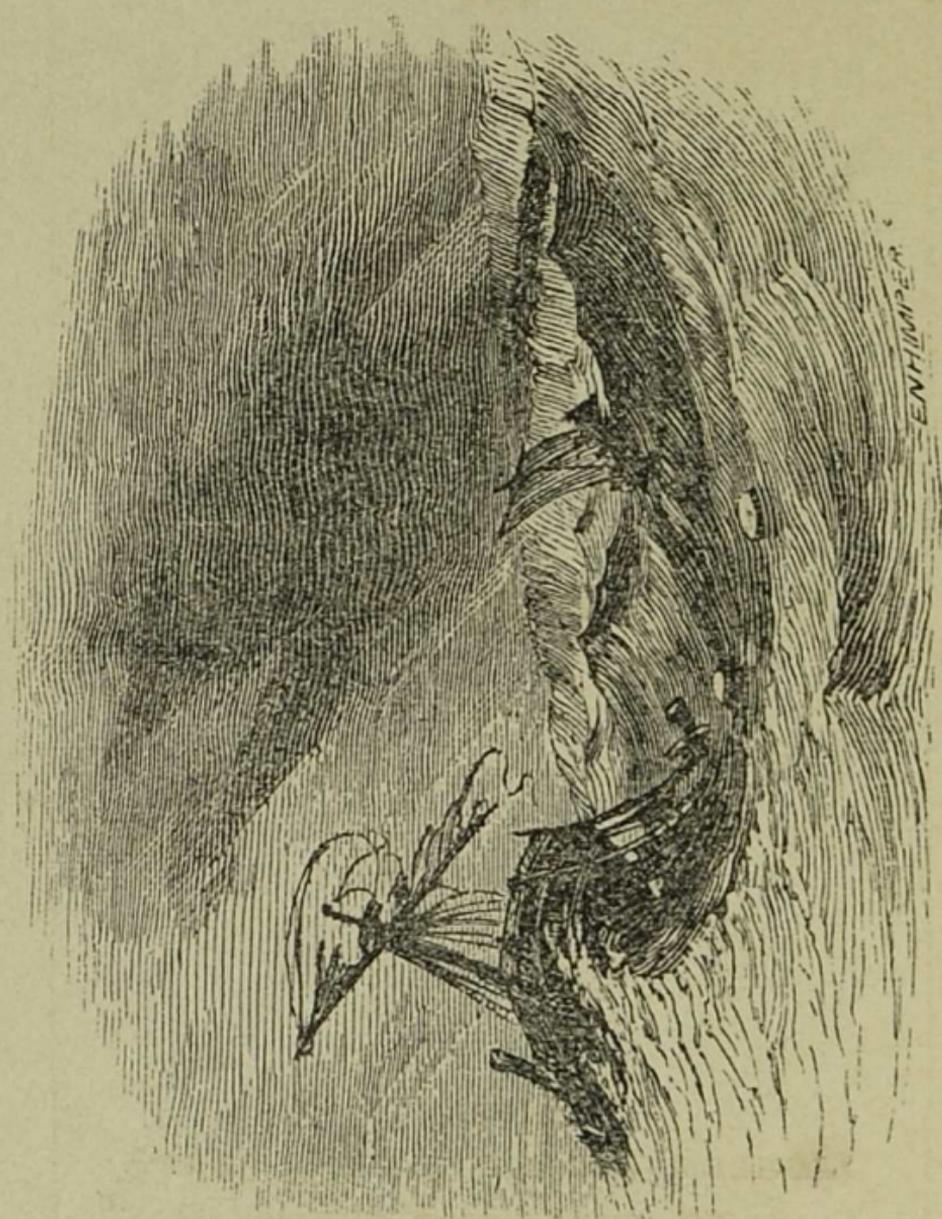


THE
DIAMOND
BRACELET.

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OF
ST. PETERSBURG.

LONDON:
J. GROOM, BAZAAR, SOHO SQUARE;
AND 185, BROAD STREET, BIRMINGHAM.

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“TIMES are getting worse and worse, boy ; we can’t keep on in this way long, and I’m afraid we must go to the workhouse after all.” — “ No, that you shan’t, mother, for I’ll go to sea first, and send you my wages.”

“ Boy, boy, never talk in that way ; never let me hear that word again.” — “ Why not, mother ? ” “ Why ? because you would break my heart. Talk

of going to sea, indeed! how should I ever think to see your face again?"

