

“UNDER HIS WINGS.”

*Original and Selected Papers
for the Young.*



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EASTERN HARVEST, SCENE.

RUTH, OR “UNDER HIS WINGS.”

“Under His wings shalt thou trust.”—PSALM xci. 4.

IT was the beginning of harvest in the sunny land of Palestine, the beautiful land of Canaan. Along one of the roads leading from Moab to the town of Bethlehem two women were walking, and one of them was speaking very earnestly to the other. What is she saying? Let us listen to her words.

“Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God.”

You all know now who the two women

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were. You remember how Naomi and her husband and two sons fled from the famine in their own land, and went to live in Moab. There her sons married ; and then Naomi seemed to forget Bethlehem and the land that was Jehovah's land ; she and her family settled down amongst a strange people with their false gods, and it seems as if they had well nigh given up the hope of returning to Canaan, where Jehovah had brought His people after He had led them out of Egypt. But if His people forget Him, God never forgets them.

A terrible time of sorrow came upon poor Naomi. Her husband—the stay and support of her life—became sick and died. Later on first one son and then the other died also, and she was left alone, a widow, and childless. Do you wonder that all the brightness seemed gone out of her life ?

But this was the moment when God was

speaking to her. In the hour of her anguish and loneliness, she thought again of her own land—and started to go back to it, for she had heard that "Jehovah had visited his people in *giving them bread.*"

Have you ever thought what a wonderful thing it is that the Lord Jesus came down here to be "living bread" for you and for me?

As soon as Naomi heard of the bread that God had given His people in Canaan, she arose and left her home in Moab to go back to Jehovah's land, where His people dwelt.

Have you ever learned your own deep need of "living bread," and gone to the Lord Jesus to get it? He never yet turned any one away, and He never will.

Naomi did not return alone. Her daughters-in-law both started to go with her, but Orpah soon went back to Moab, and then Ruth proved how the thought of

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Naomi's God had been in her heart long before the moment when she said to her mother-in-law, "Intreat me not to leave thee."

We cannot tell how it was, but we can imagine that Naomi would often tell her daughters of the God of Israel, and Ruth would have heard how He led His people through the wilderness, with the pillar of fire, and of cloud; and how He had fed them with angels' food, and even took care of the very clothes they wore, so that they lacked nothing. She may have felt how happy it would be to belong to such a God, and so when Naomi was on her way to the land where Jehovah was known and loved,—at any rate by some of His people—Ruth made up her mind that nothing should hinder her from going too, and so she said, "Thy people shall be my people, and thy God, my God."

Ruth never regretted saying that. It was no hasty decision with her, for she had stedfastly made up her mind that she too must belong to Naomi's God. The idols of her own land had never comforted her in her hour of sorrow and trouble ; and she most likely had heard from her young husband of the love of Jehovah for His people, and how He had said, " I know their sorrows ; and I am come down to deliver them " (Ex. iii. 7, 8). And He did deliver them, and brought them into His own land. She may have heard too of the tabernacle ; of the beautiful golden ark, where the wings of the cherubims shadowed the mercy seat ; and of how God had said to Moses, " There I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubims " (Ex. xxv. 22). Ruth, I think, had already begun to put her trust in

Jehovah. The language of her heart may have been very much that of the sweet singer of Israel when he said, "Hide me under the shadow of thy wings" (Psalm xvii. 8).

As soon as Naomi saw that Ruth had real purpose of heart to go with her, she ceased to persuade her to return to Moab; and cheered and encouraged by her faithful love she set her face towards Bethlehem and together they travelled on and on through the long sunny days of summer till at last the city was reached.

Barley harvest was beginning when Naomi and Ruth reached Bethlehem, and very soon the loving heart of Ruth made her feel that she would not only comfort and love Naomi, her only mother now—but that she would work for her. She seems already to have felt safe and happy in the land of Canaan, for it was Jehovah's

land, and so she goes to glean in the harvest field, trusting herself "Under His wings."

How many of you who read these words have really put *your* trust in God? You know a great deal more than Ruth did for God has revealed all His love now in sending His own Son to tell us of it, and to show us what He is. Have you ever had the desire to belong to Him, to be a real Christian? If you have, just be like Ruth in her *stedfast* mind to cleave to Naomi, that she might reach Naomi's God. Don't let anything come in to hinder you from putting all your trust in the Lord, for it is He Himself who creates the desire to be His, and that is a very great encouragement for you.

When the Lord Jesus was on earth He sorrowed because the people of Jerusalem did not receive Him ; and I think many of

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you will remember His words when He said, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, . . . how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not" (Matt. xxiii. 37).

"Under His wings" is a place of perfect safety and rest and comfort; or in other words, if you put your whole trust in Christ you will be saved for ever, and find rest and joy, and far more deep blessedness than any words of mine could express. As Ruth went into the harvest field that first day of gleaning, I think she must have had a sense of Jehovah's care over her. She may even have had these words in her mind, "He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust"; for if—as some believe—the beautiful ninety-first Psalm from which this verse is taken, was really written by Moses, it may have been

known even then to Ruth through hearing it from Naomi or some of her family.

At any rate Ruth went out to glean in the quiet peace that her trust in Jehovah gave her, and we can soon see that her trust was not in vain. It was the boundless grace of God that had drawn Ruth away from Moab with its false idol worship, to the land of Canaan, and now He was going before her and leading her in the way where His own purposes of wisdom and blessing would be shown out.

Little did Ruth think as she entered the barley field that the rich man to whom it belonged was a kinsman—a relative—of her own father-in-law, who had died in the land of Moab; but so it was. And not this only, for we see from what the Bible narrative tells us that he was a godly man, one who lived in the fear of Jehovah, and

valued His law, and welcomed those who came to glean in his field. The Lord had thought of such long before, and one of His commands was that the gleanings of the harvest were to be left for the poor and the stranger, as we see in Leviticus xix. 9. Boaz kept this command of the Lord, and finding who Ruth was he spoke so kindly to her, that she could only ask, "Why have I found grace in thine eyes . . . seeing I am a stranger."

Her question brought forth a beautiful answer from Boaz—the owner of the field, and showed too how well he knew all about the lonely widowed ones who had returned together to Bethlehem. He knew all that Ruth had left behind her in Moab, and her devoted love and care for her mother-in-law ; and after telling her this, he adds, "Jehovah recompense thy work and a full reward be given thee of the Lord God of

Israel, *under whose wings* thou art come to trust."

Do you wonder that Ruth was comforted? Here was one of Jehovah's people—one who loved Him, and he did not turn away from her, Moabite though she was, but he had even welcomed her, the friendless stranger, whose faith had led her to take shelter under the wings of the Lord God of Israel. No wonder that she said, "Thou hast comforted me." I think the one great reason why Ruth was so cheered by the kind words of Boaz was, that she felt that she was received as one who had cast in her lot with the people of God, and Boaz saw this and fully owned it.

Little did Ruth know when she left her own land and people, and started with Naomi for the land of Canaan, and the city of Bethlehem—which means the house of bread—how fully she would prove that the

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beautiful little city, surrounded with its terraces and hills covered with vines and pomegranates and figs, would indeed be a "house of bread" to her.

She had reached, as it were, an unfailing store, in putting her trust "Under His wings," and every day only proved this more and more. Jehovah had not forgotten His kindness to His people, and now He had raised up for her, and for Naomi, a friend in Boaz—the mighty man of wealth.—who was not only able, but willing, to undertake her cause.

But Ruth could not know all this at first. She did know that most tender kindness was shown her, and at meal-time the portion of food that Boaz gave her was much more than she could then eat ; and we find that after the gleaning of the day was over, and she took back to Naomi the ephah, or more than three pecks, of barley she had gleaned,

she had reserved enough of the food that was left to provide their evening meal also.

But as we think over all Ruth found in coming to "the house of bread," we feel how very far short it comes—even as a type—of what is found by those who get "living bread." In one way we are like Ruth. We are all away from God naturally, and we are sinners too, and need forgiveness, and salvation, and eternal life. How is all this, need to be met? By the same glorious One who met every need of Ruth, for the Jehovah of Israel is the Lord Jesus Christ the Son of God, who gave Himself a ransom for all.

No need is there now for any journey to any city on earth, for God sent His Son down to where we are to tell us of His love, of His desire that all should be saved, and find a supply for every need in Himself, and a home too, not in any

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Canaan on earth but in "the Father's house."

Neither Boaz nor Bethlehem could shield Ruth from death, nor even from care and sorrow that come into the happiest life ; but in putting our hearts' trust in the Lord Jesus Christ we are not only saved from death, as an enemy, but through *His* death we pass out of death into life. He gives us His own Spirit, so that we live by Him, and are able to go on and learn more of Him, and of His will, and are thus able to live so as to please Him.

We do not learn all this at once, but it is all there for us, and I long for you all to know that if, like Ruth—you are steadfastly minded to put your trust in Christ—the only Saviour for sinners, you will find far more than will meet your every need, no matter what that need may be. Christ says now, "Come unto me" and "Him that

cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." To come to Him is to put your trust in Him—to have faith in Him—to *receive* Him, and to "as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the children of God, even to them that believe on his name" (John i. 12). See to it that you let nothing hinder you from this.

We must take one more glance at Ruth and Bethlehem, this time a few years after she gleaned in the barley field. She is no longer the Moabite, but the honoured wife of Boaz in whose field she had been patiently toiling then, and she is also the mother of the little child who has so comforted Naomi in her old age, and whose name of Obed is well known to us as the grandfather of David the beloved king of Israel. Nor was this all. Great as this honour was that God put upon her, there is a greater still, for in "David's town," in

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that same lovely Bethlehem, the Jehovah of Israel "Took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men," and if you look in the first chapter of Matthew you will find that Ruth is named in the genealogy of our Lord Jesus Christ as a direct ancestress of Him who though He visited this earth as a lowly Man was ever "God over all—blessed for ever."

