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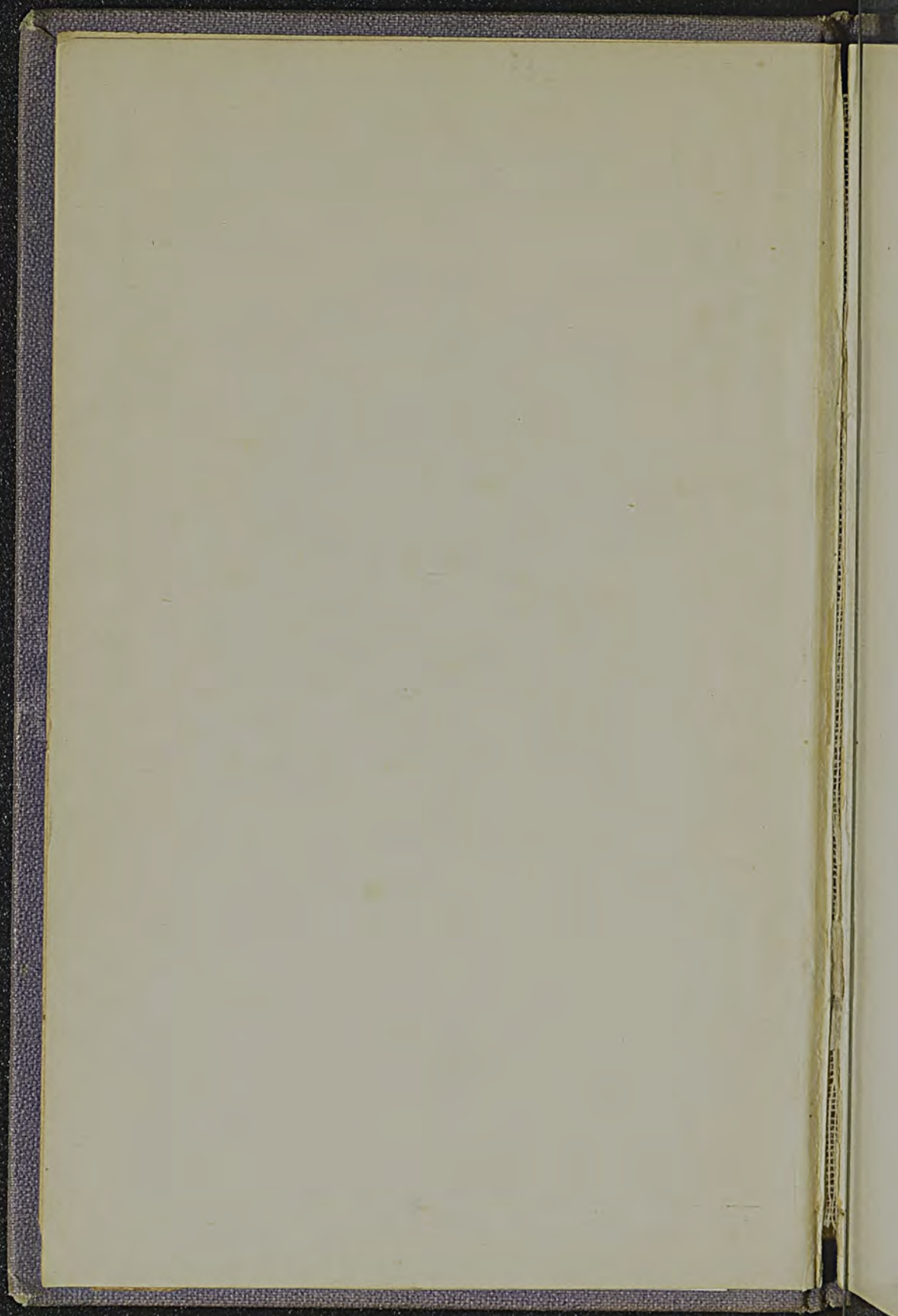
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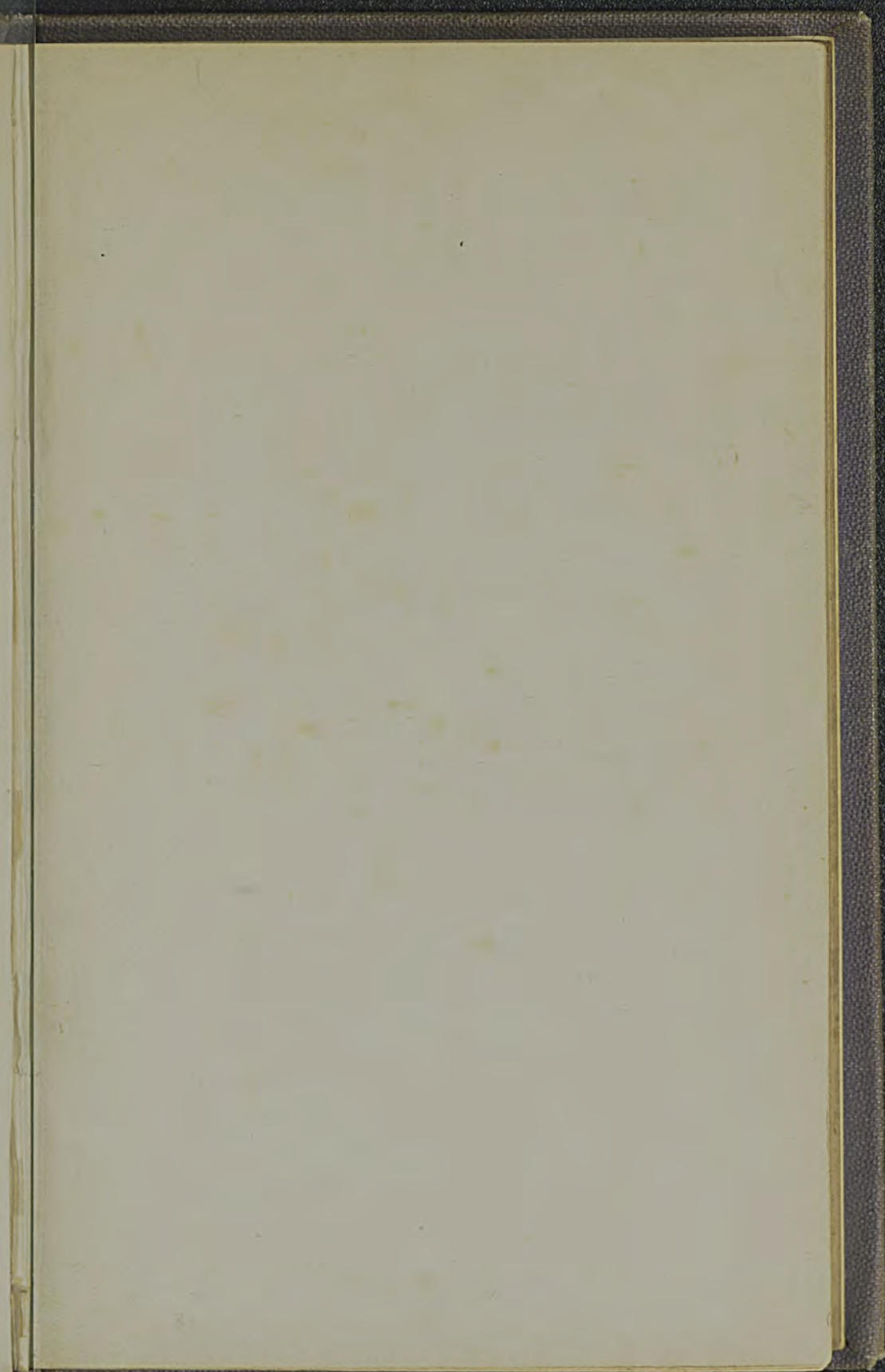
MISS RITA LEWIS

George Frederick Lewis
from his affectionate friends
J. H. Halahan C. M.

H. L. L. L.
Berkman

Jan 9 30 1874







"Ay, 'tis very near; and if you run to the place where the end of it
rests, you will find a fine pot of money."—P. 62.

SHORT STORIES

For Children.

BY

CHARLOTTE ELIZABETH.

Edinburgh:

GALL & INGLIS, 6 GEORGE STREET.

LONDON : HOULSTON AND WRIGHT.

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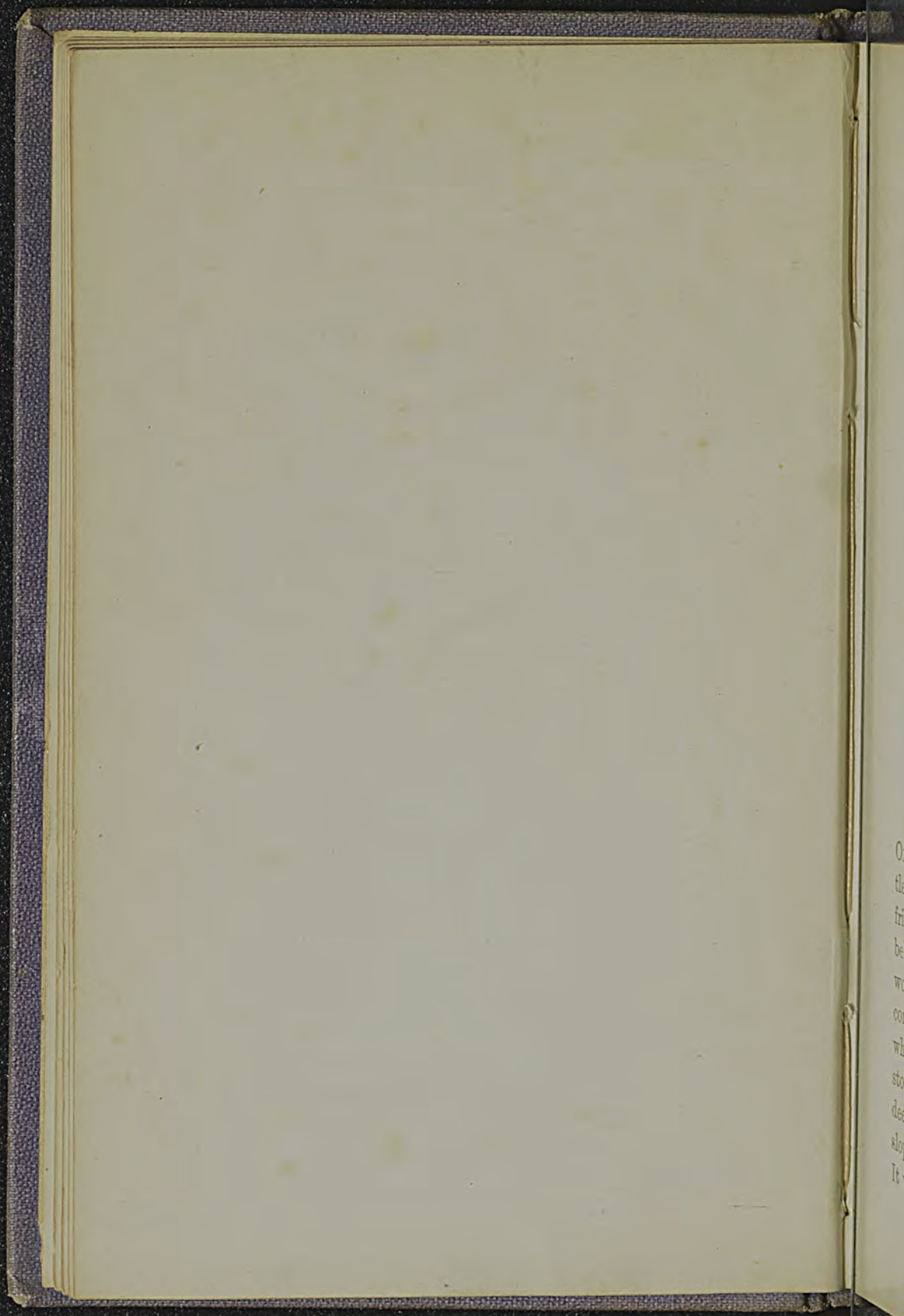
To the Reader.

CONSIDERING the extreme and everlasting importance of early instruction—referring constantly to the precept and its accompanying promise, “train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it,” I have endeavoured, in each of these lessons, to set forth the sole ground of a sinner’s hope.

The doctrine attempted to be invariably enforced, is that on which the Apostle, yea, every Apostle and Evangelist so strenuously insists, “by grace are ye saved, through faith ; and that not of yourselves ; it is the gift of God ; not of works, lest any man should boast.” But in no instance is the reader, intentionally, left to suppose that the mere acknowledgment of this truth is sufficient. Sanctification of the Spirit *unto obedience* is never omitted. Indeed the avowed object of each piece is, generally speaking, to point out some error in practice, or to enforce some positive duty, upon the ground, that, “without holiness none can see God.” The greater part of them are founded on facts, or conversations that have really occurred within my own knowledge ; and many of the subjects were suggested by young children who desired to have little books written on them.

May the Lord Jesus Christ, that great Shepherd of the sheep, whose impressive injunction was, “Feed my lambs,” smile upon these humble endeavours to bring little children unto Him !

CHARLOTTE ELIZABETH.



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The Boat.

ONCE on a very pleasant morning in summer, a gentleman and his wife left home to pass the day at a friend's house ; and as their little girl and boy had behaved so as to satisfy them that they were not unworthy of some indulgence, they were allowed to accompany their papa and mamma. The house to which they were going was a few miles distant ; it stood near the bank of a fine river, quite wide and deep, and nothing could be prettier than the gently sloping lawn that led from the house to the water. It was a great treat to little John and his sister Bess

to ride in a gig, through the pleasant shady lanes, to enjoy the smell of the sweet flowers in the hedges and fields, and to hear the small birds sing so gaily in the trees and green bushes. They saw fine gardens and houses as they went along ; but none appeared so nice as the one which they were going to visit, with its neat smooth lawn, and the river winding along the bottom of it. Corn was ripening in the fields, and fruit in the orchards—both are the gift of the merciful Lord God to His sinful creatures, who too often look upon His undeserved bounties, and eat of them too, without one feeling of thankfulness to Him who openeth His hand and filleth all things living with plenty.

The gentleman and lady to whom the house belonged, were very glad to see the children with their papa and mamma, and kindly noticed them. After getting their dinner, they had leave given them to play upon the lawn, and their papa warned them not to go too near the bank of the river ; nor on any account to get into the boat which they might find there. John and Bess had been so often told that the eye of the Lord God was always upon them, and that nothing could ever be hid from Him who hereafter would judge them, that they had, through the Divine blessing on these good instructions, been kept from many of the evil ways into which children are too apt to go ; and their parents had much confidence in them. I am afraid they were rather proud of this, and that, depending too much on themselves, and

looking too little to the Lord for help and strength, they were in greater danger than if they had been truly humble children.

Away they went, and played upon the pleasant green lawn ; till by degrees they got near the river, which shone so clear and bright with the reflection of the sun, that they could hardly keep their eyes from it. At last John cried out, " Oh, look, Bess, what a pretty boat is there ! "

" Yes," replied she, " but we must not go near it." — " We may go near it," said John, " but we must not get into it." Bess agreed to this.

