. He was young and strong, but his poor mother, she was older, her health not so good, besides that, the seeing her husband day after day do wrong, and offend God, was a weight which pressed in to her very heart, so that Susan could not be brisk or light hearted as her children were, but still she did not now say, "It is too much, God has forsaken me." No, her dream had left a lasting impression, and her murmurings and despair had given place to patience and trust in the Almighty.

CHAPTER II.

ONE Sunday morning, Susan sent Andrew and Betsy to church, or rather to the school house where service was performed. She herself remained at home to mind the baby and poor little David. She could not help sighing as she saw her children's patched clothes, and remembered how differently she once sent them dressed, and she now recollected a time when she had thought with so much satisfaction of Betsy's new bonnet and frock as to distract her attention from the prayers; and Susan felt that this and many other little things about her had been wrong.

Tom was at home to day, and Susan had a fine dish of cabbage to produce at dinner, which Andrew had reared in the garden. She tried to make things as comfortable as she could, hoping her husband might think how much nicer it was than at that riotous, dirty place, at Bob O'Brien's,

and she put the baby down on the floor by his side. Tom, who was smoking, soon took the child up, and he walked out with it in front of the hut. The other children seeing this followed, all but poor little David, and Susan stopped every now and then from sweeping and cleaning to take a look at them. Tom sober and with his children, how pleasant it was to see that! "May the Lord turn his heart!" sighed she, "and then we shall be happy again!" When Andrew and Betsy returned, they both began to talk at once and so fast, that their mother could not make out what they said. "Whisht," said she, "Andrew be quiet and let Betsy speak, if you want me to hear at all." But when Andrew ceased, Betsy came to a dead stop, and colouring up very red, she said, "No, Andrew you tell it, will you."

And then Andrew related how that after the service was over, the schoolmaster had beckoned for them to come to him, and how he had led Betsy up to the clergyman himself. And Mr. Walter had asked her age, and what she could do, and Betsy looked down on the ground, and said nothing, but Andrew came forward and spoke up for her. And how Mr. Walter had said he wanted a girl in his house and he thought if Betsy's mother would let her go she would suit, and that he would ride that way in the course of the week and see about it. And Andrew and Betsy seemed in high spirits about it; Andrew being sure Betsy would make a good servant and get wages, and Betsy thought she should be able to help her mother in this way better than she could at home.

Tom heard the story too, and he said, "Betsy must certainly go if the parson would take her, for eight children could not be supported at home." And Susan felt too glad for her husband to take any interest about it, to raise objections, though she did feel, that to lose Betsy would be to lose her right hand, and the comfort of her life. They went on talking of it, and wondering what Betsy would have to do, and when Mr. Walter would come, and Tom was there and talked too, which made them all happier. But soon as Susan rose to feed the dog, she saw a man walking near the hut, a ragged, dark browed man, and she knew it was Bob, and she knew he was waiting for her husband, and her limbs trembled, and her heart sank within her. She shut the hut door however, and proceeded with the dog's bones. Then she went on a few steps, and being near the man, she said, "good evening."

"Good evening?" said he, in return, "is Tom within?"

"He is," said Susan, "and now Bob, don't you go for to entice him out. God knows the misery you've brought on him and me. Away with your smooth talk, and leave my husband to himself."

Bob began to laugh, and asked her just to step down with Tom, and tried to take hold of her, but she shrank from him, and said, "never! Go your

ways and don't come here. Tom doesn't want any thing more with you.”

“Doesn't he though,” said Bob, “but I can tell you I have want of him. Isn't it him that has had money off me, and isn't he in my debt? He is to work with me to-morrow, and so just tell him I want him, will you?”

Just as Susan was going to answer, Tom himself came out.

“Tom, Tom, don't go! you won't leave us again, Sunday evening too, will you? Stay here and tell him to be off.” And she caught hold of her husband's arm as she spoke. He tried to shake her off, and said he was only going to settle about some work; but Susan still held fast, and entreated him to stay at home or he would break her heart.”