May you all know the blessedness of taking shelter "Under His wings."



“THE SHADOW OF THY WINGS.”

“In the shadow of thy wings will I make my
refuge.”—PSALM lvii. 1.

MANY boys and girls often feel very nervous and timid of things which seem very real and dreadful to them, however small they may appear to older folk; things which, perhaps, they hardly like to mention or tell about, for fear of being laughed at.

Then there are other things, too, which even some grown-up people are afraid of—a severe thunderstorm, for instance.

Now, suppose that you learn the verse at the head of this little paper, and next time you feel nervous and afraid, think of it

"In the shadow of thy wings." What a beautiful thought it is!

Some of you perhaps have seen a hen shelter her chickens under her wings. Now, just so God will shelter those who are His. But the picture fails, for the hen, however much she loved her chicks, might have them taken from her, or they might be hurt in some way. But God's love and power are infinite and for ever, and not even Satan himself can touch one of those who are "In the shadow of his wings."

But what if you are not His? What if you cannot claim the shelter of those protecting wings?

It is not yet too late—come *now, just as you are*, and He who has bidden you come will not turn you away, for the Lord Jesus Himself said, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" (John vi. 37).



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Shall not the cry of your heart be, "I flee unto thee to hide me"? (Ps. cxliii. 9).

Then you too will be able to say, "In the shadow of thy wings will I make *my* refuge."

Here is a verse in the Psalms for you to find—"He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust."

TWO PARABLES;
OR GOD CALLING AND BLESSING
A LITTLE CHILD.

“To-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.”—HEBREWS iii. 15.

MY dear children, I am going to tell you a true story of a child only five years old. This little girl was one Sunday afternoon listening to her mother reading the parable in the Gospel of Luke, chap. xii. 16-21. It tells of “a certain rich man,” who was, however, “not rich toward God”; whose only thoughts were of this world, and of that which he possessed in it; and who, as he was busily planning what he should do with all his good things

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and thinking what a long pleasant life was before him, heard the solemn voice of God address him—"Thou fool! *this night* thy soul shall be required of thee." These were the words that went to her heart, as though God Himself spoke them to her. She could not forget them. They rang in her ears, whatever she was doing, all through the week that followed. When at her play, those words would come again and again, and she could not shake off the thought that nearly scared her—Am I fit to meet God *now, this night?* And conscience always answered, No, you know well you are not.

And why not pray? perhaps you may ask. What could a little child of five years old have known about God, to be so afraid of Him? What do *you* know about God, my dear children? It may be your mother has told you, as hers did. that He

is a holy God, who cannot allow a single spot of sin in His holy presence. Do not your consciences remind you of many things you have said and done, that you would not like God to have heard and seen you do? Well, you cannot escape from this, for He not only knows all you have said and done in your lives, but He even knows every thought and wish of your hearts, good and bad. You cannot hide a thing from Him. He knows all. Have you ever thought of these things seriously?

But I must go back to my story, and tell you how the little girl lost the burden of her sins, which troubled her so, and how, instead of thinking of God as the Judge who must punish her for her sins, she found He was her greatest Friend, who had given His own Son to die for her. I cannot tell you anything about the next Sunday but

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I do know that another week passed away without one ray of comfort coming to her, until the third Sunday after, when her mother read her another parable from the same gospel. You will find it in chap. xviii. 9-14. This parable tells us of two prayers—the one pleased the man who offered it, the other pleased God who heard it. Why do I say this? If you read verse 14, I think you will see I am right in saying so, according to the judgment of Jesus, who spoke this parable. The first of these two men *trusted in himself*, that he was righteous (the very opposite of a sinner, certainly), and looked down upon others, so he positively thanks God that he is not like other people, who, it is easy to see, are sinners. He also reminds God what good works he has done. What need of a Saviour for one so good and religious? That he was a religious man was proved by his keeping

two fast-days in the week, and also, because he set aside a tenth part of all he had to God.

What more could possibly be expected of him? I wonder if any of you do half as good things? But I dare say you, each of you, know somebody *worse* than you are, of whom you perhaps think—I'm not so bad as so-and-so, I'm glad to say, and this is most of all consoling to think when you know you have richly deserved to be punished for being naughty. Ah, you do not yet know how utterly, hopelessly bad you are in God's sight, as the other poor man did, who had nothing good to say of himself, and whose only prayer was—"God be merciful to me, a sinner." But this was a cry *from his heart*, and, therefore, sure to reach the ear of God, who loves to answer prayer.

The next morning, when the little girl

awoke with the burden of her sins still troubling her sorely, she remembered this parable, and then and there she got up in her little bed, and prayed the same prayer—“God be merciful to me, a sinner,” from her heart, and God answered it *immediately*, by showing her that *all* her sins had been laid on Jesus, when He hung on the cross at Calvary, when He cried that bitter cry—“My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?”

Why did God forsake Jesus then, dear children? Because, God is so holy, that when *His own Son* took the sinner's place, enduring the wrath of God against sin, He had to hide His face from Him, and *this* was what made death so terrible to Jesus to think of. But now, for us *who believe in Him*, “*the sting of death*,” which “*is sin*,” is taken away, and perfect peace with God has been made through the blood

of His cross, where He was made sin for us.

It was through believing that Jesus had died for her, and had taken all her burden of sins away, that God spoke comfort to the little child's heart *this* time, so that all the trouble left it, and instead, such joy filled it, as she could never forget all her life afterwards.

Oh, dear children, may God give you to take your true place *now* before Him as *sinner*s, and you will find Him rich in mercy to you too, forgiving you your sins for Christ's sake.



INDIAN CARAVAN.

A MISSIONARY INCIDENT.

THERE was once a caravan crossing to the north of India, and numbering in its company a godly and devout missionary. As it passed along, a poor old man was overcome by the heat and labours of the journey, and, sinking down, was left to perish on the road. The missionary saw him, and kneeling down at his side, when the rest had passed along, whispered into his ear, "Brother, what is your hope?" The dying man raised himself a little to reply, and with a great effort succeeded in answering, "*The blood of Jesus Christ. . . cleanseth us from all sin*"! and immediately expired with the effort. The missionary was greatly

astonished at the answer, and in the calm and peaceful appearance of the man, he felt assured he had died in Christ. How, or where, he thought, could this man, seemingly a heathen, have got this hope? And as he thought of it, he observed a piece of paper grasped tightly in the hand of the corpse, which he succeeded in getting out. What do you think was his surprise and delight when he found it was a single leaf of the Bible, containing the first chapter of the First Epistle of John, in which these words occur! On that page the man had found the gospel.

Dear children, has this little incident no voice to you? Think of how many privileges you have had compared with this poor man. Brought up in a christian country, and having been taught the precious truths of the Bible from your infancy, do you know what it is to be cleansed from all your

sins by the blood of Christ, so that they are blotted out from God's sight for ever. If death were to come and claim you for its prey, would you be ready to meet it? Could you say, as a little girl did, who is now with Christ, "the blood of Jesus settles it all for me"? If you do not know what it is to be under the shelter of the precious blood of Christ, do not delay any longer. To-morrow may be too late; for even though death may not overtake you just yet, the Lord Jesus is coming very soon, and it may be even to-day that we shall hear His voice calling all those who belong to Him to meet Him in the air.

Think how terrible it would be if He came, and you were left behind! You would find no shelter then from the terrible storm of judgment which will burst on all those who have not believed the good news God is making known about His Son.

God's voice is speaking to you *now*
"See that ye refuse not him that speaketh."
May you be able to say from your heart :

"Precious, precious blood of Jesus,
Shed on Calvary !
Shed for rebels, shed for sinners,
Shed for me.

Precious, precious blood of Jesus,
Jesus, God's own Son,
Telling that the work is finished ;
All is done."

‘ OH, TELL IT ALL OVER AGAIN!’

GREENLAND, as most of you know, is a very cold country, much colder than it is here.

For three months in the year the sun is never seen ; and for nearly nine months the land is covered all over with snow.

We have plenty of nice fruit in summer, and many good things all the year round, but the poor Greenlanders live mostly on seal’s flesh, blubber, and oil. Poor Greenlanders, they live so miserably ; and what is much worse, many of them know nothing whatever of Jesus and His love !

But God loves them, for He loved the

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world, and “ gave his only begotten Son, that *whosoever* believeth in him should not perish, *but* have everlasting life ” ; so that, if a Greenlander believes on the Lord Jesus, he too may be saved.

Now, some earnest Christians pitied the poor heathen in Greenland, and thought they would like to go and tell them of Jesus—how He was born in Bethlehem, how good and kind He was to everyone, how He gave sight to the blind, healed the sick, raised the dead, how He died on the cross for sinners, how He went to the grave, and then to heaven, and how He will come again very soon.

So they went to Greenland and laboured there for eight long, weary years. At last they got tired of labouring so long without any apparent success, and thought about returning to their homes. They had suffered a great deal from cold and hunger,



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and the people only laughed at them, and mocked them.

But these missionaries had made a great mistake, for instead of telling the people, as they meant to do, of Jesus and His great love in dying and rising again from the dead—telling the sweet, sweet story of the cross—they found them so very ignorant, that the missionaries began merely with proving that God lives, and that He made all things, and so on.

Now, this was a great mistake, for we are sinners, and so we need to know—not only that God is the Creator, but that God is a Saviour-God, that "God is love," and that Jesus died for sinners.

One day a party of heathen Greenlanders led by a cruel and wicked Greenlander named Kajarnak, came to the missionary village, and entered the hut where the missionary was writing.