If they had recollected what their mamma had told them, when teaching them the Lord's prayer, they would have been aware, that going of their own accord into temptation, after praying God not to lead them into it, was no better than mocking Him.

To the river side they went—the boat was a pretty boat indeed, painted green, with black edges ; and it was fastened to the shore by a long chain, which was sunk in the water, while the boat resting against the bank seemed fixed to it by a short hook only. ' Oh, how I should like to get into this pretty boat,' said John. " Ah," replied Bess, " that would be disobeying papa ; and you know God sees us, though he does not." John said, " I will not disobey papa ; for I will not get into the boat ; but I will sit down on the bank, and only put my feet in the boat." The foolish little boy, like too many children, and grown people too, was ready to go to the brink of sin,

and thought that if he did not break the very words of the commandment, he would not be much to blame, though his whole heart was set on the forbidden thing. But God is not satisfied with such obedience. He says, "Give me thine heart:"—and as we have but one heart, how can we give it to God, while we bestow it upon His great enemy, sin? John thought that he had settled the matter extremely well; so he sat down on the bank, which was quite level, and the water there was very deep; he put his feet into the boat, and it immediately began to move away; the poor child, frightened, started up, and in a moment fell into the river, between the boat and the shore. His little sister, who loved him dearly, stooped down in great terror, and caught hold of the collar of his coat, trying to pull him out; but alas, the water filled his pockets and his shoes, and made his clothes so heavy, that he sank lower and lower; and Bess having nothing to hold by on the land, to support her, must either have let him sink alone, or have been pulled in also.

Now see, my little readers, what an easy thing it is to join hand in hand in sin—how impossible for sinners to deliver themselves, or each other; and what a dreadful part of the misery that the wicked must suffer in hell it will be, to see those whom they loved best on earth brought to that place of torment also, through their evil example and advice, or through their neglect of warning them from the sins which they saw them ready to commit. If God had not taken

pity on these faulty children, they would have been deep in the cold water, dead and stiff before night ; and if the Lord Jesus did not shew compassion to you, and offer you salvation through His precious blood, you would have no way of escape from the far more deep and horrible pit that burns with eternal fire.

Two men returning from work in the fields saw this little girl stooping over what they knew to be a dangerous place, and ran to the spot. They came up just as she had become almost insensible from terror ; and while one drew John out of the water, the other took Bess in his arms ; and so both were carried to their parents, who were long before they could see the colour return to John's cheeks, or convince Bess that her dear little brother was not dead ; and you may judge how sorry and ashamed the children were to own their disobedience ; but the Lord put His fear in their hearts, and would not let them add to their sin by telling a lie.

John is grown up now to be a man, and has children of his own ; and Bess is a woman, and wrote this story herself for them, and for other dear children, who like to hear of God's wonderful doings, and tender mercies towards His creatures. And she assures them that though they may be sitting in their quiet homes, and think themselves as safe as can possibly be, yet if they have not learned to know that their hearts are sinful, and that there is no hope for sinners, but in the blood and righteousness of the Lord Jesus

Christ ; and if they have not begun to pray to Him for pardon, and for a new heart to love and serve Him faithfully, and if they do not daily try to do so, they are in far greater danger than John was in, when he fell into the broad, deep river.

Wide is the gate, and broad the way,
That leads mankind to sin :
And Satan's baits are painted gay,
To lure the careless in.

How may a simple child be wise,
And hidden snares discern ?
That wisdom God alone supplies ;
Seek ye the Lord and learn.

Oh learn of Him, the lowly Lamb,
His gentle voice obey,
Walk in His steps, and sure I am
You cannot lose your way.

For He was patient, meek, and mild,
And loved His Father's will ;
The humble and obedient child
He guards from every ill.

For you He bade His life-blood flow,
For you He conquer'd death ;
His love shall watch your path below,
And soothe your dying breath.

And He will bear you to the place
Where sin is known no more—
With angels to behold His face,
And His great name adore.



The Bird's Nest.

LITTLE boy, are you going to look for birds' nests? If you are, stop a moment, and mind what I say to you.

A bird's nest is a very curious thing. You have hands to work with, speech to ask for what you want, and reason to consider what you are doing; yet I think you could not make a nest if you tried for a week. The bird has no hands, only a weak little bill to use; it cannot ask for anything, and has not reason or reflection: is it not wonderful a bird should do what you cannot?

Here, then, are two things that seem to be very plain : one is, the very great goodness of God, who enables the little bird to build her nest, and who takes care she should find proper things to make it with ; and who puts green leaves on the trees to shelter it from the cold winds and hot sun.

The other thing is, the great love which the poor bird must have for its young, since it can take such very great pains to provide a warm house for them. You see the bird never makes a bed for itself. No ; when night comes it perches on the twig of a tree, pops its little head under its wing, and sleeps away till the morning sun begins to shine, and then it wakes and sings.

But when the bird is about to build a nest for its young, it sets itself to work in earnest. It gathers straw, wool, feathers, and little sticks, and with some clay it makes all fast ; and then it lays its eggs, and sits patiently upon them till they are hatched ; and then it searches every where for insects, small worms, and food of different sorts for the young ones. It returns to the nest, feeds them, sits over them to keep them warm, and chirps till they go to sleep.

My dear little boy, perhaps your mother, or aunt, or some neighbour of yours, has a baby. You have seen how fond she is of it, how she nurses and feeds it, and puts it to sleep on her bosom ; how she grieves if it is sick, and guards it from danger. And when it begins to go alone, how delighted she is ! how she watches its little steps, and

helps it along, and tells every body how cleverly it walks !

Suppose that a strange man was to come to the village, and when the mother is away, and the baby in the cradle, was to snatch it up, and carry it off ! Suppose that you saw him, and knew that he would surely cause its death, not knowing how to feed or tend it ; and that the mother would break her heart at the loss of it, what would you do. I will tell you what I think you would do ; for I dare say you are a kind-hearted little fellow. I think you would run after the man, and tell him all this, and beg him not to take the child, and assure him that God would be very angry if he did it. You would say so much, that at last he might give you the baby. You would go then to its mother and say, "See here, though I was not big enough to get the poor thing out of the man's hands by force, yet I reasoned it away from him, and here is your dear little child again." Do you not think it would be delightful to see the joy of the mother on receiving her baby ? and would you not be thankful to God for making you the means of restoring it to her again ?

Yes, every body likes courage in a good cause, and cowards deserve to be despised. The man who would steal the child was both cowardly and cruel ; and don't you think it is so to rob a poor innocent bird of her young ? When you take the nest away, the bird often sees you, and if it could speak, it would hop before you, and say, "Oh, sir, pity me

—many a hard day's work that nest cost me, and I thought that I had put it in a safe place. Many a long hour I have sat over the eggs ; and if you knew the delight which I feel when the little yellow heads of my darlings come out—or how joyful it makes me to hear them chirp, and to put food in their hungry beaks ; and how proud I am when they begin to hop and fly, indeed, indeed, you would not take them away ! You don't know the proper food for them ; nor when they have had enough ; you cannot keep them so warm as I do. My heart will break if I lose them : dear little man, do pray, oh, do restore them to me again !”

But not a word can the bird say ; it is dumb, and its little heart may break, but it cannot complain. I mean it cannot complain to you : but there is One who knows the meaning of every sorrowful chirp it gives ; God, whose tender mercies are over all His works, notices the little birds :—King David mentioned it as one of the reasons why he loved and desired God's temple, that they were protected there. “Yea, the sparrow hath found an house and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young ; even thine altars, O Lord of Hosts, my King and my God.” And our Lord Jesus Christ said, that though two sparrows were sold for a farthing, yet not one could fall to the ground without God's consent. He said that His Father cared for them. Now, you know, or if you do not, you may read it in the 12th verse of the 20th chapter of the Revelation, at the

end of your Testament, that God has a book in which every thing you do is written down ; and He will judge you out of it. If you can be so cruel, after all that I have said, as to rob a bird's nest, I cannot hinder you ; but I give you warning that God will surely punish you. He has said, "He shall have judgment without mercy that hath shewed no mercy." Do you know what that means ? You shall be judged and punished for every single sin that you have committed, without any mercy at all. And you know that if you do not share in the mercy of Jesus Christ, you cannot escape hell !—a dreadful word !—I tremble to name it ; but it is better to remind you of it now, than to leave you to go there. Dear boy, pray to God to pardon all your sins, and to cleanse you in the blood of Jesus Christ, and to give you a new heart, and make you His child ; and do be merciful to the poor birds and animals, for the sake of Him who made both them and you.

You will not go for nests now, for if you do, you will feel unhappy, since you must know that you are doing a mean, cowardly, cruel, sinful action. You will play with your top, or kite, or ball ; run races, or read some good and useful book—especially the blessed Bible : and at night you will smile to recollect how happy the bird is, sitting on her nest ; and you may repeat these lines, or, if you like, sing them :—

I thank thee, Lord, for keeping me
From such a wicked deed,

As injuring the harmless birds,
Which Thou art pleased to feed.

Oh, let me never be enticed
To walk in sinful ways !
But teach me, Lord, to do Thy will,
To pray and speak Thy praise.

Teach me to recollect the book
Of which I often heard,
Where all my deeds are written down,
And every naughty word.

Oh, cleanse me in the precious blood
Of Jesus Christ, Thy Son ;
And for His blessed sake **forgive**
The evils I have done.

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The Red Berries.

HENRY WILSON was an only child, very dear to his papa and mamma, who took great pleasure in teaching him all that a little boy of seven years old could be expected to learn. They were careful to instruct him, as soon as he was able to understand their words, that we are all sinners in the sight of God, and must certainly be shut out from heaven, and after death sent to dwell in the place of torment, among evil spirits, if Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, who is himself God, one with the Father, had not mercifully taken our nature upon Him, and suffer-

ed for our sins, that we might be delivered from the wrath to come. Little Henry was likewise taught that we must not only believe in the blessed Lord Jesus as our Saviour, but also obey him as our King, doing whatsoever He in the Bible commands us to observe and do, and avoiding what He has forbidden. But as we are all inclined, by our evil nature, to break God's laws ; and as Satan, the great enemy of our souls, is always at hand to tempt us to do wrong, Henry was also informed that God the Holy Ghost, who likewise is one with the Father and the Son, condescends to dwell in the hearts of those who believe in Jesus Christ, enabling them to strive against sin, and to love and obey the Lord. Henry was also taught to pray every day for the aid of this Holy Spirit, without whose divine assistance he could do nothing pleasing in the sight of God, for it was said by our Lord Jesus Christ, " Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." (John iii. 5.)

Henry had an uncle, who was a clergyman ; his name was Morgan ; he lived in a pretty house, near his church, and had a nice garden. Mr and Mrs Wilson took little Henry with them to pay him a visit, late in the autumn, when the leaves were beginning to fall from the trees,—a sight fitted to remind us how soon we also must wither and be mingled with the dust of the earth. When a dry yellow leaf was blown across the path where they walked, and borne out of their sight by the rough breeze, Henry recol-

lected the words of the prophet Isaiah, "We all do fade as a leaf, and our iniquities like the wind have carried us away." (Isaiah lxiv. 6.)

The day after they arrived, Henry asked permission to walk by himself in the pretty garden, and his mamma said he might do so, when his lessons were finished: his papa also consented, but said, "Be sure, Henry, you do not eat anything that you find there."

Henry promised: and having said his lessons, away he ran, quite delighted, into the garden. There were a few flowers still in bloom; the China-rose hung its delicate head, and by bending down so readily, avoided having its soft pink leaves scattered by the wind that would have torn a much stronger blossom in pieces; and when the sun shone warm again, this rose looked up, as fresh and as sweet as ever. Like the pious soul that meekly bows beneath the afflictions which God is pleased to send, and, humbling itself under His mighty hand, is exalted in due time: while the proud rebellious heart, that thinks to brave His wrath, is broken and destroyed.

Several flowers, such as the Michaelmas-daisy, the dark China-aster, and others of such plain and sober colours, that they would not have been regarded among the gay flowers of summer, appeared quite valuable now that no brighter remained. So it is with the ordinary comforts which we are ready to overlook while our cup overflows with a variety of blessings; but which we learn to prize when other enjoyments are gone, and they too seem likely to depart. But the

cheerful-looking little flower, the heart's-ease, was smiling in every place, and Henry knew that it would continue all the winter under the sheltering shrubs of evergreen. Neither storms nor losses can destroy that blessed contentment which blossoms in the heart of the Christian, who knows that the protecting arm of his Saviour is still spread over him, to defend and to deliver him.

There was little fruit in the garden : here and there a bunch of grapes hung on the vine, some winter apples remained on the trees, and a few currants, that ripened very late upon a northerly wall, were peeping from among the cobwebs and yellow leaves : but nothing pleased little Henry so much as a bush, covered with berries of a deep scarlet, soft to the touch, and bright to the eye. He looked long at them, then ran round and round the neat gravel walks, but still returned, and stopped opposite the bush. Henry said to himself, "If papa had not forbidden me to eat any fruit, I should like just to pull a few of those delightful berries—how sweet they must be !"

While he was playing about, Mr Morgan came up, and asked him how he liked the garden. "Very much indeed, uncle," replied Henry. They walked a little while together. Presently they passed the bush which bore the beautiful red berries. And Mr Morgan, seeing how his nephew looked at it, said, "You must be sure not to eat any of those berries, Henry." "Oh, no, uncle," answered Henry, "papa desired me not to gather anything."

Mr Morgan said, "I know it, my dear ; and you will always find it your happiness, as well as duty, to obey your parents." After dinner there was fruit on the table—apples and pears, nuts and grapes, and currants : but Henry was disappointed at not seeing any of the fine red berries.

The next day was Sunday—Henry just walked round the garden before breakfast ; as he passed the bush, "Oh," said he, "my uncle keeps this nice fruit for himself. How mean ! he deserves to lose some of it."

This was a very naughty saying ; if Mr Morgan did wish to preserve the berries, they were his own, and he had a right to do as he pleased with them. Whatever he gave little Henry, it was the gift of his kindness ; and he did him no wrong in denying him other things—but it was uncharitable, and therefore unlike a Christian, to suppose that he refused them from a selfish motive. Thus it is that sinners entertain hard thoughts of God, notwithstanding all His love and kindness towards them. Henry was already more than half determined to commit a sin, and wanted to find excuses to blind his own conscience.

After breakfast, Henry asked leave to walk in the garden till the time came to go to church. "You may do so," said his papa, "if you walk soberly, recollecting this is the Lord's day and not yours. Beseech Him to keep your mind fixed on such things as are suitable to the Sabbath. Remember, too, Henry my charge, not to gather anything without leave."

"Yes, papa," said Henry, and walked off.

What do you think he did? First I will tell you what he ought to have done. The good advice of his papa should have been followed; he should have prayed that his thoughts might be kept on heavenly things, and his heart prepared for the service of God in His house; he should have avoided the place where he knew that he would be led into temptation, and very earnestly asked for the assistance of the Holy Spirit to oppose his evil wishes.