“I'll break your head first,” said he, angrily, and pushing her violently she fell against the fence. When she recovered from the giddiness the blow had occasioned, she found Tom gone with the man, and her children crying round her.

“God have mercy on them!” said she, “but he is a bad looking man, and something tells me that evil will come to them. O my children, take heed and never go into bad company, and pray you may never be tempted to drink.”

This was a wretched evening to them all, and Susan began to hope that Betsy might go in to Mr. Walter's service, and be spared such scenes.

CHAPTER III.

THREE days passed and Tom did not come home, nor did Mr. Walter come that way, though Betsy's heart beat at the sound of every horse's footstep, and Andrew had bid her be sure and keep as neat and clean as she could. Susan had not found any work either this week, and again was their meat and flour running very short.

But it is wonderful how different a trial appears at different times; how much the spirit in which we meet it, seems to change it.

If, when we are very anxious for any particular thing, we set about curbing this anxiety, it will, by the grace of God, render us as happy as if our desires were fulfilled, and if we try to bend our spirit to our lot, it will even here be as happy for us as if our lot could itself be changed. It is not, generally speaking, circumstances that make us happy or unhappy, it is far oftener our own minds, our own hearts. And now, Susan did not as on a former occasion, sink down in despair and murmur at God's dealings with her. She remembered her dream, she thought of her cross, and the two roads, and she felt comforted and sure that she was supported, and in the right time would be mercifully relieved. “Surely,” thought she, as she went to bed, “God will provide for us, something will turn up to-morrow.”

And she was right, the morrow did bring a change - the morrow was a marked day to Susan. And in after years she looked back on that day with joy and gratitude, though mingled with horror and awe. But in order to understand what happened we must for a little while follow Tom to the hut of Bob O'Brien. It was true, when he said that he was going to work. He did work with and for Bob. The O'Briens were adding to their hut, and on the Monday Bob and Tom were in the bush all day cutting slabs. There was no drinking that day, but the next morning Bob told Tom to go by himself, that he could not leave home. When Tom returned, he found Bob drinking, and much inclined to quarrel with him. A dispute arose about the work, but some others coming in, the subject was dropped. The next morning, Bob, who was any thing but sober, again attacked Tom, and accused him of being in his debt, and not trying to work it out. Tom answered hotly, and thus arguing they went out for more slabs. When they returned for dinner, they both drank some spirits, and were both very unfit for work; but Bob staggered out and called on Tom to follow. Tom however did not stir, he remained sitting on a bench, just outside the door half asleep.

A man was felling a tree very near the hut, and Bob not knowing well what he was about, walked up to him and looked on for a few moments, then recollecting Tom, he swore out at him, and taking up an axe which lay on the ground, brandished it, declaring with an oath he would dash out his brains.

Tom moved from his seat, and staggered on a few steps, returning the angry threat, and shaking his fist at Bob. At that very moment there was a loud shout of "the tree! the tree! Bob! run man."

The drunken man turned stupidly, but before he had time to see or understand, the tall tree came cracking down; there was a loud noise like the report of a gun, which was echoed through the bush, and Bob O'Brien was a mangled, shattered corpse! There was scarcely the form of a human being in his remains.

In one moment Tom Fletcher was sober, and what a dreadful, what an awful scene was before him! With curses on his lips, and anger in his heart, Bob had been suddenly summoned before his Maker, his Judge! How was it that Tom was spared? The top branches of the tree were within a yard of him!

Then came the woman's screams, and the exclamations from the byestanders. But Tom turned away. He turned away, cold as a stone, trembling in every joint, and he walked through the bush towards home.

CHAPTER IV.

AFTER Tom had proceeded a little way he threw himself down on the ground. The horrible scene came before him, and the thought "where now is Bob O'Brien," made his flesh creep; for Tom had been taught his duty. He knew there was a heaven and a hell. He knew no drunkard would be received into heaven. All his sins, his neglect of duty, his drinking, and swearing, and taking God's name in vain, and neglect of the Lord's Day, and God's commandments - all now crowded on his mind. He could not pray, he could not hope, but he felt what a wonderful escape he had had; he felt that he had received an awful warning, and once again the fear of God was in his mind, for during the last few months even this had been forgotten.