“ OH, TELL IT ALL OVER AGAIN ! ” 41

He was finishing his final correction of the four gospels, and was at the moment engaged on that part of John's Gospel relating to the sufferings and death of Christ.

Kajarnak was surprised at seeing the missionary writing, and at once asked him what he was doing.

“ Writing,” was the reply.

“ Writing ”! said Kajarnak ; “ what is writing ” ?

The missionary tried to explain it to him, and then said, “ I will read you what I have been writing.”

He read the account of Christ's agony in the garden, and then upon the cross, with the story of His being crowned, scourged, and spit upon.

As he read on, Kajarnak became greatly interested. “ And why,” he asked, “ did they treat the man so? What had he done ” ?

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"Oh"! said the missionary, "*this* man did nothing amiss, *but* Kajarnak did. Kajarnak filled the land with wickedness; and Kajarnak deserved to go to hell for it. But this man suffered all this to bear Kajarnak's punishment, that Kajarnak might not go to hell."

And then the missionary went on to tell about God's love, and man's sin, and Christ's work for sinners, till the big tears were seen to roll down the poor heathen's cheeks.

Then, unable any longer to restrain his feelings, he rose from his seat and cried, "Oh! tell it all over again, for I too would like to be saved."

He was told it all over again—it was such a sweet story. Kajarnak believed the good news. His heart was drawn to Christ. He loved Him. Kajarnak was saved.

You may be quite sure the missionaries

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did not go away. They found out their mistake, and did not afterwards waste time in trying to prove that God lives, and made all things. They told the story of the cross, and God was with them ; and many of the Greenlanders were found of Jesus.

Are you saved, dear young reader ? You have often heard and often read of Jesus and of His sufferings. Perhaps, too, you have often wept as you thought of the cruel men scourging Jesus, and spitting in His face. But though you cry very much, that will not save you.

The blood of Jesus puts away sin, and nothing else will do it. Will you now receive Him as your Saviour ? He is so kind and loving, and little children especially are dear to Him.

Poor Kajarnak, from “ Greenland’s icy mountains.” with a heart colder than the

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ice, and darker than the darkest night in his country, came to Jesus, believed in God's love, and was saved.

How I long that all my dear young readers too would seek the same Saviour, and love the Jesus that loved Kajarnak the Greenlander, and loves them too.

From Greenland's icy mountains,
From India's coral strand,
Where Afric's sunny fountains
Roll down their golden sand ;
From many an ancient river,
From many a balmy plain,
They cry, Who will deliver
Our souls from Satan's chain ?
Shall we whose souls are lighted
By wisdom from on high ;
Shall we, to man benighted
The light of life deny ?
Salvation ! O Salvation !
The joyful sound proclaim,
Till each remotest nation
Has heard of Jesus' Name.

SIN AND ITS STAINS.

I WANT you, dear children, to think a little with me what a solemn thing sin is.

Let me ask you the question, What is sin? I wonder what you will answer. Perhaps you will say, To tell a lie is sin. Well, that is a sin ; and so we might say of a great many wrong things, that they are all sins.

But what does God's word teach us about sin? It shows us that all the wrong things we do grow from one dreadful root, and that root is self-will. Do you know what I mean by "self-will"? It is doing

the things that I like, without considering what God likes.

Now, God will not have this. God has a perfect right to call upon us to do His will, for He formed us for His own glory ; but we like to do our own will, and this is sin.

Oh ! how often, then, we sin ; for does ever a day go by without our doing, in some way, our own will ?

Well, now, I wish you to remember this, because I want to show you what happens when you sin ; that is to say, when you do your own will. You put a stain on your soul, though you cannot see it. Like a little girl who stole some cherries and thought no one would know it ; but the stain left on the corner of her mouth told the sad story of her theft. So it is with you ; you cannot see the stain on your soul, but God sees it. Remember this, dear little reader. God sees the stain.

Now, I want you to read a very difficult verse in the Epistle of Jude. I will quote it for you: "And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains, under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day" (v. 6). Great, long words, are they not? And perhaps you say that you cannot understand them. What does it mean, you may say, by "habitation" and "first estate"? Shall I tell you?

I was going to speak to a company of children one afternoon, on the lawn in front of a friend's house. The weather had been damp, and chairs and rugs were carried out to the lawn to keep the little ones from the damp. However, finding we had chairs enough, I decided to have all the little people sitting up, rather than let them lie on the rugs. But there was one little boy

who had a little will of his own, and when I set him up, and turned my back, he immediately got down from his seat, and when I turned again, I found him sprawling all fours on the rug. I had placed him up, but that little boy had done his own will, and left the place I had put him in.

Now, that is just the sort of sin that was committed by those angels of whom we have read. God put them to do His will, but one day they decided to do their own wills.

Oh, what a sight in heaven! God saw those angels of His with one dark stain on them. What a sight! But, mark it, dear children, only one stain, one stain only. And what did God do? He sent them down at once to be "reserved in everlasting chains, under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day." Yes, and there they are now, as you read this paper; put out of

God's holy presence for ever for their one sin.

And now let me ask you a very solemn question. What is to become of you if God will not have a creature with one stain in His holy presence? Will God be kind, and let you in with your stains on, because He is love? Oh, no! Think of what would happen in heaven if God let a little sin-stained sinner into His presence. The angels would look in wonder and surprise at the sight. They might say one to another, How is this? God sent down our fellow-angels with one stain out of His presence for ever; they are now in everlasting chains; and how is it that He has let in this little one, stained with many sins?

You see, dear child, if God were to do it, He would have to give up His great name as the righteous, holy God. No, the bar of

God's righteousness must for ever prevent any child in his or her sins from ever entering that bright and blessed scene.

My dear little reader, what are you going to do then? Have you sinned? Oh, yes, many, many times.

Are your sins numerous and your stains deep? Oh, yes! Then whatever is to be done? Turn now to Luke xxiii. 39-43. Read the verses. They tell us about a dying thief. What a sad end to a life of self-will! He would steal. Perhaps he had done worse things, but this we know: he had become so hopelessly bad that his fellow-men said that he must live no longer; and so they hung him up and crucified him. Poor man! the self-will of all his life came up before him in that solemn hour. He saw all his sins: he knew that in a few short hours he must die, and then where would he go? Stained deep with sins,

heaven closed, the grave open, and beyond it the dreadful judgment of God,—what could be done? Was there no hope? He turned his dying eye to Jesus, who was there bearing on His own holy soul all the weight of that dying man's guilt. He believed; he trusted in Jesus. He saw the Saviour die; and soon afterwards, before ever the sun went down, that poor thief died too. God has not told us what happened in the Paradise on high, except that the Saviour and the thief were there together. What was he like? Was he stained with sin? Were the angels, God's holy angels, shocked at his appearance in Paradise? No; the poor thief, only a few hours before so deeply stained with sin, was now cleansed from every stain.

Pure and spotless he entered there, and was with his Saviour in Paradise.

And now, dear reader, what did it all?

Oh, it was the precious, precious blood of Jesus! Yes, nought but that can cleanse the sin-stained soul, nought but that can make a soul fit for God's holy presence; but, blessed be God! that precious blood cleanses from all sin.

Are you cleansed from every stain in the precious blood of Christ? Remember, no soul stained with sin can ever go to be with Jesus in God's house above; and if your stains are not washed away, if your sins are not put away and forgiven, you cannot enter there. But if you will come just as you are to the Lord Jesus Christ, He can and will wash you "as white as snow," and then you will know that you are perfectly fit for God's presence, and will be longing for the day to come when you will be there with the Lord Jesus for ever.

A dear old woman, who was very ill, was

carried into a hospital in one of our large towns. When they brought her in, the doctor came to see her, and said at once that he could do nothing for her. So he told the kind-hearted nurse to make her as comfortable as possible, for she would not live long. Well, the nurse told her quietly what the doctor had said, and asked her if she could do anything for her. "Yes," she said, "bring the Bible." The nurse fetched the Bible, and then, at the request of the dying woman, she opened at that beautiful little verse you have been reading in the first chapter of the First Epistle of John. When she had found the place, the dear old woman reached out her hand, saying, "Nurse, put my finger along the lines, read the words as you go, and stop when I tell you." The nurse read on, and when she came to that little word "all," she stopped her and said, "Leave

my finger there on that word"; and soon after she went to be with the Lord Jesus Christ; and was perfectly happy, because she knew the value of that precious blood which is able to cleanse from ALL sin.

My dear reader, do you know it thus? If not, flee to Jesus at once. "Now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. vi. 2). To-morrow will be too late for some. It may be too late for you.

THE GOOD SHEPHERD.

COME, children, let us have a Bible lesson. What shall we talk about? Bears and lions?

Oh no, they are great fierce creatures, and eat and destroy all sorts of animals smaller than themselves.

SHEEP?

Yes, that will do; let us talk about sheep.

But where shall we read about them in the Bible?

We read a great deal about sheep in the Old Testament. Abraham had a great many sheep, so also had Isaac and Jacob, and all Jacob's sons kept sheep. But we will not talk about them.

Who shall we talk about, then?

David?

Yes, that will do. You know he took care of sheep for his father Jesse, and was a very good shepherd.

One day there came a lion and took one of his lambs away. I am sure it was very frightened when the lion seized it, and I dare say it bleated very loudly as if it were crying for help.

None of the other sheep could help it, but David was such a good shepherd that he went after it and killed the lion, and brought back the poor little lamb safely to his flock.

But there is another Shepherd I should like to talk about, one of whom David, in his care of his sheep, was only a picture.

Ah, that must be Jesus.

Quite right, but what chapter shall we read? We must find one in the New



AN EASTERN SHEPHERD.

Testament, and now if you will open your Bible at the tenth chapter of the Gospel by John, we will read about Jesus and the sheep.