But, alas! little Henry did none of those things; on the contrary, he went as fast as he could to the bush, and gazed on the red berries till it seemed impossible to leave the spot without tasting them. His heart began to beat very quick, he looked about him, thought of his papa's command and advice, recollecting that it was not too late to pray to God, who both could and would keep him from sin; and then, in spite of all this, yielding to the temptation that he might have avoided, he put forth his hand, snatched several berries, and swallowed them in great haste and alarm, as he heard his papa calling to him from the gate.

The berries were not so sweet as Henry expected, but slimy, and of such a sickening taste that he was soon very sorry he had not followed the kind command which his papa had given him.

To church went naughty Henry, sad and sulky, as those usually are who feel that they have done wrong, and begin to think of the consequences, which Satan

always tries to prevent their doing till it is too late.

The psalm for the day was that very beautiful and awful one, the 139th. I cannot tell you how frightened and miserable the unhappy child felt, while his kind papa, passing his finger under the lines, seemed to point out every word that assured Henry his wickedness was all known to the Lord.

The little boy began to feel illness before the prayers concluded, but concealed it as well as he could. At last his uncle appeared in the pulpit, and gave out the text from the very psalm they had been reading. This was it : " Whither shall I go from thy Spirit ? or whither shall I flee from thy presence ? "

Mr Morgan began by describing the dreadful state of a sinner, who feels that though his wickedness may be concealed from men, yet God sees and knows it all. Presently he spoke of Adam eating the forbidden fruit, and how he tried to hide himself when he heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden. Henry was now quite sure that his uncle had seen him ; and as he thought of what he had done, he began to cry and sob most piteously. Finding it impossible to quiet him, and that he also appeared in great pain, his papa carried him out of the church, and took him home.

When laid upon his bed, little Henry was dreadfully ill, and it was plain that he had eaten something of a poisonous nature. How great was the distress of his parents ! For a long time he could not speak

but as soon as he could, it was to ask for his uncle, who came directly. "O uncle, uncle," sobbed out the boy, "do ask the Lord Jesus to forgive me ! I never will do so again."

Mr Morgan asked him what he had done.

"You know very well, uncle ; you told me of it in your sermon."

"No, my child ; I spoke of sin generally, and to all the sinners around me. If you supposed it addressed to you, it was because you knew your own guilt. I hope this may lead you to repentance."

"But God will not forgive me, uncle : I knew I was committing a great sin ; and as soon as I had done it I felt sure that He would not forgive me. And oh, uncle ! I am going to that dreadful place where liars and Sabbath-breakers, and disobedient children, and all who despise God's law, are tormented for ever !" Then he cried and screamed, and would take no comfort. If any of you had seen little Henry at that time, you would have owned that a feast of many years on all the sinful pleasures of the world would be too dearly bought at the price of such an hour as that.

Mr Morgan and his sister and brother grieved sadly ; they prayed long and fervently beside the bed of the unhappy sufferer. The life of the poor child was spared : he felt deeply on account of his sin, and it was well for him that he was taught to seek pardon from God, through the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour.

And it is for us, dear children, to cast the burden

of our guilt and sorrow on Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world, and who has promised never to cast out any who come to Him in faith.

But suppose that Henry had died immediately, from the effects of the poison : or, suppose that his heart had been hardened to go on in the ways of sin ; what would have become of him at last ?—and what will become of you, if you neglect to ask continually the help of Him who alone is able to keep you from falling, and to use that help when you obtain it ?

My little readers, and elder ones too, “pray without ceasing.” Study God’s Word, obey His laws, and seek for safety, blessing, and peace, holiness here, and heaven hereafter, only through the blood and merits of our Lord Jesus Christ, “who gave Himself for us that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.”

Can hearts endure, or hands be strong,
When God shall call the guilty throng
To stand before His throne ?
In light reveal’d each sinful deed,
And each transgressor left to plead
Unaided and alone ?

O dreadful hour ! the false disguise
That dimm’d the unbeliever’s eyes,
Too late is rent away :
See Satan, the accuser, stand
Close by the trembling sinner’s hand,
To claim him for a prey.

Be wise in time, to Jesus flee,
He died to set the captive free,
And change our fearful doom :
The Gospel feast is spread for all
Who listen to that gracious call :
"Approach—there still is room."



The Hen and her Chickens.

LET us put on our bonnets, Lucy, and give your brothers their caps ; we will go to the farm-yard, and see the young brood of early chickens that was hatched a few days ago. I know of very few scenes among the animal creation more interesting or pleasing than that which we are going to behold.

I see you are all ready ; William may run his hoop along the smooth walk, and we will lead little Frank, for the morning dew is still moist on the grass, and it would be a pity to allow him to wet his feet.

How sweetly the sun shines, while the fresh air

brings us the scent of many blossoms from the garden, and the little birds are busily employed, collecting whatever can assist them in making their nests strong, and soft, and warm. They will soon be hatching their young ones, and I know my children will not be so cruel as to rob, or even to disturb them, if they are so confiding as to build within our reach. Oh it is a sad thing when man, who is appointed to rule the inferior creatures, forgets his duty and becomes their oppressor. I never knew a person who really loved God, guilty of intentional cruelty to any creature that He has been pleased to form.

Here is a bush of sweetbrier, just come into bloom ; you may gather a small sprig of it, but be careful ; the thorns are many and sharp, though you can hardly see them, for the abundance of the leaves. It is so with most of the earthly pleasures we delight in, my children. The Lord has, indeed, given us liberally all things to enjoy, but we must be moderate and cautious in using them, or we shall find our too great eagerness after worldly blessings become hurtful, and perhaps we shall pierce ourselves through with many sorrows in pursuing them. When I look at the sweetbrier, I would think of our compassionate Saviour, who was wounded by such bitter thorns, that we might partake in the favour of God's love for ever.

Now, William, open the gate. So, Mrs Hen, you are strutting about, I see, in the midst of your chickens, very proud of them. Softly, Frank ! Do not attempt to catch the chickens ; observe how the mother ruffles

her feathers, how loudly she threatens you while running with her beak stretched out to defend her darlings. Now she calls them, and they have taken shelter under her. Stand quiet a moment, and let us consider this sight.

Do you remember, Lucy, about a month since, complaining of this very hen, that she was so fearful and shy, you never could persuade her to feed near you, as the other fowls did, laying her feathers flat, from cowardice, till she seemed so small, and she would run away, as if you had been inclined to hurt her? Look now at her eye; how boldly she fixes it upon you, watching every motion, and ready to fly in your face, if you go near her. What a change! The Scriptures tell us that "love is strong as death," and here we have an impressive instance of it. No kind of danger, as I think, would now drive this hen to flight, or induce her for a moment to forsake her chickens. Who taught her this? The eggs she sat on were, probably, few of them her own; we put them in a basket as they came to hand, and left her to hatch them. From that day nothing could tempt her to leave the nest. The sun might shine brightly, and the other fowls run cackling when called to be fed; she saw and heard it all, but never staid away from the eggs longer than to take one hasty meal every morning, and just smooth her ruffled feathers.

Day after day, for three long weeks, she denied herself every enjoyment, sitting on these eggs, and losing all care for her own comfort in the steady performance

of her duty. But while we admire this constancy in the hen, we must not forget the lesson which she seems to teach us, and which we very much need to learn ; let us ask ourselves, my dear children, if we **are** ready to bear, for the sake of Him who died for us, such privations as this poor simple fowl cheerfully bore for her chickens. Alas ! I fear, not for one day. How much need have we to look continually for the help of the Holy Spirit, that we may learn to deny ourselves, and take up our cross, and follow Christ.

Lucy, you may now scatter some of the barley that you have brought. See how anxiously the fond mother directs her little brood to the grains that seem best for them ! She pecks at one, and calls over it, and observes while they snatch it up. She must be hungry, I am sure, but how little she cares for her own wants till theirs are satisfied ! What a lesson of disinterested love is here ! What a beautiful display of Divine power in a creature, not even gifted with reason, but obeying, like a machine, the instinct implanted by the Most High ! "Marvellous are Thy works, Lord God Almighty !"

Here come the other fowls, at full speed ; they knew by your voice that you were calling the hen to feed. With what a jealous eye she watches them ! That fine cock, with his grand feathers and proud strut, is very spiteful sometimes against young chickens : it is not always that the prettiest creature is most valuable. Mind, William, he looks angry ; oh ! but see, all are sheltered, in a moment, beneath the

wings of the hen, and, bold as he is, he dares not to touch them.

Who would think that a few soft downy feathers would be such a defence for so many little living creatures like those ! But God has made every thing to answer the end He designed it for. Do you remember that beautiful psalm, the ninety-first, which describes the Divine love and protection, in terms taken, I think, from such a scene as this ? “ He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty ; ” “ He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust.” We must look at such an object as this to understand the force of these words : we must see how very safe the chickens are, so long as the hen is not removed or injured, and then, recollecting that our God cannot change, cannot fail His people, let us rejoice in our unbounded security : unbounded indeed it is, while we continue to make Him our refuge ; but, my children, how prone we are to leave that place of perfect safety, and wander about in a dangerous world without Him ! If, when the cock ran after the little chickens, one of them had refused to take shelter under its mother’s wing, and attempted to defend itself, you would hardly have pitied its fate so wilfully brought on ; yet, whenever you dare to neglect praying to God, when you run into temptation, or remain in evil company, or look for safety in any thing but Him, you commit the same folly, and a great sin ; exposing yourselves to

the danger of much worse misfortune, and eterna' punishment. You see how anxious the hen is to collect her little ones under her feathers, as well knowing they cannot be safe any where else. Does not this remind you of our Lord's tender and sorrowful address to Jerusalem? "How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" Many terrible judgments, even utter destruction, overtook that rebellious people. They would not be gathered by the Lord Jesus, who came to seek and to save that which was lost: they would not receive Him as their Saviour, nor acknowledge Him as their King, and they were delivered into the hands of those who had no pity. May we fear, lest the same condemnation should come upon us, as it surely will, if we neglect so great salvation!

Can you look at that poor feeble fowl, and behold her courage, her fortitude, her contempt of danger in the discharge of her duty, and yet doubt that, weak as we are, we can do all things through Christ, who strengtheneth us?

We will now return home, and let us pray that the lesson here given may not be in vain. Learn submission to your parents, as the little chickens obey every note of their mother. Learn not to trust to your own wisdom or strength, but be guided by the counsel of God, who teaches the simple fowls of the air. Learn patience, self-denial, and steadfastness in a good cause; and above all learn what would be

your wretched state, now and for ever, if you had not a sure refuge to flee unto in all times of danger and distress, in Him, whose love is everlasting, as His power is infinite : who openeth His hand, and filleth all things living with plenteousness ; feeding you with the bread of life, and inviting you to draw water out of the wells of salvation : for "He hath made His wonderful works to be remembered."

Holy Saviour, mighty King,
O'er me spread thy guardian wing :
When by trembling fears distress'd,
Let me fly to Thee and rest.

Call me, keep me by thy side,
Teach me there alone to hide ;
Where for safety should I flee,
If my footsteps stray'd from Thee ?

Warn me with thy gentle voice,
Point my path, and guide my choice ;
Let me, Lord, in Thee possess
Wisdom, peace, and righteousness.



Anne Bell; or, The Faults.

"Ah, butterfly! pretty butterfly! let me catch you," said Anne, as she ran after a very beautiful little red one, that was sporting over a bed of flowers.

But the butterfly did not choose to be caught: it often rested, as if to invite the child's approach; then, as soon as she stretched out her hand, away it flew, leaving her further off then ever.

Still Anne followed; at last it alighted on a rose, and seemed inclined to make a long visit, for it folded its pretty soft wings, and was very quiet. "Now,

butterfly, stay a minute, and I shall have you," said Anne, as she drew near with great caution. She struck her hand quickly down, but missed the flower, and was sadly scratched by the thorn, while the insect flew merrily off, unhurt.

Anne was now quiet angry. "Ah, naughty butterfly ! if I can but catch you, I will make you pay for all this."

She ran on, keeping close to the object of her pursuit, until it again settled itself on some long tangled grass.

"Now I *will* have you !" exclaimed the child, as she pounced upon it with outstretched hands. The butterfly was caught, and so was Anne ; for in her eagerness she lost her footing, fell head foremost, and was severely stung by some nettles that grew here and there among the grass. Her crying brought her mamma from the parlour, where she was writing. Mrs Bell lifted her little girl, and seeing how her face was marked, said, "Oh Anne, how did you get this fall ?"

Anne did not like to tell ; she knew how very often her mamma had checked the cruel sport of catching insects. She therefore said nothing, but continued crying.

Mrs Bell, seeing her hand clenched, opened it ; and there, crushed to death, was the pretty red butterfly. "So," said Mrs Bell, gravely, "I now know whose fault it was."

"It was the butterfly's fault, mamma, for leading

me such a chase ; and the gardener's fault for leaving those nasty nettles near the walks."

"If you can prove," said her mother, "that the butterfly insisted on your catching it, or that you were obliged to tumble into the long, wild grass, I may partly agree with you ; but at present I think that little Anne Bell is the person to blame ; and that the many faults which led to this disaster well deserve the punishment that they have brought."

"As if a butterfly was of any value !" said Anne ; "and I am so hurt ;" then she cried louder than before.

"This is making the matter worse," observed her mamma—"Come in ; I will apply something to relieve the pain, and talk to you about your morning's amusement."

Anne flung the dead insect away, and sullenly followed.

Mrs Bell bathed the swollen face of her child with a lotion that abated the smart ; and then placing her by her side, inquired,

"Now, Anne, how many faults did you commit in this business ?"

Anne was silent.

"Answer," said her mother.

"I suppose it was a fault to do what you bade me not to do, mamma."

"Yes, that was disobedience ; then you chose a time when you knew I was engaged, and could not observe you ; there was deceit. Reckon as I go on."

Anne counted two on her fingers, and looked much humbled.

"Wanton cruelty, Anne, is a sad, a very sad thing indeed ; and passion is another fault."

"Then I have committed four faults, mamma."

"More still, Anne—you were not only unwilling to confess the matter, but when discovered, threw the blame elsewhere, which shewed that you were hardened against the chastisement which you received : then you despised God's work, saying, a butterfly was of no value ; and were quite sullen and resentful, because I did not suffer my pity for your pain to blind me to the greatness of your offence."

"Oh, mamma," interrupted Anne, crying, "don't reckon any more, I am frightened to think how bad I have been—pray forget my faults."

"Anne," replied her mother, "I am happy that you now perceive them : at first you would scarcely allow that you had been to blame. But I have only shewn you the faults of which you were guilty within a few short minutes. Look into your heart, my child, and you will discover many other offences, daily and hourly committed : and what will it avail you that I should forget them, if the Almighty God, who knows all you do, and say, and think, should keep these faults in remembrance ?"

Anne sighed deeply, and said, "What shall I do, mamma."

"Beseech your Heavenly Father to blot them from His book, through the blood of Him who was called

JESUS, because He should save His people from their sins." (Matthew i. 21.)

Anne knelt down, and implored forgiveness in the name of her Saviour—her mother adding a petition that the Lord would create in her a new, a contrite, and merciful heart.