And so the subject was forbidden and dismissed; and no marvel it was full of terror and dread to her; for he was the only son of his mother, and she was a widow. Time wore on, but brought no improvement for the poor widow; yet not till she could hold out no longer, did she yield to circumstances she could not control; and her son must go to sea after all. We need not dwell on the anguish of the parting. At the nearest seaport to the village where they

lived, a passer-by was struck with the inquiring gaze of a cleanly, healthy boy, with a tidy bundle under his arm, (it was a tidy one, mind,) and asked him what he wanted?—
“I want a captain.” “There is one coming over the side of that ship.” It was a merchant ship; and so up to the captain he went, thinking all the time what a nice, kind-looking man he was, and touched his hat.
“Well,” said the captain, “and what do you want?”—“I want to go to sea, sir.” “You want to go to sea, do you! and who are you going with?”—“I should like to go with you, sir,

if you'll take me." "Have you ever been to sea before?" — "No, sir." "Well, that's a funny thing; and what do you want to go to sea for?" — "To send my mother my wages, sir, and keep her from going to the workhouse." The captain liked the honest, open look of the boy, and the way in which he spoke of his mother; and said, "Well then, and where is your character?" — "Character! I've got none, sir." "No character! oh! then I can't take you." — "Oh! do, sir; if you *would* but take me, indeed I would be a good boy." "Can't do it; it's against our rules; we never

take any one without a character of some sort ; you must try and get one some where ?” And many boys would have got one where they could, true or false, it matters not ; but William had been better brought up. Well, he was turning away with a heavy heart, for he knew it was too far to go where he came from, when the captain’s eye fell on his neat bundle. “What have you got in that bundle, boy ?” — “Only my clothes, sir.” “Only your clothes ; what’s that just there ?” — “Only my book, sir.” “What book ?” — “My Bible, sir.” “Oh ! you’ve got a Bible, have

you," said the captain, not much used to Bibles on board ships; "well, let me look at it;" and, turning it over, he saw written on the fly-leaf, that it had been presented "As a reward for diligence and good conduct at the Sunday School." — "The very thing," said the captain; and off he took the Bible to the owners, who agreed to take him; thinking, and rightly too, that any boy who had received a Bible as a reward for diligence and good conduct, was likely enough to prove a good servant. Nor had they any reason to repent their choice, as you shall hear.

The good ship sped on her way with fair winds and weather, bidding fair to reach soon the place of her destination; but it was not to be always so, for a storm came on which mocked all that skill and strength could do, and brought death in one of its most tremendous forms before them. Then was the time of trial, conscience spoke loudly within those iron hearts, and the silence of sullenness or awe fell on all alike; just then, our friend William approached the captain, and said, "Master, couldn't we kneel down and pray?"—"Pray, boy! I don't

know who can ; no one knows how." " I think I can, master ; I have sometimes prayed with my mother." — " Do, then, if you like." And so he did ; and knees that never bent in prayer, and hearts that never felt its power, were bowed beneath the force of William's few, but simple, touching words, till tears rolled down each weather-beaten face ; and when, soon after, the storm was mercifully abated, there were not wanting some who thought that it was just owing to his prayer, and held him in increased esteem and regard ever after.

They were trading to the

Baltic, and having landed their cargo, proceeded to St. Petersburg, to see all the wonderful sights that northern capital must present to the eye of strangers ; and as some of the gala days at court happened to fall just then, William and his captain mingled with the crowd that came to see the company assemble, — the ladies being dressed out in all the feathers, and furbelows, and finery they are wont to assume on such occasions.

As one of these ladies was alighting from her carriage, William, who was standing very near, observed something

glitter, and fall between the carriage wheels. He ran forward, and, picking it up, brought it to his captain, saying, "See, here's a pretty thing, master." — "You lucky fellow, why, where did you find that?" — "A lady dropped it as she was stepping out of her carriage." — "Why, it's a diamond bracelet! — it will make your fortune. I'll put it in my pocket, and take care of it for you." William waited a minute or two to consider, and then said, "I'm thinking that pretty thing's not mine, master; I must not keep it." — "Why, the lady will never know who has got it,

and cannot find you out ; it'll be the making of you." William took another minute to think about it, and again said, " No, I won't keep it ; it's not mine." — " Why, how foolish you are, boy, you'll get ever so much money for it when we get back to London." — " Well ; but suppose we should have another storm, master." Struck with the words ; and thinking, perhaps, that one couldn't pray quite so well with other people's property about them, if a storm *should* come on, the captain handed him the bracelet, saying, " Well, perhaps you are right ; there it is ; do as

you like with it." Away ran William, and soon ascertaining the lady's name, sent in an earnest message to request to speak with her (for he would not give it out of his own possession). She came; when he respectfully asked her if she had lost any thing? Glancing at her dress, she immediately exclaimed, "My bracelet!"—"Here it is, madam," said he, handing it to her; and explained how he had seen it drop as she got out of her carriage. The lady seemed greatly surprised and pleased, and remarked to a friend standing by, "He is a fine fellow; some-

thing must be done for him :” and the result was, that he obtained the handsome reward of £30 for his honesty. This the captain advised him to lay out in furs,—one of the chief commodities of the country,—which, when they reached London, realized his prediction of fetching twice as much as they cost ; and, moreover, spoke so highly of his integrity and good conduct to the ship’s owners, that they not only gave him his promotion with high encomiums, but refused all payment for the freightage of his furs.