Let us put the letters out plainly on a piece of paper, S H E E P, and write something that we find in this chapter against each letter.

First of all, then, we will take the letter

S

What word do we find in the chapter beginning with S that speaks of what Jesus is for the sheep? Look at verse 2. There we read He is the

SHEPHERD OF THE SHEEP.

If we look at verse 14 we read He is the Good Shepherd, and gives His life for the sheep.

David did not exactly give his life. He put his life in danger when he went after the lion, but Jesus was the Good Shepherd, and gave His life to save His sheep.

But in verse 3 we read of something else the shepherd does. "He calleth his own sheep by name." So then against this letter S we may put the word—

Shepherd—Jesus the Good Shepherd, who gave His life and calls His sheep.

H

Now we want a word beginning with H which will tell us what the sheep do when the shepherd calls. We shall find it in verse 3.

"HEAR HIS VOICE."

Yes, that's right: "The sheep hear his voice." But it is one thing to hear His voice and quite another thing to answer to His call.

Have you ever heard the voice of the Good Shepherd? He says, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

Perhaps you have never felt heavy laden with your sins. Did you ever think of

what a terrible thing *one* sin is? For *one* sin some of the angels were cast out of heaven. For *one* sin Adam and Eve were turned out of paradise. For *one* sin Moses was not allowed to enter the land of Canaan. May God make you to feel your sins until you are indeed "weary" of them and "heavy laden." Then you will not only hear the voice of Jesus the Good Shepherd, but you will answer to His call, and come to Him to have all your sins washed away in His precious blood. Then you will be among those whom Jesus calls "His own sheep." How happy!

What is the next thing we read about these sheep who are His own? It begins with the letter

E

We find it in verse 9. They

"ENTER IN"

and are saved. Happy sheep! The thieves

and robbers and wolves cannot touch them. They just walk about in and out and find pasture. They are safe under the care and protection of the Good Shepherd.

And so it is with little believers in Jesus—they enter in and are saved. Saved from their sins? Oh, yes, and saved from wrath and judgment too, but they are saved from all their enemies as well. As the little hymn puts it so sweetly—

“ Happy they who trust in Jesus,
Sweet their portion is and sure ;
When the foe on others seizes,
He will keep *His own* secure.
Happy people,
Happy though despised and poor.”

But we must go on to our next letter,

E

and in verse 28 we shall find something which the Good Shepherd gives to His own shcep. “ I give unto them

ETERNAL LIFE."

What a gift ! When you grow older you will be able to understand a little better what is wrapped up in this wonderful gift, but all I want to tell you about it now is that the Lord Jesus, who is the Good Shepherd, gives us who are His sheep eternal life, in order that we may be able to know Himself and His Father, as He says in chapter xvii. 3, "This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent."

What a wonderful thing it is to be one of the Good Shepherd's sheep !

And then last of all we find in our chapter three words for our last letter

P

In verse 9 we read that the sheep of the Lord Jesus will "find

PASTURE."

How this reminds us of what we read in

Psalm xxiii. "He maketh me to lie down in green pastures." I think the pasture where the Lord Jesus feeds us is His own love. He makes our hearts to enjoy His love, and thus we find food for our souls.

"They shall never

PERISH,

neither shall any man

PLUCK

them out of my hand."

They are eternally secure. None can ever touch them—they shall never perish.

And so we can go on to the next verse of the same little hymn and sing—

"Since His love and mercy found us,
 We are precious in His sight ;
 Thousands now may fall around us,
 Thousands more be put to flight ;
 But His presence
 Keeps us safe by day and night."

May my little reader be found among the

sheep of the Lord Jesus. Now I have something more to tell you about this Good Shepherd, something that will make His own 'sheep very glad, but will make those who do not hear His voice, and do not answer to His call, very sad indeed.

What is that? you perhaps say.

Well, it is just this—the Lord Jesus is coming very soon to call us who are His own sheep up to meet Him in the air.

Now are you very glad to hear about this? Could you put this paper down and lift your heart to the Lord Jesus and say, “Even so, come, Lord Jesus”?

I will now tell you a little story, and then say something more to you about His coming for His sheep.

Many years ago I walked to the top of the Torrs at Ilfracombe. It was a beautiful

afternoon in the month of July, the sun was shining brightly, and the sea was dotted over with little sailing ships.

Everything was peaceful, just such a day as we all enjoy so much at the seaside.

When I had climbed to the very top, I lay down on the grass and enjoyed the lovely view. Suddenly my quiet rest was disturbed by a loud cry, and when it was repeated I raised myself to see if I could find out whence the cry was coming.

After a time I discovered that it was coming from a man who was riding a little pony, and who just then was standing on the top of the hill next to the one on which I was resting.

At first I thought he was calling to me, but in a very few minutes I discovered that he was calling to some sheep, for now I saw them walking quite fast up the hill towards him.

Very soon the top of the hill was quite white with sheep, and all I could see was the shepherd surrounded by the sheep. Do you know what I thought of? I expect you can guess. I thought of the time when the Lord Jesus will come in the air, and call all His own sheep who will know His voice and will go up and meet Him.

It made my heart so glad, for I had known Him for a few years then, and nothing could possibly give us, who are His, greater joy than to be called up to meet Him. Just as the sheep went up from the valleys to the hill-top when the shepherd called them on the Torrs, so shall we, dear little fellow-believers, go up to meet our Good Shepherd when He calls in that happy day.

But that was not all I saw on that afternoon. After about five minutes I saw the shepherd wave his arms, and at once

two dogs ran down the hillside, and I soon heard a great barking and bleating of sheep.

The bleating certainly did not come from the sheep on the hill-top. Ah, I soon found out whence it did come, for now I could see a flock of sheep being driven along the slope of the hill by the dogs. I watched, and at last I saw all *those* sheep driven into an old quarry on the side of the hill.

I found out very soon why these sheep were put into the quarry, but the tears almost came into my eyes as the interpretation of the scene flashed into my mind.

Here were some sheep who did not know the shepherd's voice. They did not go to the hill-top and meet the shepherd when he called, but they were driven into the quarry. Ah, I thought, so will it be when Jesus comes. Those who hear His voice and love Him will go up to meet Him, but

those who will not hear His voice will be turned into the terrible quarry of hell.

Oh, my dear little reader, how will it be with you in that day? Have you heard the voice of Jesus and hearkened to His call and come to Him? Have you had your sins washed away in His precious blood? or are you still unwashed, unforgiven, unsaved? Do let me entreat you not to delay any longer. How blessed if you are found in that day among the sheep who go up to meet the Shepherd! but how terrible if you are found among those who do not hear His voice!

The sheep of which I have been telling you were only driven into the quarry and kept there for a *short time* while the shepherd counted them, but those who do not hear the *Good Shepherd's* voice will be driven away from Him for ever and ever.

It will then be known that such were

not really sheep of the flock of Christ, but more like the goats we read of in Matt. xxv. 32, 33.

Oh, dear little reader, do not remain any longer one of those to whom Jesus may have to say, "I have called, but ye refused"; but remember that lovely little verse which says, "They that seek me early shall find me."

"He is coming ! Who is coming ?
Is it One whom I shall fear ?
No ! the blessed, kind Lord Jesus—
He who suffered for me here.
He is coming !
In the clouds He will appear.

"Oh, how happy ! Those who love Him
All His beauty then will see ;
And the glorious sight will make them
Bright and beautiful as He.
In a moment
Like their Saviour they shall be.

“ He will take them up to heaven,
From this world and sin apart ;
There His Father will receive them
To His home and to His heart :
In His glory,
Never more from Him to part.

“THERE IS A LAD HERE.”

MOST boys delight in being useful, they want to be doing. Activity of thought and action marks them. and when they are converted to God there is oftentimes great desire to serve Christ, who has loved them and given Himself for them.

Now this lad of John vi. brings out the true way of usefulness. Three things present themselves before me concerning him about which I should like to say a few words to you all.

1. He was attracted to Christ.
2. He was in company with Christ.
3. He was useful to Christ.

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HE WAS ATTRACTED TO CHRIST.

We know not what drew him—whether it was a sense of sin or of need ; whether an awakened conscience or an unsatisfied heart ; but for some cause or another he had come.

Have you come to Him? You are a sinner, and you need to be cleansed in His precious blood, or you can never enter heaven. And your heart can never be set at rest until you find Christ. The wealth and wisdom and wonders of the world will fail to satisfy. Only Christ can. Come to Him, boys.

As a lad I came to Him. With a sense of my danger of judgment, with a longing of heart that could find no satisfaction in anything to which I had turned,

“ I came to Jesus as I was,
Weary, and worn, and sad ;
I found in Him a resting-place,
And He has made me glad.”

He has made me glad in knowing Him as my Saviour and my Satisfier too. I had heard before of His grace to others, of His goodness to the distressed, of His mercy to the sinful ; now I taste of it for myself.

Perhaps the lad of our scripture had heard of His tenderness and kindness to all who came, and thus had been drawn into His presence.

Any way, he had come ; and he had come to stay, for he had brought provision with him.

This brings us to the second point.

HE WAS IN COMPANY WITH CHRIST.

He not only came, but he remained, Held by the grace of the Lord, he abode in His company, hearing His words and learning of Him as he followed Him from place to place.

Then, going into the mountain, Christ

desired to feed the multitude, and the opportunity comes for the lad.

HE WAS USEFUL TO CHRIST.

“ There is a lad here,” says Andrew, “ which hath five barley loaves and two small fishes.” Evidently the lad was willing for them to be used; may-be he was near enough to hear when the Lord asked Philip, “ Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?” and so offered his little all for the Master’s service

Then, in the Lord’s hands, a little is made to go a long way; and so the boy’s five loaves and two small fishes become sufficient for that great multitude.