"I am afraid, mamma, you think me very cruel," said Anne, after she rose up, "but indeed it was not that which made me hurt the butterfly; I only wanted to look at it."

"Could you not do so as it rested on the flowers?"

"Yes, mamma, but—but—it amused me to run after it."

"And that was cruelty," said Mrs Bell, "distressing a harmless creature merely for your diversion. It was presumption too: He who made you run about, also formed this insect to fly about. The same sun warmed you both; the same air refreshed you: nay, the birds and insects are more immediately God's care, as they have nobody to feed and provide for them as you have."

"Do you think that God cared for the butterfly, mamma?"

"Undoubtedly; His tender mercies are over all His works: it is said, 'Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created.' (Rev. iv. 11.) Our blessed Lord declares, that a sparrow falleth not to the ground without His permission, and directs our attention to the care the Almighty takes of His helpless creatures. I am quite sure that the spirit of

Christ and the spirit of cruelty cannot dwell in the one breast."

"But what did you mean by my despising God's work, mamma?"

"We have no right to say of any thing it has pleased God to make, that it is of no value; and in all creation probably there is not a more beautiful object than the butterfly. I am sure none ever led me to such serious and profitable thoughts."

"How so, mamma?"

"First, as I spoke of its beauty, let me tell you that if I was to shew you in a microscope, even the speck of dust that still cleaves to your hand, you will be astonished to find it composed of the most lovely feathers, richer than those of the peacock or the pheasant. Then the little delicate fibres that stretch along its wings, the beautiful regularity of every part, and the manner in which it is enabled to move so quickly through the air, would really delight you. But above all, when I think on what the butterfly was, and what it is, the change fills my whole heart with that great event of which it is a type or representation."

"What event, mamma?"

"The resurrection of the body. You know, Anne, that the first form in which the insect always appears, is that of a worm; a creature bred in the earth, and unable to rise above it. Such creatures as you and I, Anne, who are formed out of dust, and must return to it again: and who find ourselves little disposed, and less able to rise to the contemplation of

heavenly things ; chasing some fancied pleasure, as you did the poor butterfly to-day, continually offending God in our eagerness after perishing enjoyments, that bring only bitterness and pain at last. Like the caterpillar we eat up the fruits of the earth, and often with as little sense of thankfulness to Him who gives them."

"But this is very sad, mamma—how can the thought of it afford you pleasure?"

"My pleasure arises from considering the wonderful power of God displayed in the insect, and leading me to His promise of changing my 'vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself.' (Phil. iii. 21.)"

"The worm, having surrounded itself with a sort of shell, remains enclosed like a corpse in the tomb, without life or motion : after a time the shell breaks, and gives liberty to a creature so different from the one which entered it, that I often think the butterfly was made to leave the infidel without excuse, even in the sight of men. When I trace the flight of that beautiful creature through the air, into which it could not possibly lift up itself without such a wondrous change, I am led to say, in a deep feeling of my present state, 'My soul cleaveth unto the dust ; quicken Thou me, according to Thy word.' And my spirit rises into those regions of life, and light, and joy, into which I hope, by the sufferings and merits of my glorious Redeemer, to be admitted at the close of my pilgrimage on earth."

“Oh, mamma !” exclaimed Anne, in tears, “how sorry I am that I killed the butterfly !”

“To kill or to hurt anything without sufficient cause, my dear, is very sinful—very far removed from like-mindedness to Christ Jesus. You have sadly experienced to-day that in your heart are the seeds of disobedience, passion, pride, cruelty, deceit, and indifference to the glory of your Creator, in His works. The flight of a butterfly across your path has called all these evil dispositions into action in a moment. Oh, my child, what must these hearts be in the sight of Him who is perfect righteousness and purity ! What need we have, daily, hourly, to implore the aid of the Holy Spirit to cleanse and to sanctify us, who cannot make our own hearts clean : and how should our souls bless the Lord, and all that is within us bless the holy name of Him through whom alone we can escape eternal death ; who hath redeemed us to God by His blood, and made the believer an heir of everlasting life !”

Glory to Him who made the world ;
Whose hand its flowery garment wove ;
And o'er its rolling orb unfurl'd
The banner of eternal love ;
And brought from dust the various race
Of living forms that crowd its space.

Glory to Him, whose care upholds
The works His wondrous skill hath wrought ;
Whose arm each helpless form enfolds,
Whose wisdom hath a lesson taught,

Even in the worm that crawls along,
The meanest of the reptile throng.

Glory to Him, whose power shall raise
The forms of men that sleep in earth,
And give, to His eternal praise,
The splendours of a heavenly birth ;
Bidding us burst the tomb and soar
Where sin and death are known no more !



The Moth.

COME hither, Maria, and drive that foolish little insect from the candle. He has long been fluttering round it, and now ventures so near, that the flames will catch him. See how he glides away on his pretty gossamer wings, more afraid of the friendly hand that guards, than of the destructive fire that threatens his little life.

Now he skims along the ceiling, and might there be safe ; but I much fear that the light of the candle will still tempt him. I wish we could drive him out

into the garden, where the stars are glittering beyond his reach, and the sweet cool breeze could not harm him. You do well to open the window, and we will try to chase him out. Go, pretty creature, you do not know the dangers that await you here—go to flutter in your own pure element, and leave the brightness that tempts you to your ruin.

'Tis all in vain, Maria! he will not depart. See how resolved he is to approach the candle, now soaring above our reach, now skimming quickly past us, now resting high on the wall, now buried in the folds of the curtain; but always coming near the candle in his flight. Well, we will hunt him no longer, but leave the window a little way open, and you may keep guard over the light.

Already the poor insect has returned to his dangerous station, and approaches nearer at every turn. Well done, you saved him then; but he is little thankful for your good offices. Never mind, Maria, when we have a kind action to perform, though its object be but a moth, let us not be discouraged. Gratitude is seldom found, even among men; and when disposed to complain on that point, let us consider how insensible, how unthankful are our own hearts, under the mercies which the Lord showers upon us daily; and viewing our characters as in a glass, seek by Divine grace to correct in ourselves what we feel to be so unamiable in others—what in us is so guilty.

Why did you cry out? you have scorched your finger in brushing the moth from the very edge of

the flame, and he has flown off, sadly burnt, though not disabled. I hope the lesson will be sufficient to make him keep his distance now. He suffers pain, but knows not what a valuable lesson it may give him. Thus it often is with us : we meet with events that we call unfortunate, and do not patiently examine the meaning of such messages. Nothing falls out by chance, and if in all our ways we acknowledged God, we should find Him directing our path continually : but instead of seeking instruction from what is ordered by His providential care, we judge of every thing by our own perverse will, and call events favourable or otherwise as they please us, or not—too often preferring what is forbidden and ruinous.

The moth has returned ! He is buzzing about the candle, more determined than ever to reach the flame. You have struck him rather hard, but it is in vain. You see that he only mounted out of your way, and descends again. You cannot save him—he has plunged into the blaze. See in what agony he now spins upon the table, his limbs burnt and shrivelled up. Put an end to his suffering, Maria : kill him at once—it is the only mercy we can now shew to the wretched little victim of obstinate error. It is well you have crushed him, and his span of existence is past ; but he died in the act of teaching us wisdom, though void of it himself ; and we must not lose the benefit of the parting instructions which he affords.

I see you look surprised and do not understand me. The moth certainly did not speak to us, nor was

he at all conscious of being sent for our advantage : but the scene we have witnessed is full of profitable warning. So much so, that I have often thought, the propensity of these little creatures to perish thus, is brought before our eyes that we may lay it to heart and reflect on the end of a self-willed course, and pray to be delivered from every temptation.

We must consider the moth as the type of a human being, and the candle as representing sin, which leads to death everlasting. The great enemy of mankind who first tempted Eve to transgress, constantly watches to involve us in guilt, the consequences of which, he well knows, are as fatal to our souls, as the flame was to the body of that poor insect. He clothes in such colours as may most attract us, and persuades us that we may safely play on the brink of destruction, while trusting on our own prudence and virtue that we shall not go beyond the bounds. The history of the world shews us how skilful the tempter is in adapting his baits to the various dispositions of those with whom he has to deal. Judas was covetous ; he was entrusted with the bag that contained the slender store of our blessed Lord and His Apostles. From this bag, it would seem Judas occasionally stole (see John xii. 6) ; and Satan made use of his covetousness to engage him in the blackest crime that ever man committed—he sold for money his Divine Master, whose companion he was, whose teaching he daily heard, and who, in all the beauty of His glorious character, meek and lowly of heart, holy, harmless,

undefiled, speaking as never man spake, going about doing good and pouring down continual benefits on the evil and unthankful, became an object of bargain and sale with this wretched man, and was by him delivered up to a cruel death. What an awful instance have we here of Satan's power and cunning ! We are expressly told that the devil entered into Judas Iscariot for this purpose : he had caused the prospect of a little gain to shine before his imagination, as the candle did in the sight of that moth, and the miserable sinner suffered his thoughts to dwell upon it, until the temptation became too great to be resisted, and he was fully possessed of the evil spirit. We know the dreadful end of this traitor. When he saw that Jesus was condemned, he was struck with horror at the enormity of his crime, and would even have returned the wages of iniquity, but it was too late : the blood-guiltiness that he had brought on himself clave to him ; he was driven to despair, and hanged himself ; and the Scripture, in telling us he went to his own place, clearly shews that his portion for ever is in outer darkness, where is weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth. Now, my dear child, though we cannot commit the same dreadful deed that Judas did in selling our Lord in person, yet remember that we can betray His cause, dishonour His name, and destroy our own souls, by yielding to the temptations of the same enemy. Some people are soon made angry by trifles, and for such he contrives many little vexations, until the indulgence of

their passionate temper, resisting and grieving the Holy Spirit, has destroyed all comfort, and left them a prey to sin and ruin. Some are inclined to be envious ; to these, opportunities are given, by shewing them people who excel them in beauty, riches, learning, or whatever else the world terms fortunate ; and envy and emulation are ranked with wrath and strife, and other things that shut sinners out of heaven. For the vain and idle, there are amusements worse than unprofitable, and revellings where the very name of God is forgotten, or only used in blasphemy. Every moth may find a flame round which to flutter till he falls a victim to the blaze. The friendly hand that would withhold us, and the kind voice that warns us of our danger, often excite more resentment than gratitude : experience itself, when we have been partly drawn into the snare, and suffered for it in our souls, is soon forgotten, and does not prevent our returning with fresh eagerness to the pursuit. It is the nature of sin to intoxicate, and he who begins by playing with temptation, will soon be overthrown by it.

I have been told of a lady who brought up a young bear ; it was a harmless cub when she first took it : she was assured by her friends that in time it would become dangerous, but she would not give up her plaything. After some time, when the bear had grown large and strong, she was amusing herself with it as usual, and the animal suddenly seized her between his paws, and crushed her so, that she died in

a few hours. This is much like the moth and candle—like the sinner and his sin. The lady should have given up her savage favourite, when told he would become a very bear; the moth should have flown out at the window when we opened it for him; and we ought to fly from the presence of everything that Scripture, reason, or experience tells us may end in endangering our souls. After the moth had burned himself, he certainly did not intend to suffer the same pain again; yet he returned to the candle. So it is with you, too often. You do wrong, and feel not only the bodily punishment, but the shame and deadness of spirit, and distress of mind that follow, when the heart is not hardened in guilt; yet how heedless you are, often running into the way of the same temptation again, and laying yourself open to worse consequences than before. It is a sad proof how evil we are by nature, that we always incline to what is likely to harm us, and shun what we know to be good. Are you not often more disposed for idle conversation and play, than to address the Lord in prayer? Is not a book of mere amusement taken up with livelier interest than the Bible? While making a merit of paying your little contribution to the charitable societies, do you not feel it a greater indulgence to expend money in pampering your appetite and pleasing your eye? just as the moth preferred the bright glare and close heat of that dangerous candle to the pure, fresh breeze that invited him to leave it. In all this we see the necessity of “praying always with

all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance." We not only need a new heart to hate the evil and love the good, but continual supplies also of Divine grace, to prevent our following the will of a corrupt nature, which is ever joining with the enemy of our souls, to draw us aside from the right way. We want faith: the world is ever proving itself an active enemy, and "this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." If we deeply consider that the Son of God exposed Himself to be in all points tempted like as we are, "that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest," and that as "He himself hath suffered, being tempted, He is able to succour them that are tempted," we should be more encouraged to come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. A false reliance on our own strength, leads us nearer and nearer to destruction, as the poor moth, wheeling round the candle, approached it more closely at every turn: whereas, if all our dependence was on the Lord, in whom alone we have righteousness and strength, our house would be built on a rock that could not be removed, and Satan might cause all his storms to beat on it in vain. We pray against being led into temptation. Let us shun that from which we seek to be delivered, and take comfort from this assurance, "God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will, with the temptation, also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it."

While sporting on the verge of sin,
We slight the secret voice within,
And brave the tempter's power ;
Rejoicing in the circle bright,
Where pleasure sheds her glowing light
That shines but to devour.

Great Guardian of Thy helpless band,
Extend, O Lord, Thy pitying hand
To snatch us from the snare ;
Reveal to our deluded eyes
Where, shrouded in its beauty, lies
The spectre of despair.

Man sees a path with flowers bespread,
And inly longs to bend his tread
O'er that delicious road ;
Incredulous, a track so sweet,
Can e'er conduct his willing feet
To Death's profound abode.

O Thou who bidst the day-star shine,
Illume us with its light divine,
Let each deception cease ;
Though thorny be the way, and steep,
Teach us the narrow path to keep,
That ends in lasting peace.



The Bible the Best Book.

ANNE, and her sister Ellen, had been busily employed all the morning at their lessons. Ellen finished her piece of sewing just as her sister began the last line in her copy ; and by the time that her little work-box was neatly put up in its place, Anne had wiped her pen, exclaiming, "There ! now business is done, and as it rains so fast, we are sure of a nice story from mamma."

To mamma they went ; and having satisfied her that their tasks were indeed properly done, claimed the reward. "What story shall it be ?" said mamma. "Oh, a pretty history out of the Bible, if you please, mamma," replied Ellen. "Yes," said Anne, "there are many beautiful histories in the Bible. I do love it

best of all books, for the sweet histories that are in it. I am never tired of hearing about Moses and Joshua, how they led the Israelites from Egypt to Canaan ; or of David, how he killed Goliath, and fled from Saul, and how he became king. And then about naughty Absalom, and wise Solomon, and Samuel, the little priest. Oh, there is no book like the Bible !” “So I say too,” added Ellen ; “Hagar and Ishmael—what a pretty thing that is, when the angel of the Lord shewed the fountain of water, to save the child from dying : and then about Miriam hiding herself, to watch what would become of her little baby-brother, in his ark of bulrushes ; and the history of gentle Ruth, and Queen Esther, who saved the poor Jews from death. But mamma has got the Bible open, so let us listen now, Anne, and talk afterwards.”

The children seated themselves upon two little stools, near their mother, and with smiling looks waited for her to begin. But she had something to say to them first.