Just as Susan was preparing for their evening prayers, and Betsy had opened the Bible to read a chapter, Tom walked in; his face was deadly pale, a look of fixed horror was in his eyes, he had no hat on, and his clothes were spotted with blood. Susan and the children looked at him in wonder; a horrid fear rushed across his wife's mind - "what had he done," - but she could not speak. Not a word was said, but Tom came up to the table, and in a very excited manner he put his hand on the Bible and said, "I swear" ---

"Tom, Tom," interrupted his wife, "don't swear, that's the Bible; look at your hands - what have you done - God forgive you!"

Tom, however, continued in a broken voice, "I swear that never again shall spirits pass my lips. So help me God." And he sank overpowered on the bench, and cried like a child.

Susan dreaded to ask a question, and knew not what would come next. They sat in silence; no sounds were heard but the wretched man's sobs, till a curlew set up its melancholy cry and startled Susan. Then she jumped up and made fast the door, though why she did so she hardly knew, and she looked in upon the younger children who were asleep, and then she again came near the fire, and again the blood caught her eye. "Tom!" she almost screamed, "tell me, what is this, where have you been?"

Tom fixed his eyes on her for a moment, and then looked at his shirt. "Ha!" said he, "I didn't know it had reached me - that is Bob O'Brien's blood, he is dead." and again he cried violently.

"And was it your doing Tom?" said Susan, in a faint low voice; holding by the table, for she felt as if she should drop.

"My doing?" said Tom, "it was God's doing. The tree fell with a thundering noise, we were drunk and quarrelling, it killed Bob, me it spared, and for what? - to die a wretched sinner."

"No," said Susan, relieved of a deadly weight, "no, Tom, you are spared to repent. Many times I have prayed for God to rouse you, and I knew not

how it could be see now it is done!” and she burst into tears.

By degrees Tom told all that he knew of the occurrence, and as he talked his heart felt softened. He would have given worlds to pray, but knew not how. Susan, however, bid Betsy read the chapter, and then she repeated some of the prayers out of the Prayer-book, and Tom joined. Susan shook when she remembered Tom's oath on the Bible, but she prayed earnestly that God would strengthen him to keep it, and that He would forgive him.

CHAPTER V.

AN inquest was held on the body of Bob O'Brien, and a verdict returned of accidental death, occasioned by the falling of a tree. Tom was present, and he also attended the funeral.

O, how awful! how solemn did the words sound to him, “earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust;” and while he feared for Bob, he tried to thank God for sparing him, and to pray for forgiveness of his sins and grace to amend his life. He had explained all to Susan, who heard his confessions without uttering any reproach, and she advised him to offer to work out what was still due to the O'Briens; “or,” added she, as she recollected the temptation of the drink there, “Tom, woudn't it be better to bide at home and work? Sure you can soon raise the money, and it would come as well and better to the poor widow.”

Tom agreed, for he was very willing not to go near that dreaded hut. He set about working at home the very next day, and said he should yet be in time to get in a crop of maize. Susan herself put up a few pounds of butter which she had been saving, and went with it to the store, which enabled her to bring home some flour. How lightly she walked on as she saw Tom and Andrew at work! and yet she dared not trust too much to it, for drunkenness is a hard think to conquer, and she knew that for some time Tom must live on very little. It was not possible to make up for lost time all at once, and she was afraid of trouble again driving him to drink, but she resolved to work hard herself and never complain; if she could not always command meat and bread, she could wear a cheerful face, and have a kind voice, and Tom's nature was not bad, his temper was kindly enough till drink had spoiled him. And then, Betsy might perhaps be able to help them if the clergyman took her, and then she began to wonder what had become of Mr. Walter.

However, while she was at the store Mr. Walter himself rode up and enquired the way to Fletcher's hut.

“Mrs. Fletcher is just here herself sir, ” said the woman, and Susan came out.