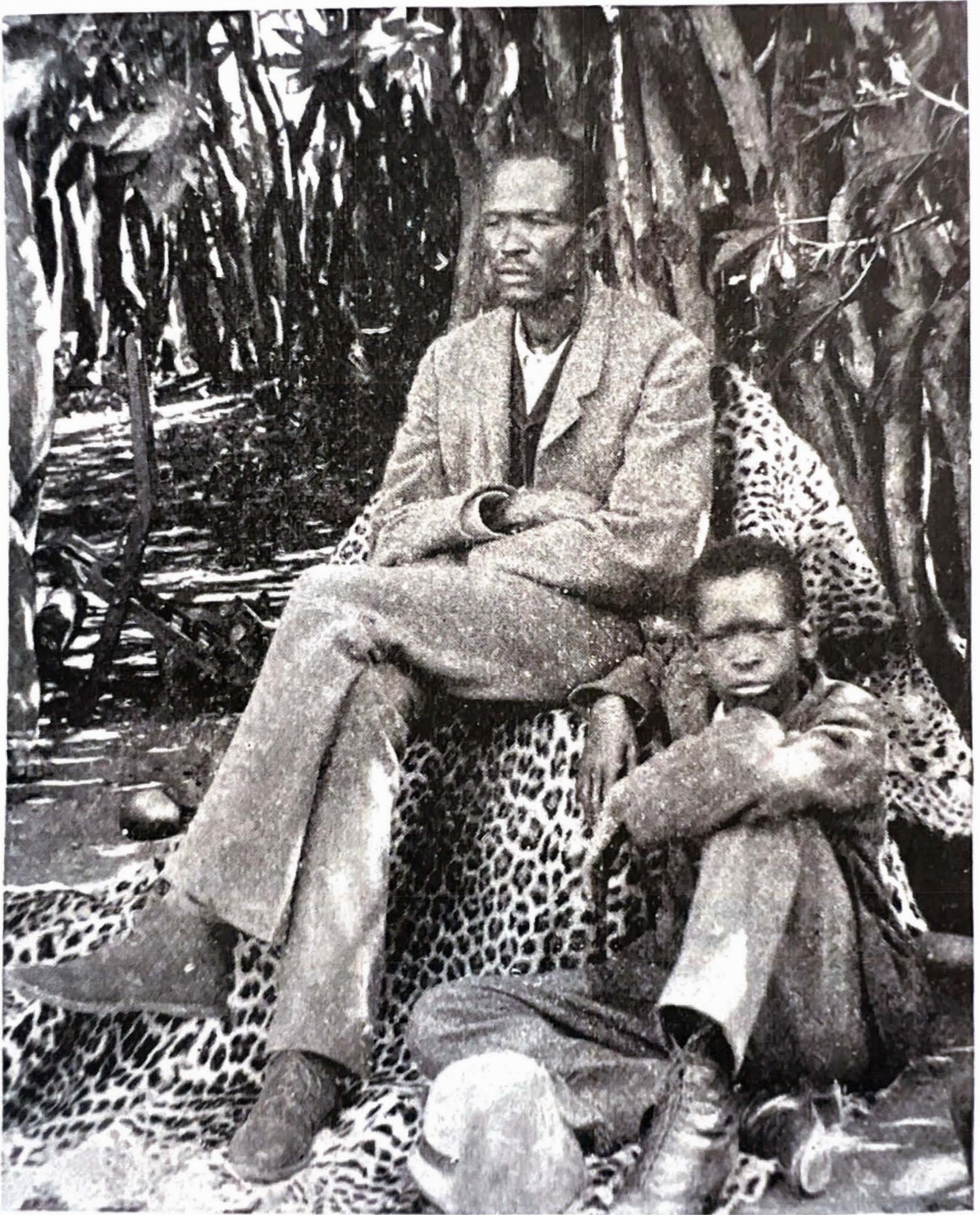
Would you be of use to the Lord? Then say to Him, There is a lad here, Lord, who would like to serve Thee. He will use you in good time in one way or another. Remember the order—

Attracted by,
In company with, and then
Useful to,

Christ.

The lad did not go to be used, but because he valued Christ and His teaching, and being near Christ he was in the place where he could become of service by yielding what he had for Christ's hands to multiply.

The great thing for all Christian lads and girls who wish to serve is to be *fit for service*, “meet for the Master's use.”



KING KHAMA AND HIS SON, A CONVERTED AFRICAN CHIEF.
(Photo taken for Paris Society for Evangelical Missions.)

THE YOUNG BLACK PRINCE.

A DEAR old missionary went one day to speak to some girls at a boarding school.

Just at the time he had a young black prince staying with him, whom he asked to accompany him and say a few words also. Prince J. E—— looked astonished, and asked, “What can *I* say to young ladies who know God—I, who have only known Him such a little while?”

The answer of the missionary surprised him still more. “You say they know God, but that is a mistake. Of course, they have *heard* of Him ever since they were born, but some of them do not yet *know* Him,

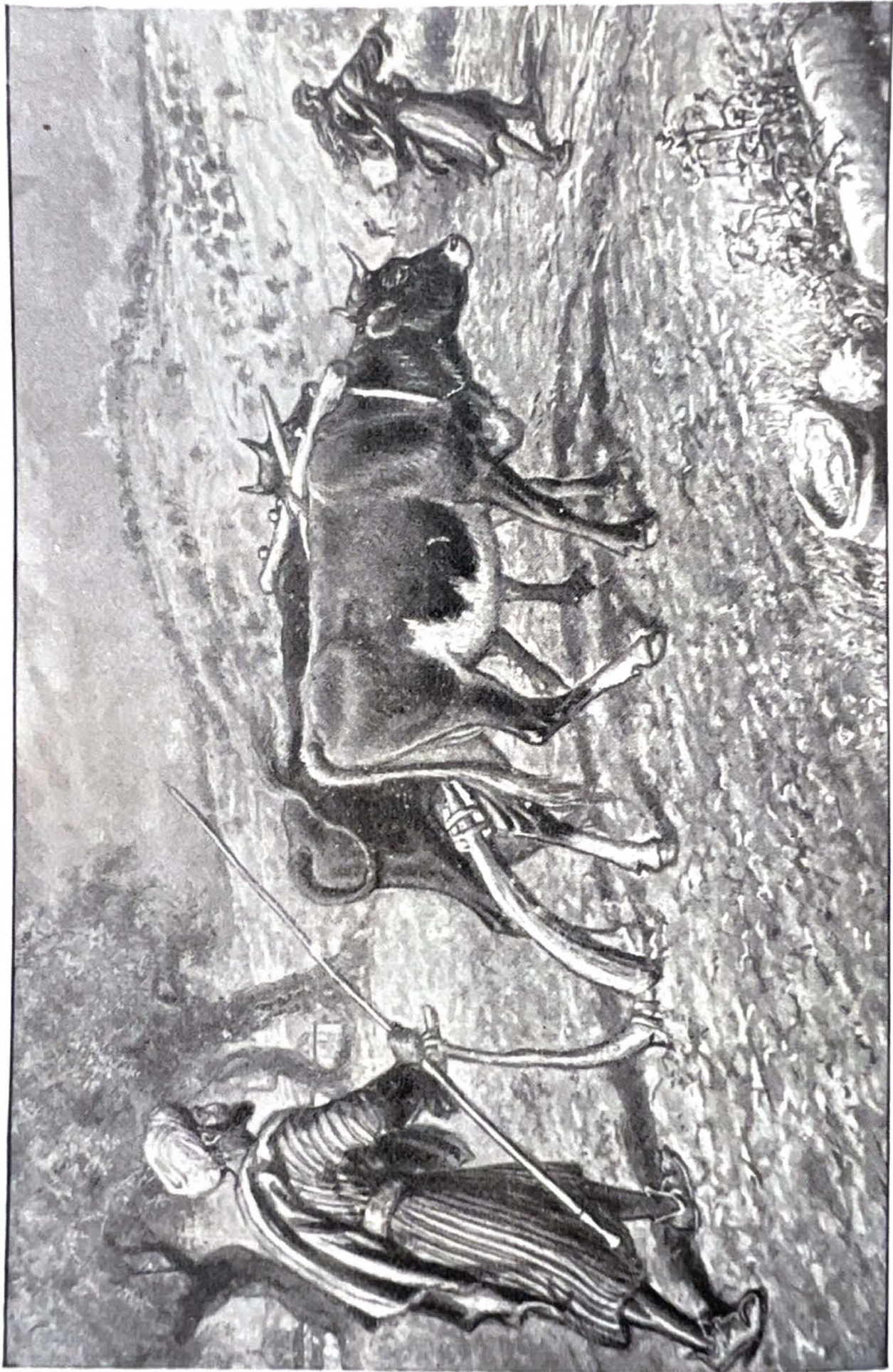
their hearts have never been touched by His love.”

On arriving at the school, the missionary gave a little address, and showed some idols and curiosities which he had collected in Yoruba, West Africa, and at the close asked his coloured friend to speak, and the prince began :—

“Dear young ladies, I cannot say much to you, for I find your language is a very hard one. I thought you all knew more than I do, for I have been brought up in a heathen country, and worshipped idols such as you have been looking at, and I have only known your God a little while ; but my friend tells me that perhaps some of you do not know Him yet, and this seemed so strange to me that I could not find it in my head to believe it. Is it really true? Our gods are so wicked, and hard, and cruel, we could not love *them* ; but

when your missionary came and told us about your God, how loving He is, and how He gave His only dear Son to die such a cruel death to save us, and wash away our black sins, then my heart believed in Him and loved Him. Can you hear about such great love and not love Him back? My eyes feel as if they could weep for you; but you *will* soon get to know Him, won't you? I must tell you that my father is a king, and I might be one next to him; but I do not want to be, I want instead to go and tell my people about this loving God and His Son Jesus, and my brother may be king. I pray that you may soon all know God."