“My dear children seem quite agreed that the Bible is the best book.” “Oh yes, mamma, and it is ; is it not ?” they both cried out.

“Surely, my dears. All that man’s wisdom and taste can produce, is far more inferior to the words of this blessed book than yonder scrap of red paper is to the rich fragrant roses blowing in the garden.” The children looked delighted ; mamma went on.

“Still, I am afraid that you may injure yourselves and indeed commit sin, by thinking too much of the amusement that you find in the Bible.”

"Too much, mamma?" "Yes; thinking so much of the amusement as to make you forget or disregard the instruction that it is intended to convey to our souls. There is in the Bible no idle word. It is a message from the Most High God to His sinful, ignorant creatures, given to teach them what is His holy will; and the beautiful histories which you delight in, form a part of this lesson. In the histories that you have named, and all others, we are shewn examples, whether of piety or wickedness, 'profitable,' as St Paul tells us, 'for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, instruction in righteousness;' and the object is, 'that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.' When we overlook this, we not only do wrong, but acquire a habit of trifling with holy things, and pierce ourselves through with many sorrows, by neglecting to use the means which God has given, in the manner that He has commanded."

"I believe, mamma," said Anne, "I often do this. I am forgetting every thing but the pleasure of the story."

"I do not," said Ellen; "I see the hand of God all along, and think of His wonderful providence."

"I am glad you do so," replied her mamma, "but you must observe many other things besides the providential government of God. All the parables in the New Testament, as you well know, are given to teach us our duty as Christians, and many of them are explained by our blessed Lord himself."

"Yes, mamma," said Anne; "but we are speaking of the Old Testament histories now."

“In those histories, my dear, we have a constant lesson ; and there is not one of them that does not point to the Saviour who was to come, or to duties, privileges, and promises of the gospel. When we read them, we must bear in mind the sin of Adam, and the curse which fell upon the human race, and upon the earth itself, in consequence of that sin. We must remember that man can find no favour in God’s sight, nor hope to escape everlasting death, excepting through the promised Saviour, ‘Jesus who delivered us from the wrath to come.’ We must also remember, that the sinners redeemed by Him, become ‘a peculiar people, zealous of good works ;’ and that although ‘we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God,’ yet to those who believe, exceeding great and precious promises are given of such strength and support as they need. They find God a refuge, ‘a very present help in trouble ; when their heart and their flesh fail, they find Him the strength of their heart and their portion for ever.’

“How beautifully does this appear in the whole history of David ! You delight to hear how the lovely shepherd youth met the boasting Philistine giant, and slew him with a pebble, so delivering not only himself, but the vast armies of Israel. In this, my dear children, David is a type of the Lord Jesus Christ, meeting and vanquishing Satan, our terrible foe ; and purchasing deliverance for us. David is also here a type of each humble Christian, who, having made the Lord of Hosts his only hope and strength, meets and conquers those who would de-

stroy his soul, as it is written, 'Resist the devil and he will flee from you.' Do you always recollect these things, when listening to the best of all books, the Bible?"

"Indeed, mamma," said Ellen, "I do not. It is true that I often say to myself, 'How wonderfully God delivers His people out of their dangers!' but I do not think so much about our Saviour, as it seems I ought to do."

"Alas, my child! how can such as we dare at all to think upon the Holy Lord God, or take His name into our mouths, unless at the same time we regard Him as our reconciled Father, through Jesus Christ? So awfully pure and holy is the Most High, that He is a consuming fire to all out of Christ. Every blessing, every comfort, every hope that we enjoy—health and strength, the use of our limbs and our senses, safety by day, repose at night, food and raiment—all, all are the purchase of our Redeemer's blood. He says, 'All power is given unto me in heaven and on earth.' How mercifully that power is used, let our lips confess while our souls bless the Lord."

"If we always thought of this, sister," said Anne, "every thing that we read in the Bible would make us love Jesus Christ more and more." "It ought to do so," replied her mamma, "but our ungrateful hearts are so ready to forget His benefits, and so little inclined for His service, that I fear you do not always pray for the help of the Holy Spirit, although He is given to take of the things of Christ, and shew them unto us—to bring all things to our remem-

brance—and to lead us into all truth. Our Lord says, ‘Search the Scriptures,’ ‘they are they which testify of Me.’ It is He ‘of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets did write.’ ‘To Him gave all the prophets witness.’

“Our blessed Lord is sometimes spoken of in the Old Testament under the name of an Angel. Jacob thus prays, ‘God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk, the God which led me all my life long unto this day; the Angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads.’ You take great pleasure in hearing the delightful history of Israel’s deliverance out of Egypt, and how the Lord led them through the wilderness to the land of Canaan. Do you remember that an Angel went before them?”

“Yes, mamma, and they were told not to provoke Him.”

“True, my dears : Jehovah said, ‘My name is in Him;’ and this Angel had power to forgive sins, or not to forgive them. ‘Who can forgive sins but God alone?’”

“The Jews said that, mamma.”

“Yes, Ellen; and the Jews were right. They heard Jesus Christ declare to the sick man that his sins were forgiven; and they saw a miracle performed, to prove that He had ‘power upon earth to forgive sins.’ This should have convinced them that He was indeed ‘God manifest in the flesh,’ but their hard and unbelieving hearts would not allow it. ‘Seeing they did not perceive, and hearing they could not understand.’ Shall we be like those unhappy Jews,

shutting our eyes and our ears against the blessed truths that testify of Jesus?"

"Oh no, mamma, I hope not," said Anne, very earnestly, and Ellen said the same.

"Then, my children, we must diligently seek in the Bible for what will so strengthen our faith, and assure our hearts; always praying that we be not forgetful hearers, but doers of the word. Satan, who opposed the work of our redemption, and even dared to meet and to tempt the Son of God, is always watching to draw off our thoughts from Him, whom to know is eternal life. We may take up the Bible to be interested by its histories, and delighted by the beautiful language in which they are written, yet seek no real profit from it. We may believe all that is told us of the creation, and even the whole of our Saviour's life, death, and resurrection, without being the better or the happier. It is when we look into the Bible as if it was a letter written to us, and every word of it meant for our instruction, that it becomes a light to our feet, shewing us the path to heaven. We must feel ourselves to be poor ruined creatures, and come seeking our only Saviour, Jesus Christ, in every part of the book. They who seek Him early shall find Him."

The children were very thankful to their mamma for telling them all this; and they listened very attentively, while she read to them the history of Abraham going to sacrifice his son Isaac, in the 22d chapter of Genesis. She also explained how beautifully the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus was foreshewn in it.

"But Isaac was not slain at last," said Ellen, "and our Lord was."

"Isaac was spared," said her mamma, "through the offering of another in his stead. As the death of the ram saved the life of Isaac's body, so did the precious blood of Christ deliver Isaac's soul from the bitter pains of eternal death. 'God spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all,' and the blessed Jesus was contented to be delivered up, and to die upon the cross, for the sinful children of men. Let us never cease to give honour unto Him who is adored by the angels of heaven, joining with the spirits of just men made perfect ; and glorifying Him, and saying, 'Worthy is the Lamb that was slain.'"

When with humble joy I look
In Thy sweet and holy book,
Blessed Jesus, make me see
How it testifies of Thee !

Thou, the woman's promised Seed,
Cam'st to suffer and to bleed :
But, in rising from the dead,
Thou hast bruised the serpent's head.

All along the sacred lines,
Lord, thy gentle glory shines :
Abraham Thy day could see—
May his faith be found in me !

Let me walk in holy fear,
Knowing Thou art ever near ;
Never by my heart forgot,
Though mine eyes behold Thee not.

By Thy Spirit and Thy Word
Still vouchsafe to guide me, Lord ;
Teach me now to love Thy ways,
And in heaven I'll sing Thy praise.

The Bow in the Cloud.

JOHN and Henry were returning together from their school, when a very heavy shower of rain came on, and they were glad to take shelter under some trees that grew a little way from the road side. Carefully preserving their books from being wetted, the little fellows stood close together, watching the large drops as they fell around, and listening to the noise which they made on the surface of a pretty stream, not far from their retreat.

"I wish it would stop raining," said Henry, "I am quite tired of standing here." "It will soon be over," replied John, "and then the grass will look so fresh, and the flowers smell so sweet after the shower, that the rest of our walk will be delightful. God sends rain to make the earth fruitful ; and I like to see it fall."

Presently the sun shone out beautifully ; and the rain ceased to patter upon the leaves. Our two little boys left their shelter, and returned towards the road. "Oh look, brother !" cried John, "what a lovely rainbow ! It seems so large and bright, and quite near us."

A man who was passing them on horseback heard the remark, and said, "Ay, 'tis very near ; and if you run to the place where the end of it rests, you will find a fine pot of money."

"Which end, sir," said Henry ; but the man was out of hearing, having spoken a falsehood for the sake of a silly jest. This is very wicked : it is also very cruel to deceive the young and ignorant ; for when they find themselves imposed on by bad people, they sometimes are afraid to believe what is told them by good ones.

Now Henry was a silly boy, and a little covetous, I fear : he stood quite still, and stared first at one end of the rainbow, then at the other, in great perplexity. "Come," said his brother, "we shall be late home."

"And if we take home a pot of money with us, will not that be a good excuse for staying out a little? I wish I knew which end of the rainbow it is at!" "I don't think it is at either end," observed John, "for I have seen rainbows in so many different places, that if what the man said was true, we could hardly walk a mile any way without stumbling over a pot of money."

Henry did not mind what he was saying, but went on talking to himself. "That end is certainly nearer to me, but then it is on the other side of the water, and the man must have known I could not get at it. The other is a good way off, at the top of the hill ; but a pot of money is worth trying for, and I'll have a run. Here, John, hold my book ; and if you keep it safe, may be I'll give you a handful of my silver and gold," and away ran the simpleton, over hedge and ditch. John followed him a little way, calling him back ; but poor Henry thought he wanted to get before him, and lay hold on the prize ; so he ran faster than before and John gave over the chase.

The minister, who lived very near the place, had walked out to enjoy the freshness of the air, after the rain ; from a little distance he had seen Henry start off in such a hurry ; and knowing how foolish children sometimes are about such things, he partly guessed what he was about. He pursued his walk ; and came out on the road just where John was quietly going towards his home.

The little boy made him a bow, which the minister kindly noticed, and then asked him where his brother was.

"He is gone to fetch a pot of money, sir."

"A pot of money !"

"Yes, sir ; or at least to look for one," and John told him what had passed. The minister could hardly help smiling, when he turned and saw poor Henry at a good distance, sitting on the top of a gate and looking about in all directions for the rainbow, which had disappeared while he made his way under some bushes. He did not remain there long, however, but jumped down on the other side, and continued to run up the hill.

"Pray, sir, is it true?" said John, who knew that the kind minister would not be displeased at his asking a question.

"No," replied the minister, "your brother will meet the disappointment that is usually found by those who seek for what God has never promised. The rainbow ought in a particular manner to raise our thoughts above this earth and its treasures."

"It is very beautiful, sir," said John.

"It is indeed ; and we must not forget the purpose which God has commanded it to answer. I hope you remember it."

"Yes, sir : I have learned that chapter. God made a covenant with Noah, and set His bow in the cloud, 'And God said unto Noah, this is the token of the covenant which I have established between me and all flesh that is upon the earth.'"

"Right : the dreadful wickedness of the world had provoked the Most High to destroy with a great flood every living creature, excepting Noah and those shut up in the ark with him. It was a terrible judgment, and the remembrance of it would be so alarming to us, sinful creatures, that in seeing how much evil there is around us, and feeling the wickedness of our own hearts, we should be in constant fear of such another flood, if God had not mercifully assured us that it should not be."

"Pray, sir, what is the rainbow made of ?"

"It is produced by the sun's rays falling on the watery cloud : you may sometimes see such colours when they shine through a glass of water. It is probable that the rainbow appeared as it does now from the creation : but it was not till the days of Noah that God chose it for the token of a covenant between Him and His creatures. It is most mercifully chosen ; for its extreme beauty, and its situation in the sky, are fitted to lead the mind up to Him who sits above, ruling over all. And as the falling of heavy rains may well remind us how terribly the Lord once shewed that He can drown this sinful world, it is

very gracious at that particular time to bid us remember His promise, that He *will not*. Those who live in disobedience to God's holy laws, will hereafter be tormented in fire, though they are secure from the great drowning of a terrible flood of waters now."

John looked down, and at last said, "I am afraid, sir, sometimes, that God will punish me in that fire: for though I am but young, I can say of myself what the Bible says of the people after the flood: 'The imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth.'"

The minister looked very kindly on him, and replied, "I am glad that you so well know the sad truth of your own sinfulness, as I trust it will lead you constantly to pray that the Lord will change that evil heart, where there is no good thing, into the humble heart of an obedient child. There would be no hope for us, after this life, if God had not given us a better covenant than that with Noah, even the covenant of everlasting salvation in Jesus Christ. When we look upon the rainbow stretched over our earth, let us think of that which is round about the throne of God in the highest heavens. St John, in the Revelation, says that he saw one: and blessed indeed is he who shall appear before that throne to worship and serve God continually with the holy angels! Those who do so, are they who have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb; even Jesus Christ, the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, whose precious blood cleanses us from sin, and by the gift of whose grace we are enabled to serve God acceptably."

By this time Henry, who had turned back soon after crossing the gate, was come within a short distance of them ; and the minister kindly waited until he could overtake them. He looked foolish enough : his clothes were torn, his face very red, and he was quite out of breath. " Well, my lad," said the minister, " where is your money ?"

" The rainbow was gone, sir, and I could not find where it stood."

" And if you had, do you really believe you should have found a treasure ?"

" Why, I don't know, sir ; but there would be no harm in looking."

" Believe me, my child, there is more danger than you suppose in the indulgence of these covetous inclinations. ' The love of money is the root of all evil ;' the Apostle tells us so : and even this foolish chase of yours has done you some harm, has it not ?"

Henry looked more sheepish, and said nothing.

" Your parents, I know, are not rich ; and even the injury done to your clothes is of some consequence to them ; but your mind is injured too ; for you felt angry and disappointed when you found your labour was vain ; and if the rainbow had continued all day in your view, you would gladly have given up your time, neglected your studies and your work, and risked your health and your limbs, in following after the object of your wishes."

" But, sir, a pot of money would have made amends for all."

" No, it would have been a snare to you, making

you proud, idle, unhappy, and forgetful of God. The more you enjoyed of this world's goods, the more you would set your heart on them, and the less you would seek after heavenly blessings. 'Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.' 'Riches certainly make themselves wings: they fly away; and with your riches would fly your comfort. You would have no relish for better things, after cleaving long and closely to the dust of the earth. If riches were good for us, would the blessed Jesus have chosen a life of poverty and humility? Would He have said, 'It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God?'

"Are there no good rich men, sir?"