Having now got his promotion, and a clear £60 in his

pocket, I think we can all guess what William's next object was,—only what had been uppermost in his thoughts ever since he had left England,—to see his poor old mother once more. He soon reached his long-remembered home; but, on arriving at the spot, how sad was the change he beheld!—the cottage looked deserted, the garden in disorder, and rank weeds were growing in the neat, trim paths. The shock was too much for him; he burst into tears, and sobbed aloud. Just then a friendly face appeared at the next door, and a voice cried out, “Why,

William, is that you? Don't take on so, your mother's not dead; she's only gone to the workhouse." Away he went to the workhouse, and told the matron he wanted to take away his mother. "You can't have her," said the matron; "she has but just come in."—"Oh! but I want to take her away for good."—"That's quite another thing," said the matron; "you may do that if you like." And so the mother and the son met once more; and it would be very hard to say whether her joy or wonder were the greater, as she listened to the ever-welcome tale of his well-deserved

success, and his promise that she should go back to the old cottage once more ; and no one should ever take her away again. Well, too, the promise was performed ; for, a long time after, a lady looking in upon her one day, saw her reading her Bible, in her great arm-chair, and said, “ Well, Goody, you seem getting on bravely now.” — “ Oh ! yes, ma’am ; and I trust I always shall, for my boy’s a mate now, and he says I shall never go to the workhouse again as long as *he* lives.”

The Diamond Bracelet, we have named this story, because

it was *this* which, in one sense, made William's fortune.

But the Sailor Boy possessed another Bracelet, more valuable far, which shone with gems "more precious than rubies;" and was "better unto him than thousands of gold and silver." It was—

THE CHRISTIAN'S BRACELET!

Let us mark some of the brightest Diamonds which are set in it:—

Diamond I.—Redemption.

"God so loved the world, that

He gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Diamond II.—Pardon.

"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord : Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow ; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

Diamond III.—Regeneration.

"A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I

put within you ; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.”

Diamond IV.—Righteousness.

“ The righteousness of God, which is, by faith of Jesus Christ, unto all, and upon all them that believe.”

Diamond V.—Peace.

“ Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Diamond VI.—Adoption.

“ I will give him a WHITE STONE, and in the stone a new name written.”

Diamond VII.—Holy Spirit.

“ If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him.”

Diamond VIII.—Grace.

“ My grace is sufficient for

thee ; for my strength is made perfect in weakness.”

Diamond IX.—Glory.

“ Her light (heaven) was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper-stone, (or diamond,) clear as crystal.”

Reader ! is this thy Bracelet ? What a string of priceless diamonds thy Jewel-Box contains !—

The offer of a great Salvation !

The free pardon of all thy sins !

The promise of a new and holy heart !

The covering of all thy vile-ness with a complete righteous-ness !

The possession of a peace which passeth understanding !

The admission into the family of God !

The indwelling of the Holy Spirit !

The power of Divine grace to sustain you in life, and sup- port you in death !

The assured hope of Im- mortality beyond the grave !

“ Unsearchable riches of Christ ! ” No wonder, when the

apostle was digging in such a mine of diamonds, he had to cry, "Oh! the depth!"

Where does this Bracelet lie? The Bible is the Jewel-Box which holds it; and Prayer is the key which unlocks that Jewel-Box, and makes all these heavenly gems your own!

Do you love your precious Bibles? There is something strikingly beautiful in this simple name William gave to *his*, —"MY BOOK!" as if he valued no other, and cared for no other. It was all his library. The solitary companion of his wanderings. *The Book of Books!* He unlocked it in the

storm, and showed what the key of *Prayer* could do when the helm of the *ship* could do nothing. He unlocked it in the streets of St. Petersburg, and showed what Christian principle could do in the hour of temptation. If we were to consult our Bibles more, and our own wills less, how much better we should be ! Like William, in the storms of life we should be safe, and amidst the temptations of life preserved, and in the prospect of death happy.

Let his brief history impress upon us these four lessons :—

A well-read Bible is the best certificate of character.

Prayer is the best Pilot in the storm.

Honesty is the best Policy in life.

Godliness is, always, in the end, "*Great Gain!*"

Oh! taste and see that the Lord is good:
Blessed is the man that trusteth in Him.



EARLY PIETY.

“Those that seek me early shall find me.”—Prov.
viii. 17.

HELP us, O Lord, to seek Thy grace,
Now in the morning of our days ;
For thine own words the young remind,
That they who early seek shall find.

We all Thy pard'ning mercy need,
For sins of thought, and word, and deed ;
And mercy is for us design'd,
Since they who early seek shall find.

The Holy Ghost Thou dost impart,
To teach, renew, and cheer the heart ;
We seek His grace with earnest mind,
For they who early seek shall find.

May we devote our youthful days
To humble prayer and fervent praise,
And to our hearts this promise bind,
That they who early seek shall find.

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