Are *we* like this young black prince, whose heart had been touched by the love of God so that he loved Him in return? or like some of those girls, well-educated as to the things of this world, but ignorant of the love of God?



PLOUGHING WITH OXEN IN THE EAST.

“ And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.” (John xvii. 3).

One of those girls never forgot what the prince said. She was struck with her own ingratitude and sin, and found no rest till she knew and believed the love of God in Christ.





EWES AND LAMBS.

THE POOR MAN'S LAMB.

YOU may find the story of a bought lamb in 2 Samuel xii. and I want you to read it when you get time.

This little lamb belonged to a poor man, and it is said he had bought it. I cannot tell you what this poor man paid for the lamb, but I can tell you what Jesus has paid for you. Little ones who believe in Jesus belong to Him, for the simple reason that He has bought them.

In the New Testament it tells us, "Ye are not your own . . . ye are bought with a price." Can you tell me what the price was that Jesus paid? His own precious blood. And you know when we buy a

thing, if we have paid a big price for it, we set a very high value upon it ; and let me tell you the blessed Lord has paid a very high price for you, and so He sets a very high value on His little lambs.

The Lord Jesus, who was rich in glory, was a poor man here. He could say, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." Think of the Lord Jesus being in the bosom of the Father, and then, when He came to earth, not having where to lay his head! "Ye know," says the Apostle Paul, "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich." He laid down His life, and His precious blood was shed. He did all this in order to buy us. He must die before He could have one of you as His little lamb.

I wonder if this little lamb is in this meeting to-night? Would you like me to illustrate the grace of the Lord? Come with me in thought to a very high ridge of a mountain in Scotland. A few feet from the top of the mountain is an awful precipice, and on the top of the mountain you may see three men.

What are they doing? Two of them are uncoiling a long thick rope, and when they get it uncoiled, they fasten it under the shoulders and around the body of the third man. After they have secured it, he cautiously proceeds to the edge of the precipice and slides over, while the two men hold the rope tight. He goes down a long, long way, until they hear a voice from the bottom saying, "Stop! stop! Hold the rope fast!"

They hold the rope fast, and presently hear, "Pull away now. All right." And

they begin to pull up the rope, but it is much harder work than letting the shepherd down.

They pull with all their strength, until, to their great delight, the man is at the top with something in his arms. What is it? Why, a pretty little lamb that had wandered from the fold and had got to a place on the cliff where it could not turn round to get back again; but out of love the shepherd risked his life and saved it. Our Great and Good Shepherd has done more than risk His life—He has laid down His life. I cannot tell you the distance the Shepherd has gone to for us. The little hymn puts it so sweetly—

“ But none of the ransomed ever knew
How deep were the waters crossed ;
Nor how dark was the night that the Lord
passed through
Ere He found the sheep that was lost.
Out in the desert He heard its cry,
Sick, and helpless, and ready to die.”

HOW A WELSH BOY BOUGHT A BIBLE

JOHN DAVIES was but thirteen years of age when he purchased a Bible for himself with his own money.

Of course in our day many children younger than he have procured Bibles for their own use ; but in his day and district, Bibles were more difficult to obtain than they are now. Thus, as it will be seen, it needed considerable self-denial on the part of John Davies if he would obtain the desired volume.

He was the son of a poor widow, and lived at Newtown in Montgomeryshire.

One bitterly cold night he arrived at the

bookseller's at ten o'clock, and finding that the shop was closed, he went to the kitchen door and knocked. The little circle within the house had gathered for their evening reading of the scriptures, and prayer, and he was at first unanswered.

But he continued knocking, and his perseverance was at length rewarded.

Opening the door the servant asked what he wanted.

He replied, "A Bible."

"If you come in the morning," said the bookseller, who had drawn near, "you can have one."

"I cannot, sir! as I work in Moughtre (a place two miles from Newtown), and don't return home until late at night."

"Come in then, and you shall have one."

In answer to further questions, he told the bookseller that he had heard that Bibles could be obtained very cheap at that shop,

and therefore had saved up his money in order to obtain one for himself.

Receiving the book, he went off with his purchase, well satisfied with the success of his errand.

The next morning his widowed mother came to the bookseller with the Bible in her hand. At first he feared that the money with which it had been procured had been obtained in some wrong way, but his doubts were soon dismissed.

“Did my little boy buy this Bible here last night?” she asked.

“He did, and told me that he saved the money for that purpose.”

“And how do you think he saved it?”

“I cannot say.”

“Well, I will tell you. Having to leave home very early every morning, I cut him two large pieces of black bread (for I cannot get anything better), one for his breakfast.

90 HOW A WELSH BOY BOUGHT A BIBLE.

and the other for his dinner ; (his supper he had when he came home at night ;) and with this I gave him a halfpenny each day to buy some milk, and told him to divide it into two equal parts, to drink with his slices of bread." The mother paused, for her feelings almost overcame her, but with an effort she proceeded : "The little boy ate the black bread, and drank nothing but water for four successive weeks in order to have this Bible."

Such is the story. What think you of it my reader? Has the Spirit of God wrought such a love for God's word in you?

In this day many are turning from the truth unto fables.

May God give you to value the scriptures, to hide them in your heart, to think over them, and to esteem them more than thousands of gold and silver.

LESSONS FROM THE NEEDLE

SOME little time ago a question was asked through one of the London papers, "What instrument has been the most useful to mankind"? Were I to ask the question of both old and young present, you would probably fail to give the answer that secured the prize.

What was it? Let me ask you another question. What instrument was used when Johnny came home the other day with his coat all torn? Why, Nellie knows what it was; the same that was used so well by mother when her pinafore was torn. *The needle.*

Yes, it was "the needle" that was given

as the answer to the above question, and got the prize.

Why, mother, it may be, can do without other servants in her house, but this little servant she must have. I was just thinking what useful little servants of the Lord Jesus you children might be in your households, and to all around, were you to let others know the blessed truths of Jesus, of God's salvation, and of the cleansing power of the blood of Jesus.

Oh, boys and girls, if you know Christ for yourselves, tell others !

“Tell to all around,
What a Saviour you have found.”

Then, like the little needle, you will be a most useful servant. Let us seek to learn some lessons from the needle.

The needle has three important qualities.

First. It is single-eyed.

Second. It is sharp-pointed.

Third. It is shining bright.

First, you remember what the Lord Jesus says about a single eye. "When thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light" (Luke xi. 34). He would have us single-eyed for His glory in all we do. A single eye for a single object, and that object the Lord Himself.

When the jailer cried out, "What must I do to be saved"? the answer was, "Believe on the *Lord Jesus Christ*, and thou shalt be saved." The Lord Jesus was the object for the eye of faith, and the result was *salvation*. If you have turned your eye to Him, keep it there.

Paul could say, "One thing I do." He kept his eye on the right Person in the right place.

What a single-eyed servant he was! And none were so used of the Lord in His service. I have heard of a Sunday-school teacher

who so longed to be true and whole-hearted for the Lord, that he cut out on his desk, where he sat in his office, these three words. "*A single eye,*" so as to have the thought constantly before him. Now let this desire be yours, dear children.

Second, the needle is sharp-pointed. Why, you know that if a needle be broken or blunt, mother just takes it and throws it away ; it is useless, it is not fitted or ready for its work. So scripture tells us to "be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you" (1 Peter iii. 15). If we would be useful servants, fit and ready for the Master's use, we must know and be in the enjoyment of God's salvation ourselves.

Once a preacher was preaching to a fashionable audience. At the close of his address a young lady came weeping to him, and asked how she might be saved. "Oh,"

he replied in perplexity, " I am very sorry I have hurt your feelings ; I did not intend to." Poor useless, pointless preacher, was he not ?

He knew not the Lord, nor the cleansing power of His precious blood for himself, and so could not help others. Do you know Him ? Then be ready to tell others. The Lord would have you to be out-and-out for Him in your life, and quick to run in His service.

There is a vast difference between profession and possession. Then be real yourselves, and plain and pointed in all things.

Thirdly, the needle that is useful is a shining, bright needle. No one cares for a rusty needle ; it cannot do the work, can it ? So if we would do our work well for Jesus we must be shining, bright servants. " Rejoice in the Lord alway : and again I say, Rejoice " (Phil. iv. 4).

Oh, in His service be cheerful and happy !

An African boy was once asked by a gentleman what sort of birds they had in Africa. "Birds of plumage," said the boy.

"What sort of birds are they" ? "Oh," said the little fellow, "birds with fine feathers, but no song."

How many are like that, religious and respectable professing Christians, like those fine-feathered birds, but with no song. They have never learned to sing the everlasting song of the redeemed. Let us who have learned that song be bright and happy in the knowledge of His boundless love, and may it be with us

" Joy to confess Thy blessed Name,
The virtues of Thy blood,
And to the weary heart proclaim,
Behold the Lamb of God !"