"Yes; there are many in whom the love of God has overcome the love of this present evil world: and who make use of His gifts to promote His glory. But these men do not run after wealth: they would willingly give up all they possess, if such were the good pleasure of the Lord. They pray to be kept from covetousness; and well know that their silver and gold will witness against them, if they use it for the gratification of their own worldly desires. We are all exposed to the temptations of Satan, and to the workings of a nature never free from sin while we remain in the flesh. How foolish, then, to heap together those things which are most likely to give the enemy opportunities of hurting our souls! Tell me, Henry, what did Judas do for thirty pieces of silver?"

"He betrayed his Master, sir."

"Yes ; he committed a sin which it is dreadful to think of, for a handful of money, because he *loved* money : and from the same cause wicked Balaam would have cursed the people of God, and delivered them up to a cruel heathen king. Covetousness is idolatry. The rainbow, I hope, has been the means of giving you a lesson. I pray God that His works may always lead you to His Word, and both be blessed to your souls."

Beautiful Bow ! in mercy given,
A token of love to earth from heaven,
When thou art beaming bright and fair,
May I ever behold the promise there !

Beautiful Bow ! when the rain drops fall,
And the cloud is dark like a funeral pall ;
When the sun has hidden his shining ray,
And the birds seek shelter beneath the spray.

Beautiful Bow ! I will look on high,
For thou wilt appear to paint the sky,
And bid earth's mourning children see
The sign of a covenant God in thee.

Beautiful Bow ! a brighter one
Is shining round the eternal throne ;
And when life's little storm is o'er,
May I gaze on that bow for evermore !



The Rose-Bud.

SIT down, Louisa, under this pleasant shade ; and listen to the story which I am about to tell you. The honeysuckle, while it defends us from the sun's rays, is so beautiful to the sight, and so fragrant to the smell, that we scarcely know whether to admire it more for its loveliness or prize it for its use.

It is thus with most of God's works, if we would but lay to heart the sweet lessons that they can teach us. But the history which you are now to hear is not of a honeysuckle. A rose-bud is the theme.

I don't know how many years it is since I planted the slip from a very fine tree, growing in a friend's garden. It was a rich deep red, or rather crimson, damask rose. The petals were soft as velvet, with a most delicate gloss : in short, the flower was so exceedingly beautiful, that I could not rest until I had, as I thought, secured such a tree to myself. I took off the slip in autumn, and placed it under shelter during the winter. Early in spring, I found that it had become strongly rooted, and then I transplanted it to the most favourite spot in my garden, taking up several valuable shrubs to make room for my rose, my precious rose-bush !

Many and frequent were my visits to the spot ; and the little plant flourished to my satisfaction. Leaf after leaf came peeping forth and unfolding its soft green upon the slender shoots. At last to my very great joy I was able to distinguish amongst them a little hard knot, which I knew would produce a bud—there was but one : and if there had been no other rose-bud in the kingdom, I could scarcely have treasured it more proudly, or set a higher value on it.

I know what makes my little girl smile : my lecture yesterday, on the folly and danger of giving our hearts to earthly objects, seems to have been rather different from my practice in this instance. But I told you it was many years ago ; and experience has

since taught me, what I shall be very glad to see you learning in earlier life, my Louisa.

Well—the bud grew : and what with fine weather and my tender care of it, there seemed to be every prospect of its becoming as grand a rose as any in my friend's garden. My impatience to see it unfold its beauteous leaves was very great ; and I well remember the joy with which I first discovered a little blush of red in the centre of its soft green covering. If I had watched as anxiously for the building of Divine grace in my own soul, what happiness I might have enjoyed ! but my heart was then set upon earthly things : and I grasped at the gifts of God in creation and providence, without ever asking myself what fruit He expected in me. Had my rose-bush put forth neither leaves nor blossoms, I should have flung it away, and made choice of another : but though I was myself as a dead plant in the garden of the visible church, I never reflected how justly the same sentence might have passed upon me.

It was now the beginning of June ; on every side the sweetest flowers were opening, and their charming colours invited my eye. Delicate pinks and bright carnations ; rich double wallflowers, and purple stocks ; tall, fair lilies, and superb convolvulus, with the star-like jasmine, and honeysuckle as bright as that over our heads, all put forth their sweets in vain. The humble mignonette threw its delightful breath around my path, and the cheerful-looking little heart's-ease spread out a bordering carpet of blue and gold.

Nay, even a moss blush-rose was in full beauty,

close beside ; but all were disregarded ; while I waited with fretful anxiety to see my expected damask flower expand, and reign king over the garden.

Alas, poor foolish, thankless mortals ! How heedlessly we pass by a thousand blessings which our God scatters about us, on the right hand and on the left, while our eyes and our hearts, our longings and our hopes are fixed on some one perishing toy, which His wisdom sees good to withhold from us.

Still, all eager for the welfare of my damask rose, I took up and threw away whatever root grew too near it. Some, which I had planted the year before, and which would not flower till this their second summer, I now regarded as quite worthless, compared with the important rose : and I tore up their tender fibres, either tossing them quite out of the garden, or carelessly putting them in some distant bed. Some magnificent tiger lilies, in particular, were thus destroyed, lest their lofty heads should come between the sunbeams and my rose—my precious damask rose-bud !

You smile, Louisa ; and at this moment so do I, at the recollection of my childish folly : but if we considered it rightly, we should find in it rather a matter for lamentation. The time so lost upon one trivial object, never can be recalled : the diligence bestowed upon it was robbery of Him whose we are, and whom we ought to serve. I do not mean that we may not, even with profit to ourselves, enjoy the sweets of His creative bounty, in the lovely works that surround us here, in a garden ; but in all cases we must use the world as not abusing it ; and inor-

dinate affection is always a sort of idolatry, highly displeasing in the sight of God. Besides, in thus extravagantly prizing one possession, we are guilty of despising others : and the destruction of my tiger lilies was but a type of that unjust love of novelty which discards old friends for new, and neglects a present privilege while looking forward to one still distant and uncertain.

But listen to the end of my story. The bud swelled to its full size ; and for several evenings I expected that the following morning would shew it expanded into a bright round flower. It still remained the same, excepting that a sickly yellowish cast stole over the green leaves that enfolded it ; and it became contracted a little on one side. The rich crimson of its head grew pale : it was soft to the touch, and all my unwillingness to believe it could not hide the truth that my hopes would be blighted. At last it hung down so shrivelled and dried up, that I could no longer doubt its fate. I plucked it from the stem, and broke it open. The canker was within ; and my damask rose-bud was scattered to the winds.

This lesson, Louisa, was not much heeded at the time. I thought but of the loss, not of the gain that it might be to me : but I have since very often thought of my damask rose-bud, and found much to meditate upon.

The canker is a disease which takes hold of the flower at a very early period, but does not shew itself until it has eaten away the principle of life in the bud. How often does secret discontent, a bad temper, or an

evil inclination, prey upon the beauty of the Christian character, destroy its promise in this life, and perhaps devour its hope for the life to come ! I watch you closely, my dear child, with feelings of far deeper interest than those with which I watched my rose-bud ; for I desire to present you to the Lord, without spot or blemish, and there are many dangers both without and within to keep my anxiety awake. Satan as a raging lion would break in and trample you down, if not fenced round by Him who is able to keep all that we commit unto Him. When I see you surrounded by prosperity, smiling in thoughtless joy, and with no trouble to cloud your mind, I sometimes tremble lest such summer rays should scorch my bud. For in seasons of great ease, the heart is often lifted up, and forgets its God. When sickness, or the little disappointments that even childhood must know, make you fretful, I fear that you should be blown from the safe shelter, where I would have you always lying still, at the Saviour's feet. The friendship of the world, and its pleasures, are like insects that creep over the leaf, secretly devouring, and defiling where they pass. Ingratitude is a blight, and pride is a canker that lies deep—so deep as often not to be seen by the eye of man—and works at the very life of the soul.

There was once a perfect flower on earth ; an undefiled one, which, exposed to every enemy that could possibly rise up against us, conquered them all by suffering their rage, and then went to bloom for ever in a glorious place. "The Rose of Sharon," was the name of this bright flower "a plant of renown." He

"grew up as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground. (Isaiah liii. 2.) For His mortal birth was obscure, and His dwelling was in the habitations of poverty. The world smiled not upon Him—it said, "He hath no form or comeliness ; and when we shall see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him," for in the beauty of holiness, the world sees nothing desirable ; and though praise is comely for the upright, a crooked and perverse generation call it weariness. This Rose of Sharon drooped under many a storm, and was wounded and torn by those whom He came to enlighten and to bless. The thorns were about His head, and their points were turned in to pierce Him, that we might escape torment. Such little helpless buds as my Louisa, cannot study too often the history of the Rose, the Lord Jesus Christ, whom they must be like upon earth, if they would blossom in the heavenly garden, where all His glories and beauties are now expanded. We cannot love *Him* too much : we cannot rise too early to seek after Him, nor visit Him too often in prayer and praise. We cannot be too anxious to root up every thing that would prevent His spreading in our hearts : nor ought we to rest till He reigns there in every affection, pleasure, and hope. Many beautiful things surround us, for which we are bound to return continual thanks to God ; but He is "the chiefest among ten thousand," and "altogether lovely." More welcome than the snow-drop, He appears in the wintry season of sorrow, to tell us that there is yet life in the world, and brighter days will come. More sweet than the violet

He invites us to search for Him in retirement, and over pays us a thousandfold by His beauty and fragrance. More pure than the lily of the valley, He is found among lowly shrubs ; and if the rich and great receive Him, He shews the loveliness of humility, and puts pride to shame. More fruitful than the vine, He overspreads the land that owns Him with rich clusters ; and says to His branches, " Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit." Nay, He is more precious than the tree of life in paradise, for to Him no flaming sword forbids the approach : but in the voice of tenderest invitation, He bids us draw nigh, and proclaims, " He that eateth Me, even he shall live by Me."

Childhood, like a budding rose,
In the world's wide garden grows :
But how often hateful sin,
Like a canker dwells within ;
All unseen by mortal eyes,
While the Rose-bud droops and dies.

Men behold the outward deed,
God the inward thought can read :
From our God we cannot hide
Envy, anger, secret pride ;
Clear as in the noon-day sun,
God can read them every one.

To the Saviour let us pray—
Lord, these cankers take away ;
Let Thy Spirit dwell within,
Guarding us from every sin,
Till gather'd by Thy tender hand,
All Thy buds in heaven expand.



The Willow Tree.

I KNEW a little girl, and a very little girl she was then, who used to take great notice of every thing about her ; but because she did not like to ask questions, she often made strange mistakes, and puzzled herself to no purpose, when she might have learned a great many useful things, which from her ignorance it was not possible she should find out of herself. This is very silly : when children have kind parents or friends willing to instruct them, they ought to be thankful, and to ask for all the information that they want.

This little girl, Eliza, among other matters, was

greatly distressed about a willow tree, which grew before her papa's house, in the little garden. It was a pretty weeping willow, but not very large. Eliza had taken notice, that, when she sat in the parlour below stairs, and looked across the street, the willow was so tall as to hide from her sight the house of a neighbour over the way : but if she went to an upper window, the tree hardly reached the knocker of the neighbour's door, and she looked over the top of it with great ease ; and the silly child thought that the willow stretched itself up, or drew itself down, as if to tease her ; and she was teased, and used to lie awake at night thinking what could be the reason of it.

At last, one morning, at breakfast, Eliza's papa seeing her constantly looking out of the window, asked what she saw there to amuse her so much. Eliza would not tell an untruth ; so she said, "I am thinking, papa, how odd it is that the willow tree should grow higher than Mr Davis's house."

"It is not nearly so high, my dear."

"No, papa, not always," said Eliza, "it was little enough when I looked at it half an hour ago, out at the study window, above : but now it is so tall that I can't see Mr Davis's chimney."

Her papa smiled, and explained to her that all the difference was owing to her looking at the tree from above or from below. And he stood up, and bade her observe that his head seemed to her higher than the opposite window, when he stood near her. Then Eliza wondered how she could have been so silly ; and was ashamed to have puzzled her little head so long.

when her kind papa would have set her right in a minute if she had asked him.

When Eliza grew up, she often thought of the willow ; and I will tell you some reflections that it brought to her mind.

There are many things of no great consequence that we keep close before our eyes, and look up to them till we fancy them very grand ; and they hide from us other things much better than themselves, as the small willow tree hid the large house from Eliza. Some children think so much of their toys that they neglect their books : others are so fond of looking into silly story-books, which they call amusing, that they have hardly any time or wish to study the blessed Bible, or listen to instruction. Some take great pride in fine clothes, and will not see how wicked and ugly, in God's sight, are the hearts which they try to hide behind these gay dresses. Many care for nothing but play, and are always about some foolish amusement or another, thinking it of more importance than knowledge and piety, because they allow it to keep these better things out of their minds. Some desire to be rich, or beautiful, or famous, when they grow up ; and never spare a look towards death and judgment, which are behind all those worldly enjoyments.

In these cases, and many more, we may suppose that we see little Eliza, with her eyes fixed on the willow, thinking how tall and grand it is ; while indeed the reason is only that she keeps so near to it, and looks up. But when, by God's mercy, children are able to look down upon what the world loves, they are like

Eliza at the study window, above stairs, able to see all the better prospects beyond, and not finding the willow at all in her way.

Solomon was a very wise king ; but he became much wiser by considering these matters. He had great riches, and learning, and all the good things of this world ; but he found that they were all "vanity and vexation of spirit." They stood in his way, and hindered him from looking to the glories of heaven. Like Eliza's willow tree, they shut out the best part of the sky, and he got weary of them. Then he sought the wisdom which God gives to those who ask it ; and found himself far happier in looking down upon the world, than ever he had been in looking up to it.

Eliza lost a great deal of time in thinking about the willow, and in running up and down stairs, while her little companions were busily employed at their task : and afterwards she was sorry to find how far they had got before her. She was quite right in wishing to understand what she saw ; but quite wrong in not applying to those older and wiser than herself. So it is in too many cases where we choose to trust to our own wisdom, and do not like to seek that which cometh from above. We often hear children say, "I don't think there is any harm in it," or, "I dare say it will not be wrong ;" when they wish to do a thing which they are afraid is not right. Now, at such times, instead of guessing about it, they should try to remember, whether the Bible does not speak of such actions as sinful—whether they are such as the holy and pure Son of God would have done, when He was

upon earth ; for we are commanded, "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus ;" and we are told to follow His example.

When Eliza was about ten years old, her papa went to live in another place ; and after she grew up to be a woman, she visited again the house where her childhood was spent. The willow tree was gone : it bore no fruit, and therefore was only for show ; and the people, who wanted something useful in their little garden, had thrown it away. Then Eliza recollected what our Lord says, in the parable of the barren fig tree : and how, because He found no fruit on it, He said, "Cut it down ; why cumbereth it the ground ?" Eliza reflected how many of her dear little friends, who used to play with her under the willow tree, were laid in the cold grave already, and she was very sad when she thought that some of them had been like the unfruitful tree, for she knew the terrible doom of such, "Cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness ; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

Dear children, can you bear to think that the righteous Judge may one day say this of you ? If He does, it must be your own fault ; for Jesus Christ has told us how willing He is to receive little children, and to bless them. Some people go on in sin for a long life, and do not hear of the love of Christ in saving poor sinners till they are quite old ; and then they look back on the years that they have so wickedly misspent, and are afraid to come in their old age to Him whom they did not serve in their youth :

but they should not be afraid to come to Him, because He will not cast them out, but will receive them, and wash away their sins in His precious blood, and give them a new heart, and enable them to pass their few remaining days in His faith and fear.