The clergyman asked her how her husband was going on, saying he had heard very bad accounts of him, but he hoped the awful judgment which had fallen on O'Brien would recal him.

Susan's tears started into her eyes as she answered, and said "she hoped Tom would in future be steady and give over drinking."

Then Mr. Walter asked about Betsy, and it was at length settled that she should go to live in Mr. Walter's family as under nursery maid. She was to receive £8 a-year, and come at once. Mr. Walter's cart was coming to the settlement in the course of a week, and would call for her.

CHAPTER VI.

WELL, it really seemed as if brighter days were about to shine on Susan; Tom going on more steadily, and Betsy likely to have a very good situation. True they were poor, but as long as a man can and will work steadily, they are not likely to starve in this country.

It must not be supposed, however, that Tom could all at once return to what he had been. Indulgence in any sin leaves behind it a mark, even after we have through God's grace broken through the habit. The temper generally suffers, and there cannot be that lightness and smoothness which they possess, who from childhood try to please God. Tom was now more easily annoyed with things than he used to be, more apt to be angry, and then again he was more stern in manner.

He was very earnest and eager to keep his vow, which in a moment of excitement he had been led to make. He had undertaken a great deal, but perhaps it is necessary for such as he was to make a desperate effort; not only to say they will not drink enough to affect them, but that they will not drink at all. It may be right for them it may be the only way for them, but there certainly is a danger lest in making such resolutions, and earnestly striving to keep them, people become severe towards others, and forgetting what has brought them into their present state, they immediately set up to be judges of their neighbours. But it should be recollected that those who have not done wrong or given way to temptations, do not require the same severe measures. How much better would it be - how much safer, for penitents, reclaimed drunkards and others, to bear in mind what they have been, remembering that it is through God's mercy they were spared to repent; not to forsake one sin and fall into another; for it should be recollected, that the same God who condemns drunkenness, says also, "Judge not, that ye be not judged," and perhaps there is no one fault which our Blessed Saviour more frequently warns us against, than this kind of spiritual pride.

Now Tom had to fight against this; he had to try not to be severe on his neighbours. He often felt inclined when he saw a man taking a glass of beer, or any thing else, to shake his head and condemn him, and to feel self satisfied that he had given it all up. But though we are all apt to fall into such errors, and our spiritual enemy is ever at hand to suggest such thoughts, and make them assume the form of strictness of religion; yet we shall by God's blessing learn to avoid them if we set the right way about it. There have been, and there are now, those who lead the strictest and most self-denying lives, who are withal, the most humble and charitable. And as Tom did try, did pray daily for forgiveness and grace, did attend church, and feel himself to be one of the stray sheep, as he listened to advice and tried to follow it, he was enabled to subdue such unbecoming thoughts.

Months passed on. Betsy was living at Mr. Walter's, and conducting herself very well; Tom did not return to his old habits, but was industrious and sober; the hut was duly repaired, and the weeds in the garden cleared away. One Sunday evening when they strolled out into the bush, Tom carrying poor little David, and the baby trying to walk with its mother's help, they came upon the clump of swamp oaks under which Susan had slept. Susan could not help saying "dear me, how comfortable 'tis Tom to have you steady. 'Tis wonderful to think how the same thing which brings woe to some, brings joy to others. Poor Bob's death was a blessing to us, sure."

Tom said, "aye, it was so, but, Susan, if you hadn't been what you are, I'm thinking I never should have come round. You never abused me, or threw it at me how you suffered: I never could have come home and kept steady if I had expected complaints from you - your meek voice and face went far to bring me back, though Bob's death was what suddenly forced me to it."

Then Susan told her husband of that morning, when she had been in such despair, and when impatience seemed to be getting the better of her; and she told him how she had dropped asleep, and what she had dreamt, adding, "that as long as she lived, that she should bless God for that dream, which had enabled her to be patient and resigned."

If any one who reads this, is suffering from a heavy trial, which weighs them down and seems hard to bear, let them take courage, and think of Susan and her dream.