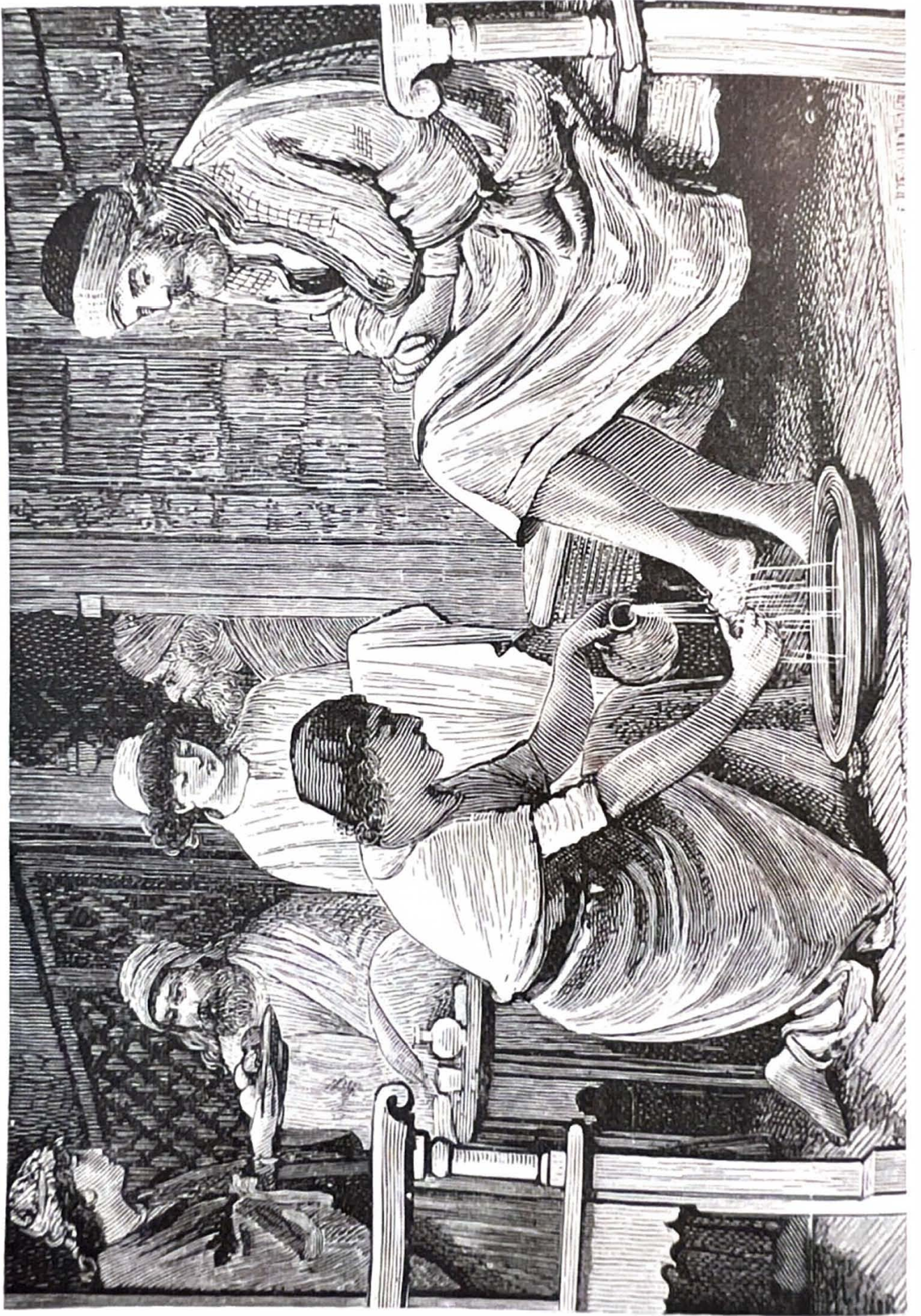
Then, to be useful servants of the Lord

Jesus, let us cultivate the single eye, the sharp point, and shining brightness.

The Lord has said—

“IF ANY MAN SERVE ME
LET HIM FOLLOW ME ;
AND WHERE I AM, THERE SHALL ALSO
MY SERVANT BE :
IF ANY MAN SERVE ME, HIM WILL
MY FATHER HONOUR.”

JOHN xii. 26.



WASHING A GUEST'S FEET IN THE EAST.

THE FEAST OF BLESSING.

F R E E
E N D U R I N G
A B U N D A N T
S I N N E R S '
T A S T E D

IN the fourteenth chapter of Luke we find the Lord Jesus directing His hearers how to act when they made a feast. Instead of inviting those who were able to repay them, they were to ask the poor and maimed, the halt and the blind ; and then He goes on to show, in the well-known parable of the great supper, how God in His great grace towards us acts after this manner.

He has a great feast of blessing for all, and sends out His servants to make it known.

It is His desire that children and grown-up people should be near Him, and thus He has provided everything that is needed for their salvation and blessing.

Now I should like to say a little to you concerning this feast of grace, and we will break up the word and use the five letters as the first letters of words which may teach us some important lessons about it.

The letter F stands first, and we will employ it to remind us that the feast is a

FREE FEAST.

Grace has spread the feast, and if grace spreads it it must be free. We could not pay for it, for we have nothing to bring, but, thank God, nothing is required.

Very often when I am inviting young people to a meeting I am asked, How

much is it? or, What is to pay? and I am always glad to be able to answer, There is nothing to pay, all is free. Thus it is with the great gathering of salvation, There is nothing to pay, all is free.

So the prophet's cry is "Ho, everyone that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price" (Isa. lv.); and this is answered by the New Testament cry, "Come, for *all* things are now ready," and again, "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

Nothing is required of us except to come and to come now.

The invitation was refused, however, by those to whom the master of the house first sent—they begged to be excused, they urged different reasons, but all with the same object. They did not wish for the

feast. They chose to occupy themselves with other things, and so would not go to the supper.

Now let us use the next letter, E, and think of the feast as an

ENDURING FEAST.

Many of the feasts in Eastern lands last for several days, sometimes for a week or longer, but God's feast of salvation is for ever. He invites us to spend eternity amid all the joys and delights of His house. He would have us in His presence at home with Himself, and that not on a visit, but eternally. We begin our joy on earth in the knowledge of His love now, and that joy is to know no end.

Then this feast is an

ABUNDANT FEAST.

There is no stint, for God is a cheerful giver.

“What is the best thing to take to a feast?” was a question asked of an audience of children, and the prompt reply was

“A GOOD APPETITE.”

And the child was right, provided there is plenty to eat ; and at this feast of blessing there is full provision.

All that man needs is provided. We have but to take our seats and hear Him say, “Eat, O friends ; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved.”

The Lord Himself tells of the blessedness of those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.

Have you a need ? Are you longing for the forgiveness of sins ? This is provided. The words of the Saviour Himself were, “Thus it behoved Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations.” If it is

your desire to know this, take your seat at the table in simple faith. It is for you, for "whosoever," for it is written, "Whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission"—that is, forgiveness—"of sins."

But not only forgiveness ; salvation, peace, joy, eternal life, and every other blessing are provided.

Thus the message is, "*All* things are now ready."

Reaching the letter S, we can speak of the feast as a satisfying feast, because it gives that for which the conscience and heart long ; or we might think of it as the Saviour's feast, because He has spread it by His death upon the cross. But I want to occupy you a little with the thought of it being a

SINNERS' FEAST,

because it is for them that all this blessing has been arranged.

Sometimes in great cities persons will provide what is called a thieves' supper, and gather together those who are known to be dishonest in order that the gospel may be preached to them. Only thieves and such-like are invited, none others may come.

Now, to the feast which God has spread only sinners are invited. It is not for those who have never done anything wrong. The Lord Himself said, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." And of Him it was truly spoken, "This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them."

You are a sinner, my reader. Of this there is no manner of doubt, for God has spoken clearly and plainly, and has said, "There is none righteous, no, not one."

After a children's meeting one evening a girl was speaking with me, and I asked her if she were good. She at once replied, "Yes! Mr. F——."

Opening my Bible, I asked her to read for me the twelfth verse of the third chapter of the Epistle to the Romans.

Slowly she uttered the words, "They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable ; there is none that doeth good, no, not one."

The tears filled the child's eyes as she saw what God Himself had stated about all, therefore about her.

Why did I show her such a passage? Because I wanted her to see her need of Christ, so that she might accept His blessed invitation and come to Him—to the feast of blessing.

Take your place then as a sinner and come.

By-and-by it will be too late. Only now is the invitation given. Only now may it be accepted.

If you look at Luke xiv. 24 you will find

a word of warning, with which the Lord closes the parable. "None of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper."

Is this blessing to be missed by you? It will be missed by many who have heard about it. Other matters have occupied them, and they have excused themselves from coming until too late. Thus it can never be a

TASTED FEAST

by them.

Many have already tasted of God's good things, and their hearts have been gladdened and their lives made bright and joyous.

Will not you come now, ere it be too late?



A SAVIOUR FOR THE CHILDREN.

“**I**S there a Saviour for a little girl nine years old?” Such was the earnest enquiry of a child. She had heard of a Saviour for men and women, but longed to know whether salvation was for a little one like herself.

Thank God there is. He, in His love to the world, took in the young as well as the old, the weak and ignorant as well as the strong and learned. The word *world* embraces every one, even you, my reader, sinful though you are. “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son,” and Jesus, the Son of God, came to be the Saviour of the world, and suffered for sinners when on the cross of Calvary.

Many boys and girls are rejoicing in the knowledge of the Saviour's grace. More than this, their lives are made more useful, for they now have the desire to please Him and to glorify His name.

How are we to do this, do you ask? Well, the *first* lesson is a home-lesson. Turn to 1 Timothy v. 4, and you will understand my meaning. Young believers are there told that they should "show piety at home, and . . . requite their parents," and that such conduct is "good and acceptable before God."

This surely means that in our every-day home life we are to walk in the fear of God, and in subjection to His word. The younger Christians, to whom the words were first addressed, were to pay back their parents, for all their kindness and care, by supporting them when in need. Thus they were to manifest godliness in their ways,

and this would be pleasing to God. Piety in the home is the very start—obedience in all right things to our parents, love and care for them especially, kindness towards brothers and sisters, consideration for servants, and thoughtfulness for others. All these graces, and many more, will result if we walk in the sense of the presence of God.