Some young people, when they hear the aged invited to repent, and to believe in Jesus Christ, that their sins may be blotted out, are so very foolish and wicked as to say to themselves, "When I am old I will do so too : there is time enough yet. I will live in pleasure, and not trouble myself now about religion ; but before I die, I will repent and believe in Jesus Christ." What ! do not children die, and middle-aged people also ? There are graves of all sizes in the church-yard. I have often seen a little coffin, that the nurse could carry under her arm, with a small baby in it that died on the lap ; and I have seen one or two men, bearing a larger child to the grave ; and I have seen six men stooping beneath the weight of a heavy coffin, containing the body of a strong, stout man in it, who seemed as flourishing a little while before as the green willow tree ; and like it was suddenly cut down. And while God is shewing us thus how frail we are, can we talk of putting off to another year the work of Him of whom the Psalmist says, "To-day, if ye will hear His voice, harden not your heart," and who said to the ungodly rich man, "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee ?" No ; you must obey Him now, because He calls you now. You are not like those poor creatures who do not know the danger their souls are in. You have

SHORT STORIES FOR CHILDREN.

Bibles to read, and the Bible tells you that you are sinners before God, and that He knows the things that come into your mind, every one of them, and will judge you for your wicked words and thoughts, as well as for your wicked ways. It tells you too that Jesus Christ died on the cross to make satisfaction for sins ; and that if you will believe in Him, they shall be remembered no more against you. And while telling you this, the Bible also tells you that "now is the accepted time ; behold now is the day of salvation." Jesus Christ must save you from the power of sin in this life, if you are saved from the punishment of sin hereafter. He even asks you to be saved. He says, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock." He stands at the door of your hearts and desires you to let Him in, that He may cast out all the evil things which are in it, and come and make it a place fit for Him to dwell in. And do you think the Son of God is to stand knocking and calling to you all the morning of your youth, and the day of middle life, and till the night of old age comes on, even if you were sure of living to be old ! and then when you find you must die at last, you will let Him in, not because you love Him, but because you would rather be happy among the blessed spirits, than be tormented for ever with the devil and his angels. Oh, do not expect that God will be so mocked. All those things which now keep you from Him will perish like the willow tree, and leave no fruit ; and you, too, like the tree, must be cut down and cast into the fire, unless you listen to His merciful call, "Come, ye

children, hearken unto me ; I will teach you the fear of the Lord." If you were a little lamb, would you not rather be taken care of by a kind shepherd, in a safe pasture, than run about the streets to be worried by dogs, and destroyed by cruel people ? Behold, Jesus is the good Shepherd, who giveth His life for the sheep, and He is willing to gather you with His arm, and to carry you in His bosom, and to give unto you eternal life ; so that you shall never perish, neither shall any pluck you out of His hand.

Bent downward, like the willow leaf,
We fix our eyes below,
Where crawl the forms of sin and grief,
And weeds of folly grow.

Look up, ye simple ones, and view
True wisdom stored in heave ;
Ye need but ask, and unto you
The precious gift is given.

Serve God in fear ; His hand shall lead
Your wandering hearts aright :
Serve Him in love ; your soul shall feed
In pastures of delight.

Serve Him in faithfulness below,
Through scenes of doubt and strife ;
In heaven He'll bless you, and bestow
A radiant crown of life.



The Glow-Worm.

It was a very fine evening in August ; Mr Bruce and his little boy and girl were walking through a beautiful shady green lane ; where the lofty trees meeting far above their heads, only afforded, here and there, an opening, through which they could see the dark blue sky, with small stars faintly twinkling upon it. Daylight had not been gone long enough to allow their brightness to appear : there was still a strong mellow tint of the twilight that is so lovely at that season : and those stars seemed few, and small, and pale, and distant, because the glorious sunshine had left so much of its power around. Thus the Chris-

tian, who has been in fervent prayer, and felt the presence of Jesus Christ, that "Sun of Righteousness," shedding light on his soul, when he looks again on the poor comforts and delights that worldly people love, sees them hardly worth his notice. God gives us many mercies ; and we must not despise the least of them, as they come from Him ; but the great mercy, with which no other can compare, is His love to our souls, in giving His only Son to redeem them from sin and everlasting death.

Something like this Mr Bruce was saying to his children as they walked along. The usual time for the children to go to rest was past ; and their father had permitted them to stay up longer, because he wanted to shew them a pretty sight. He had brought them through the shrubbery, and over a field of new-mown hay, the sweet smell of which was delicious. He now led them along this pretty lane, where the hedges were gay with honeysuckle, and the grass that bordered them was spotted with little wild-flowers. Ellen and Fred were delighted ; it was a place where they had often walked by day, but never before in the evening : and they found it as new as if they never had seen the green lane till then.

After a while they came to a spot where the trees and shrubs grew thicker ; and a great many large bramble bushes threw their branches from the top of the hedge down to the grass below ; united with spreading plants of dock and mallow, and tall thistles.

"Now," said Mr Bruce, "look about, children ; and observe the hedges."

All on a sudden, little Ellen called out, "Oh, papa, papa, there are stars in the hedge!"

Fred ran to look, and said, "I don't think stars are apt to tumble down; nor if they did, to look so small; but certainly there are some very little lights in the grass."

"Oh, very pretty, indeed, brother," said Ellen, "prettier than beads or spangles, or any thing else in the world—they must be little stars."

"Let us gather some, sister, for mamma. Look, there is a cluster of them under that great leaf: I shall soon catch them. Oh! I have burned my fingers! they are all fire."

"I rather think," said his papa, smiling, "that your fingers have been scratched by the prickly points of that thistle leaf under which you were thrusting them. The glow-worms will not hurt you; and I would rather you left them alone in their snug corner; for your rough grasp might give the poor insects pain."

"Are they glow-worms, papa?"

"Yes; and very pretty creatures too, are they not? See with what a soft, yet brilliant light they shine among the leaves, slowly moving up and down. Walk on, and you will find them more numerous. Under that broad bramble there is a cluster of them; and a little way off, you may see them scattered singly about the grass. Was not this worth coming to look at?"

"Oh yes, papa, thank you for bringing us," said both children, "but may we not take some home?"

"For what purpose?"

"To shew mamma," said Ellen.

"To see them in the house," said Fred.

"Your mamma often walks here to admire them without disturbing their comfort. However, if you wish it, I will take one back with us; and when you have examined it, how shall it be disposed of?"

"I will keep it in a box," said Fred.

"No, brother, that would be cruel," said Ellen.

"You would deprive it of its liberty," observed his father.

"Then I will put it in the garden, papa."

"That is a better thought; but why separate it from its companions and home?"

"If you would not mind the trouble of bringing it back, papa."

"Indeed, Fred, I should feel myself most unfaithful to the charge which God has given to man—the task of ruling His inferior creatures—if I considered that a trouble which would save a poor helpless insect from a lingering death. Never, my dear children, suffer yourselves to be made ashamed of what too many call the weakness of such feelings. This poor worm," continued Mr Bruce, as he carefully placed one of them in his handkerchief, "is as sensible of pain and of hunger as you are. Its present existence is its *all*: and at this moment it depends on us whether it shall end in torture, or be left to the lot assigned its harmless race. I dare not hurt this insect, Fred. I dare not, because cruelty is a distinguishing mark of the wicked. I dare not, because 'we must all ap-

pear before the judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.' If I now commit cruelty, can I then expect mercy? If I wantonly injure the creatures of God, can I think that He will acknowledge me His faithful servant? No; He has said, 'Blessed are the merciful, and in that He threatens a curse to the cruel.'

The children loved their papa's instructions; and when he had done speaking, they thanked him, and said they hoped that they should never be cruel. Then they talked again of the glow-worm.

"How beautiful it will look by candle-light," said Ellen.

They hastened home; and the children went jumping into the parlour, crying out, "Mamma, we have brought you the prettiest thing in the world."

Mamma smiled, and asked what it was.

"Oh, papa has got it in his handkerchief; come close to the candle, if you please, papa, that it may shine."

Mr Bruce laid his handkerchief on the table, and unfolded it, while the children put their heads together, expecting to be quite dazzled, when the glow-worm should appear. How great was their disappointment on beholding a little ugly dark worm, or grub, of a dirty brown colour, and no brighter than a piece of old leather.

"Oh," cried Ellen, "it is not a glow-worm."

"Indeed it is," replied her father.

"That a glow-worm, papa! oh, I think that you

have made a mistake. You picked up in the dark that ugly old grub, instead of one of the sweet, beautiful, shining glow-worms, that made the hedge look as if it were full of stars. What a pity !”

“The glow-worms,” said Fred, “are round like little balls of glass ; they are yellowish and greenish, and quite different from that old grub.”

“Well,” said Mr Bruce, laughing, “the old grub seems to have displeased you greatly by his inelegant appearance. I must try to raise him a little in your opinion.” So saying, he placed the insect on the crown of his hat ; and desiring Ellen and Fred to keep their eyes fixed on it, he carried it into a dark corner of the room accompanied by the children.

“Aha,” cried Fred, in great glee, “papa has played us a trick ; for there’s the glow-worm instead of the grub.”

“The glow-worm and the grub are the same thing,” said his mamma : and she brought the candle to shew them it was so.

Fred looked at his sister, and his sister looked at him. Their little heads were quite puzzled—so their papa led them back to the table, and began to explain the matter.

“The glow-worm,” said he, “is, as you see, a very ugly-looking insect : dark, dull, and hardly to be distinguished from the earth on which it moves. It possesses, however, a bright luminous substance, which in the absence of other light shines out beautifully. By day a thousand glow-worms might creep in your path, and be no more regarded than so many ants—

indeed they have rather a disgusting appearance, to those who admire beauty alone. But at night, when the butterflies have folded their gay wings, and the flowers have closed their cups, and even those objects which undergo no change, cannot afford us pleasure by their loveliness, because the darkness hides them ; then the poor little glow-worm throws around him his tiny, but beautiful light ; you forget his ugliness, if you have seen it ; and if you have not, you cannot believe that he is anything but a spark of brightness."

The children were delighted : and their mamma said, "If the glow-worm were as brilliant by day as he is by night, don't you think the little hungry birds would soon catch and swallow him up ? He remains safe in the shape of an ugly old grub, as you call it, till the birds are all gone to rest ; and then his beauty appears to gratify us without endangering himself. Will not this be a lesson to my children, teaching them not to judge hastily, from outward appearance ?"

"Yes, mamma," answered Ellen, "the glow-worm is like an ugly good man."

"Exactly so, my love. There are many of God's most honoured servants, who from plainness of person, or awkwardness of manner, from poverty or want of learning, from natural defect, or some other outward disadvantage, are apt, like their blessed Master, to be 'despised and rejected of men.' Such people, when all is bright about us, and the gay forms and pleasant things of the world court our eyes, may move before us in native lowliness—not seeking our

notice, nor sought out by us—spoken of, too, contemptuously, as you spoke of the old grub ; and considered almost as a blemish in society. But let the night of sorrow come—let sickness, pain, or any affliction cover the gay scenes of earth with a dark cloud, so that we look around in vain for something to delight us amongst all that we prized before—then the humble Christian shines alone in the gloom. He has light in his soul, the light of God's love, and the knowledge of His glory, and the sure hope of eternal life. Oh, it is sweet to behold such an one fully staid upon his God, and therefore kept in perfect peace, seeking not the praise of men, but letting his light so shine before them, that they may glorify the hand which kindled it. I often think, when walking abroad at night, where these little creatures abound, that they are scattered there to keep up the sweet lesson which we are told to learn from the birds of the air, and the lilies of the field. While the heavens reflect the glory of God, and the firmament displays His handiwork—while, above our heads, 'day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge,' the earth beneath our feet is never without some witness to His power, His wisdom, and His love. The glow-worm, reposing under its little canopy of humble leaves, or glittering in the dewy grass, is no less the work of God's creative hand, and the object of His providential care, than those mighty orbs which we call stars and planets, and which at such immense distances are sparkling in the sky, and rolling along in their appointed course. All speak

the praise of Him by whom the worlds were made, even Jesus the Son of God, who died for us, and of whose compassionate love to poor sinners we ought to be reminded by every object that we look upon. He who gives the sun its brightness, lights up also the little spark of the glow-worm. He who humbleth Himself to behold the things that are done in heaven, taketh thought for the meanest insect upon earth."

The Lord hath writ His glorious name
Where'er we cast our eye ;
It shines where, bright in distant flame,
The stars bestud the sky.

It sparkles in the morning dew ;
'Tis painted on the flower ;
It glows upon the lovely hue
That gilds the sunset-hour.

The cricket's chirp, the lion's roar,
Alike His praise declare ;
'Tis thunder on the sea-beat shore,
Whisper'd in summer air.

But all we see around, above
No lesson can impart,
Unless the story of His love
Be written on our heart.

And while earth's many tribes combine
Their thankful song to raise,
Oh, may He ope our lips to join
That chorus of His praise !



The Hated Task.

"It is very provoking!" said Harriet to herself, as she slowly unfolded her work, and prepared to begin a long piece of hemming; while her mamma was engaged in executing some needful work at another table.

Harriet began her task still talking to herself, "Yes, it is provoking, and out of all reason, that I must sit here so long, doing what any poor child in the parish-school would gladly do for me, and even three times as much to earn a halfpenny; and all the while the sun is shining, and the air so pleasant; most of the ragged children in the village are out at play now, I

dare say ; and I, a young lady, must be kept slaving here, only because I am a young lady, and can afford to pass my time as I like best. It is very provoking."

When people feel ill-tempered and discontented, they generally look sulky. Harriet's mamma soon saw that something was wrong with her little girl, who sat very awkwardly upon her seat, with her feet turned in, and her head poked out, and her shoulders a great deal higher than they needed to be. Her mamma found fault with her, and desired that she would sit upright ; but though Harriet dared not to disobey, she looked more sulky than before, and worked so very slowly, that at length her mamma told her she must not leave off until she had hemmed a whole side of the muslin handkerchief, and hemmed it neatly too. Harriet, who intended to do only half that quantity in the time allotted to her, felt still more provoked—the tears rose in her eyes, but they were tears of anger ; and still repeating to herself, "Was there ever any thing so provoking!" she went on twitching out her needle with such peevish haste that she presently snapped the thread.

Her mamma observed all this, but said nothing. She finished her own employment, and then began to cut out some work, while Harriet went on as fast as she could ; and just as she brought the handkerchief for her mamma to look at, a smart shower began to fall.

"There, there," exclaimed Harriet, "I knew it would be so !"

"How did you know it?" said her mamma.

"Oh, I knew the sun would shine as long as I was cooped up here at my task, and that it would rain when I was ready to go out."

"Harriet, I am ashamed of you."

"But it is so provoking, mamma."

"I fear it is," said her mamma; "I fear you are provoking the Lord."

"I mean, mamma, that it provokes me."

"Does it provoke you to see this refreshing shower fall on the dry and thirsty ground?"

"Why no, mamma, not that exactly; but every thing."

"I am sorry to hear you speak so, Harriet; and very sorry too I was to see with what sullen looks, and improper manner you went through your whole task of sewing. I have given you time to recollect yourself; and now expect to know what was the cause of such unbecoming behaviour."

"Well, certainly, mamma, I did feel vexed at being obliged to sit at work, while the sun was shining, and I might have been enjoying a nice run in the garden."

"Then you would never study but in bad weather, I suppose?" said her mamma.

"Yes, I would study, but not often work. You know, mamma, one must be able to read, and to write, and know something of what other people know, or one would be laughed at. But as for hemming and sewing, so long as I have learned it, I cannot see the use of sitting for an hour at a time over a handkerchief, which anybody else could hem as well as I: and it is

such a charity to send all the work we can to the schools, mamma."

Harriet's mamma had been much grieved by her little girl's looks and manner that morning ; and to hear her talk in such a way made her yet more uncomfortable. She looked very grave, and said, "I am much surprised and distressed at what you say, Harriet ; but I hope to convince you how very wrong you are. It seems that you would be quite satisfied to give up your time and thoughts to whatever is esteemed by the world—the most vain and giddy part of it ; and this, too, to avoid being laughed at, and, if you spoke truly, for the sake of being admired. Is it not so?"

"To be sure, mamma, I should not like to be thought a dunce."

"But you would have no dislike to being idle and useless. You would be like a tree that bears fine leaves and blossoms, but never produces any fruit—a tree that cumpers the ground, Harriet ; and what is to be done with such a tree?"

Harriet knew very well, for she had read the parable of the fig-tree, in the 13th chapter of St Luke's Gospel ; but she did not answer.

"I see you understand me," said her mamma, "and I hope the Lord will make you understand too how great is the evil, the sin of idleness. The unfruitful tree will be cut down : the unprofitable servant will be cast into outer darkness."

"But, mamma, I am such a child ! When I am a woman I shall find plenty to do, and be very useful,

I hope. What good will come of my sitting here, to hem a handkerchief?"

"What good, Harriet! Is it not written, 'Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.' You consider it hard to give up an hour's amusement in the sunshine, for the purpose of a little sewing; but even if your work was in itself of no consequence, still the habits of industry, diligence, and self-denial, acquired in childhood, prove a blessing through life; and those who put off being useful until they grow up, will find it more difficult to become so then, than to pull down a house and build another in its place.

"How pleased you were, Harriet, when I shewed you the print of a school, where poor little Hindoo girls are instructed by ladies from England and America."

"Oh yes, mamma, that is delightful. You know I love the schools, and pray for them, and subscribe for them too."

"But what would become of the schools if there were no teachers?"

"Then there would be no schools, mamma."

"And there would be no teachers, Harriet, if all our ladies were brought up according to your plan. The little girl who will not spare one hour from her selfish amusements, for the purpose of hemming a handkerchief, is not likely, when a woman, to devote her time and talents to instruct others, in what she herself despises; neither will she be the person to sacrifice her own ease and comfort, much less to endanger her health and life, for the sake of people whom she never saw.

The very schools at home, to which you think it would be so charitable to send all your work, would not exist, if ladies were not willing to take a great deal of trouble, and make many sacrifices for their benefit.

"Self-indulgence, Harriet, is a miserable and disgraceful thing ; and oh, how opposite is it to the character of Him whose example we are commanded to follow ! The blessed Jesus pleased not Himself. He 'took upon Him the form of a servant ;' He 'went about doing good ;' He came 'not to be ministered unto, but to minister ;' and when appealed to on behalf of a sick servant, His reply was, 'I will come and heal him.' His apostles, while preaching the gospel, working miracles, and surrounded by believers who would gladly have provided them with all things, wrought, working with their own hands, that they should not be chargeable to any."

Harriet began to feel very much ashamed of herself : indeed she had been for a long time quite miserable in her own mind. True peace never can abide with selfishness and idleness. "Mamma," she said, "I will try to be diligent in whatever you desire me to do ; and then I shall be happy."

"To make you happy, my dear, your diligence must spring from a right motive : from a desire of filling up the measure of your duties in your state of life, so as best to perform the will of God, and to promote His glory, remembering that whether as a poor child, or, as you call yourself, a young lady, God calls you to be His humble, patient, and faithful servant. You cannot know that He will spare you to a riper age :

and life being so very uncertain, you are the more bound to make the very most of every day. I, your parent, give you such tasks as I hope, with the Divine blessing, will best prepare you for the active duties of life ; and your part is to accept them with prayer to God for that diligence which the Scriptures so highly commend, and with watchfulness against that slothful spirit, which they represent as ruinous both to body and soul.

“ How I pity those young ladies who, having finished their education, as it is called, find themselves in a state of idleness more wearisome than the most laborious employment ! They go lounging about the house or garden, or sit languidly down to some trifling work of fancy, or pore over some silly book, or make a gossiping visit among their neighbours, whose affairs they pry into, because they have none of their own worth attending to. St Paul cautions us against becoming tattlers and busy bodies ; but such is the character too generally found among those who despise the quiet scenes of female industry. You should read the last chapter of Proverbs, from 10th verse, Harriet ; and see what Solomon has written, by the inspiration of God, on that subject. But, if we pity the idle girl, because she has no true comfort now, what exceeding grief ought we to feel for her, recollecting that of all these wasted hours not one is forgotten before God ! That duties omitted are sins committed—that her health, strength, senses, the use of her limbs, all her knowledge, and all her ability, are so many talents which she is hiding in a napkin,

and every one of which must witness against her at the last day ! They are like the vineyard described in the 5th chapter of Isaiah : 'He fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine ; and built a tower in the midst of it, and also made a wine-press therein : and he looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes ;' fruit not worth the gathering—Oh, Harriet, this is provoking the Lord ! ”

“Dear mamma ! ” said Harriet, while tears stole from her eyes, “pray for me that I may not do thus. I have been more wicked than you can suppose ; and the Lord has known all my naughty thoughts. But I will remember the love of Jesus Christ to poor children, and beg of Him to teach and to bless me, and to guide me in the way I should go ! ”

Come let us work, while here we stay,
Work while it is call'd to-day,
Before the closing night of death
Seal our eyes and check our breath.

Earth is not a home for rest,
So polluted and unblest :
Where the Lord reveals His face,
We'll find a better resting place.

While we lie with folded hands,
Satan all rejoicing stands ;
Sloth would cast us into sleep,
Till on our slumbers death should creep.

Jesus toil'd when here below,
And to Him for help we'll go ;
Lord, appoint our task, that we,
When 'tis done, may rest with Thee.



Good and Bad Luck.

"I AM just going to take some nice cuttings, Miss," said the gardener, as Mary walked through her papa's shrubbery.

"Give me plenty of them, John," replied the young lady: "but stay, I will not set them to-day."

"Why not, Miss? the sooner the better."

"No, no; Friday is an unlucky day; to-morrow or Monday, they will have a better chance of growing: so, John, don't cut any now:" and then, as if she had said a wise thing, Miss Mary nodded her head and walked off.

Now, it happened that Mary's father was just by,

when this passed ; but some shrubs concealed him from his little girl. When she was gone, he desired the gardener to take off all the slips, and plant them about the grounds, and on no account to let Mary have one of them.

The next morning Mary ran to look for the gardener. "I want roses," said she, "and honeysuckles, and geraniums ; also gooseberries, currant-bushes, and whatever you can find."

The gardener answered he was sorry that he had not a single cutting to give her.

"Why, you told me yesterday that you had plenty for me."

"So I had, Miss ; but you were not ready for them, and master bade me set them all in his garden."

Away went Mary to complain to her papa of the disappointment. He observed, "You might have had them yesterday ; but I understood that you refused them."

"I did not *refuse* them, papa, I only put off taking them for a day."

"Why, child, your tasks were ended, your garden was ready, the weather was good, the gardener at leisure—what hindered you from taking the slips ?"

Mary would rather have been excused from answering the question, for she felt in her own mind that her reason was a very silly one. However, she told the truth, and said that she did not like to begin a work on Friday, because it is an unlucky day.

Her papa smiled, and said, "How long is it since you made this discovery ? If I remember rightly,

you were willing enough to begin a new story-book last Friday, and to cut up a new cake. What has Friday done to frighten you since it was last here ? ”

“ Nothing, papa : but I heard Sally tell the cook the beer was spoiled because it was brewed on Friday, and they mentioned a number of other things that proved what an unlucky day it is.”

“ And did they explain to you the meaning of the word ‘ luck ’ ? ”

“ No, papa : I know what it means.”

“ Well, let me hear your account of it.”

“ It means, papa—it means,” and Mary began to look about her, quite at a loss for words to explain what she did not understand—and who does understand the foolish expression ? “ Go on,” said Mary’s papa. “ I know what it means,” said Mary, “ only I can’t exactly tell you.”

“ Then I will tell you, my dear. It means, ‘ There is no God.’ Who says that in his heart, Mary ? ”

“ The fool,” she replied, recollecting the psalm. “ But, papa, I am sure that *luck* does not mean any thing so wicked as that.”

“ Who ‘ causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man,’ Mary ? ”

Mary replied, that it was “ the Lord God.”

“ Most true,” said her papa, “ but if luck could prevent their growing, this thing which you call luck must be more powerful than God.”

“ I did not mean to say that, papa ; but may not the Lord have made some days and some things more lucky than others ? ”

Her father replied, " 'Six days shalt thou labour, and do all that thou hast to do.' Such is the commandment: and do you suppose a blessing will be withheld from our work upon any one of the six, if that blessing be sought in humble prayer? The fault is our own, but they do not like to acknowledge it; and not daring openly to accuse the Most High, they are so wicked as to make strange gods to themselves: and according as they are prosperous or otherwise, good luck gets the praise, or bad luck the blame. Tell me, is not this the folly which says 'there is no God?' "

"Indeed, papa," said Mary, "it looks very much like it: I never thought about it so seriously."

"But you must learn, my dear child, to think seriously on every subject; for the Christian must walk circumspectly, watching always; remembering that it is written, 'Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.' It is terrible to think what sins are openly committed by people who believe themselves very correct."

"You know that in the third commandment it is said, 'Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain, yet how often do we hear that great and terrible name made light of by being uttered to express astonishment, alarm, or even a jest! Ought not this to make us thoughtful, that we may be sure we understand the real meaning of all that we utter?'"

Mary said that she would endeavour always to do so: her papa went on: "It is really amazing to hear the foolish things that some people will say on the

subject of luck. Not long ago, I remarked an infant, hardly ten months old, whose little face was terribly scratched in almost every part. I asked his mother how it happened, and she told me the child did it with his nails. 'Why do you not cut them?' said I. 'Oh no, sir,' she answered, 'I dare not do that, it is so *unlucky* to cut the nails of an infant.'

Mary laughed, and remarked, "I hardly ever saw a person who would set a hen on any but an odd number of eggs; they all say that an even number is *unlucky*."

"And do you not perceive, my dear, how dreadfully God is dishonoured in this instance? He without whom a sparrow falleth not to the ground, can alone cause the egg to produce a living bird; yet, with daring impiety, do His creatures presume that by adding or taking away one egg from the nest, they can give the breath of life, or withhold it. These may appear trifling things, Mary, but nothing in which the glory of God is concerned can be trivial."

"It is strange," said Mary, "that so many well educated and sensible people should believe in luck as much as the most ignorant of the poor."

"I cannot allow that any person has been well taught," replied her papa, "in whose education the Bible has been neglected: and as to their good sense, what greater proof of folly can they give than that of not liking to retain God in their knowledge? Satan is always on the watch to take advantage of such wilful ignorance. He is the father of all lies, and, amongst other things, of the false religions that prevail among

heathen nations. It is from them we have borrowed the disgraceful belief in luck. They know not the Almighty Creator of heaven and earth, and were taught by Satan to dishonour Him, by seeking direction in their enterprises from the flight of birds, the position of the stars, and the counsel of men as foolish and ignorant as themselves. They also had their lucky and unlucky days, and numbers, and names, and customs. Does it become us, to whom the Lord has given His glorious gospel, to walk on in such gross darkness, following the superstitions of heathen lands?"

"I see now, papa, how foolish I have been," said Mary. "I thought if I set my slips on Friday they would not take root, but wither and die. You have convinced me that this was indeed as much as saying in my heart, 'There is no God.'"

"My advice," said her papa, "is that you should constantly pray to be led by the Spirit of God into all truth, and search the Scriptures daily to discover the will of God. Jesus Christ was manifested to destroy the works of the devil, and that in Him his people might conquer, yea, might become more than conquerors, in the great battle against that powerful enemy.

"In this life, the victory is not so complete as to place us out of the reach of temptation, and we must watch most carefully lest in any thing we be led to dishonour God, and to grieve the Holy Spirit. Luck and chance, and good and bad fortune, are in themselves idle words; but when we consider that by acknowledging such things we deny the providence of God, it becomes exceedingly sinful to make use of

them. Those who are ignorant of God, often use the expression 'bad luck,' in the way of an imprecation. A circumstance of this kind is recorded in the Book of Numbers, the 23d and 24th chapters. We read of the king of Moab sending for Balaam, whose word he supposed to have great power, in order that Balaam might curse Israel, that they might fail, or have what is called 'bad luck' in their undertaking ; but what says Balaam himself ? Surely there is no enchantment against Jacob, neither is there any divination against Israel' (Num. xxiii. 23.)

"The believer, who in the morning with humble prayer commends himself and all his concerns into the hands of the Lord, need not fear the events of the day ; 'all things work together for good to them that love God.' 'Be careful for nothing ; but in every thing by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God.' The disappointment of your hope may become a valuable lesson—preparing you to meet with patient submission the greater trials of life ; and we may well be thankful if one flower bloom in a path which, if we were dealt with according to our sins and ingratitude, would be covered only with thorns and briers, and noxious weeds. Oh, let God be in all your thoughts, for every one of them is known to Him ; and remember those comfortable words, 'Thou shalt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee, because he trusteth in Thee.'"

Mary thanked her papa again, and confessed that the lesson which she had gained was worth far more

than all the slips that she had lost. From that day, whenever she heard any person talk of good and bad luck, she would remind them, that God's kingdom ruleth over all, and add, "In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths."

I need not fear an evil day,
While to my heavenly King I pray ;
For all my wants will be supplied
By Him who is my shield and guide.

I cannot in my Bible find
One word of fortune being kind ;
But this I know that Jesus came
To save me from eternal flame.

I know that unto Him is given,
Almighty power in earth and heaven :
I own no other God than He
Who shew'd such wondrous love for me.

Let but His blessing crown my store,
I need not look to chance for more :
Or let Him take my wealth away,
I yet will trust Him though He slay.

I ask but to be made His own,
I tremble at His wrath alone :
If I have grace His will to do,
I must be safe and happy too.