Truly there is a Saviour for children—a Saviour not only from judgment, but from the power of sin, and from the selfishness which marks so many.

Is this Saviour yours? If you know your sins blotted out by His blood, seek His face constantly, that you may learn these home-lessons and so adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.

“TIE ME TO 'EE, FAITHER.”

AT the beginning of the late severe winter, a sturdy fisherman, belonging to North Sunderland, took his little boy with him for a sail in his cobble.

The morning bade fair for a fine day ; but they had not been out many hours when the sky suddenly darkened, and one of the severest storms that has visited our bleak and rock-bound coast during the last few years broke over the scene.

The falling snow was so dense that it became almost dark, and the wind began to blow hard, increasing ere long to a perfect hurricane.

While lowering his sail with all possible



SHIP IN A STORM.

speed, the fisherman was nearly swamped by the huge waves, and his boat all but over-turned. On looking anxiously round for his little boy, he found him safe, but discovered that both the oars had been swept away. Nothing was left for them but to drift on the angry billows; and for an hour or more the frail boat was driven, at their mercy, towards the rocks.

What were they to do? Only a dark watery grave seemed open to them, and they must prepare for the worst. The fisherman could not swim, and so did not expect to escape himself; but he thought that if his child were bound to a plank he might float in safety to the shore.

The seat of the boat was speedily removed, and with a piece of stout rope he began to lash his little boy to the plank. The boy took in the situation at a glance, and, fearing to be separated from his father, said,

with tears in his little eyes, "Nay, nay, faither; tie me to 'ee, faither—tie me to 'ee." The father was much affected, and clasped the boy to his bosom; and then with a breaking heart, and an earnest prayer to God for help, did as the child desired, and secured the boy to himself.

In a few more minutes there was a lull in the storm, and a break in the clouds. The fisherman then discerned through the gloom the form of the Farne lighthouse, and that the boat was drifting towards it. The lighthouse-keepers were on the look-out, and directed by the shouts of the fisherman, they descried the boat, and both father and son were eventually saved.

Is my reader tied to Christ? Can he say in heart-reality, I am

" Safe in the arms of Jesus,
Safe on His gentle breast,
There by His love o'ershaded
Sweetly my soul shall rest."?

The Apostle Paul knew what it was to be safe in the arms of divine love when he said, “I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Rom. viii. 38, 39).

Christianity is not a mere plank of creeds or dogmas, however valuable. We would not have you tied to them. It is the knowledge of, and the love for, a Person, and that Person is the Lord Jesus Christ, the great and blessed revelation of God the Father. Are you safe, as linked with Him? If not, listen even now to His voice as He says, “I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even

so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight. All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father: neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him. Come unto *me*, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and *I will give you rest.*" (Matt. xi. 25-28.)

O sinner, there is a heaven of bliss for your soul in that little word *Me*. As another has said, "All the love and grace of the heart of God, and all rest and peace for the sinner, are contained between those two letters M and E—*Me*."

What a haven of rest there is for a tempest-tossed, sin-troubled soul! Would that He were dear to you, and that you could say, "I know *whom* I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." (2 Tim. i. 12).

You may have all knowledge, and speak with the tongue of an angel as to doctrines; you may be highly benevolent, and bestow all your goods to feed the poor; but if you have not Christ, you have *nothing*; for what is a mere profession of Christianity without Christ—the mere name without the reality, the outward profession without the inward possession? It is only sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. (1 Cor. xiii.)

Surely the little rescued lad will often think of his escape, and will be thankful that his father saved him from a watery grave by tying him to himself. Thus it is with God's salvation; it endears us to the Saviour by making Him the Object of our love, giving us a longing desire to see Him, to be like Him, and with Him for ever. (1 John iii. 2; 1 Thess. iv. 17). May Christ be your *rest*, and His coming *your desire*.



THE FINDING OF MOSES.

THE SECRET OF A HAPPY LIFE.

THERE is nothing children seem to like to hear better than a secret.

Now I am going to tell you something that is known to very few, so that it is a great secret. It is the secret of a happy life.

Most of the people I see day by day show me by their faces and their words that they do not know my secret, they are not really happy.

Where shall we turn to find the way to spend a truly happy life? It is the Bible, the book of God, that will tell us. But God used many holy men in writing His book. Moses, Jeremiah, Paul, John, and

others. Which of them shall tell us about our secret to-day? We will go to Moses, who lived 120 years, and never became feeble with age.

Where is our secret told in Moses' writings? What did he write?

"Genesis." It is not there.

"Exodus." No.

"Leviticus." No.

"Numbers." No.

"Deuteronomy." No.

What else did Moses write?

I see I must tell you. Find Psalm xc. You will see it is called in the heading, "A prayer of Moses the man of God," and those headings that are printed in Roman type are part of God's word, but the headings in italics are not.

Let us read verse 14: "O satisfy us early with thy mercy; that we may rejoice and be glad all our

days." Here is the secret of a happy life.

God's mercy in this Psalm means His loving-kindness. Everyone here knows that God is full of loving-kindness, but I ask each of you, Do you know God's mercy to yourself? I will tell you how I know it myself.

I was guilty of doing many wrong things, which must have sent me to hell, if I got what I deserved. But then I learnt that God had been so rich in mercy to me that He had sent His Son, the Lord Jesus, to die on the cross and shed His blood for my sins, so that God could wash them all away. By this I know God is kind to me, and again I ask, Do *you* know His loving-kindness to you?

Perhaps you have never thought much about your sins. If you confess them to Him now, you will prove, as I did, His

loving-kindness in putting them all away through Jesus' sacrifice.

The little word "early" in our text reminds us that if we do not come to Him while we are young, we cannot have a really joyous life, because the truly happy part of life does not begin till we come to Him, and so all the time before is really spoilt and wasted.

Notice, too, Moses does not merely say, Make us know thy mercy, but "*Satisfy* us . . . with thy mercy." There are many believing boys and girls who know God's loving-kindness to them in putting away their sins, but who are not happy, because they are always wanting something that they have not got. Perhaps a boy would like a better situation, or a girl wishes for a finer dress, and so they are not satisfied and cannot be happy. Now God's loving-kindness is so wonderful that, if we only

knew more about it, it would make us always so happy that we should not long after anything else.

A little girl I know had a doll, of which she was very fond, and one day her mother wanted her to give this doll to a poor child that had come to the house. The little girl did not like to part with her doll ; so her mother took her to a drawer, and opening it, showed her a much better doll, which she intended to give her on her birthday in a few days. Then her mother asked her again if she would give away her old doll. and she was now quite ready to part with it, having seen the better one.

This is how it should be with us. God shows us the wonderful things which He has given us that we may not trouble after the poor things of this world. We have something better.

Now I want to ask you, Are you satisfied

with the Lord Jesus, or are you planning out pleasure for yourself, and longing for some change? Oh, confess it to the Lord if He does not satisfy you, for if only you knew Him better you would be satisfied with Him.

Let us see how Moses proved the truth of our verse. You will all recollect that he was found on the river by the king's daughter, and given back to his mother to nurse till he should be old enough to leave her and go to live in the palace, as the son of Pharaoh's daughter.

Moses' parents believed in the true God, as we are told in Hebrews xi. 23; and they must have been very anxious that Moses should learn to know Him before he had to go to the palace, where only idols were worshipped. So we are very wishful that you should learn to know the Lord Jesus now, before you have to go out

into the great world around you. But Moses' parents could not tell him that Jesus had died to save him. They could only tell him that God had promised to save the poor Israelites from their slavery in Egypt, and to bring them into the land of Canaan. When Moses had grown up and become a great man in Egypt (Stephen tells us in Acts vii., that he was a *learned* man, an *eloquent* man, and a *valiant* man, he "refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter," and gave up his place as a prince.

Why did Moses do this? He had to choose between two things: "to suffer affliction with the people of God"—that is, to join the poor Israelites in their cruel bondage, or "to enjoy" in Pharaoh's palace "the pleasures of sin for a season." He chose the affliction, and he esteemed the "reproach of Christ greater riches than

the treasures in Egypt"; that is, he thought he was better off, if he were laughed at by his companions for belonging to these wretched Hebrew slaves, than if he were the richest, wisest, mightiest man in Egypt.

When he weighed his prospects these are the things that were in the scales. On one side were—

The pleasures of sin.

The treasures in Egypt.

On the other side were—

Affliction with the people of
God.

The reproach of Christ.

The recompense of the reward.

Which weighed the most in Moses' eyes? The latter. Why? Because of that "recompense" at the bottom of the scale. Moses doubtless remembered his mother's lessons, and thought of the reward God always gave to those who had faith in Him,

and he decided to share in the affliction and reproach of God's people. But, strange to say, the people, for whom he had given up his high place in the palace, refused to have anything to do with him, and he had to flee to Midian, where he spent forty long years. Ah, Moses, have you not made a mistake? Think of the influence you might have used to lighten the burdens of God's people if you had stayed in the palace, and now they are groaning under the cruel taskmasters, and you cannot help them. No, no one ever makes a mistake who gives up anything for Christ. This same Moses, Stephen tells us, God sent to deliver His people, and to lead them through the wilderness to the borders of Canaan. He could not have done this if he had stayed in the palace.

Now was not Moses' life a happy one? He tells us as much in our text: "That we

may rejoice and be glad all our days." Even the forty years in Midian? Yes, "all our days." When God gives He gives freely—with both hands, as it were. So it says, "Rejoice" one hand, and "Be glad" the other.

Now may each one of you be so satisfied with Jesus while you are young that when you have to choose, like Moses, between Christ and the world, you may, like him, give up for Christ whatever may be in the way, and then you will, like Moses, know the secret of a happy life.