



THE NARROW PATHWAY

TO

THE GOLDEN GATE.

A BOOK FOR YOUNG PILGRIMS.

By A. T. S.



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P R E F A C E.



MY dear young friends, this book is specially written for the help of those of you who, having entered at the "strait gate," are learning to walk in the "narrow way."

In our day God is blessing His Word to the young in a very remarkable way; and it is from an earnest desire to help such that I have written these pages, looking to God to use them for His own glory.

Before you read them, however, I have to make one

REQUEST.

I find it of the greatest value to be obliged to search God's Word for one's self, and in order to induce you to do this, I have left blank all the chapters and verses referred to in this book for you to fill in with pen and ink; and I want you to promise me that you

will fill in each blank space as you go along, for I feel assured that God will bless you in thus searching His Word. I have tried to be as simple and plain as possible even where the truth taught is rather difficult.

If anywhere I have failed to make you understand my meaning, I will try and explain myself more fully if you write to me on the subject.—Your loving friend,

A. T. S.

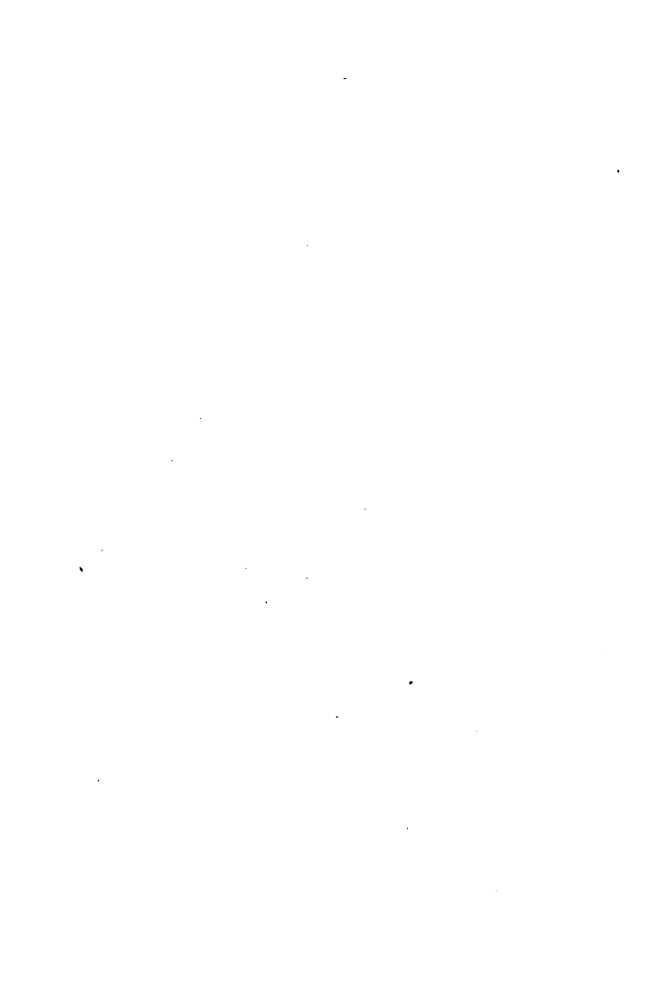
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THE NARROW-PATHWAY
TO
THE GOLDEN GATE.

CHAPTER I.

MY BIRTHDAY.

"Ye must be born again."..... ch.....v.

"I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for His name's sake."ch.....v.....

SOME children think a great deal of their birthday; their brothers and sisters give them little presents on it, and it is made as happy a day to them as it can be. I have read books written about birthdays before now; but this book is for children who have not only such a birthday as I have been speaking of, but who have also a "*new* birthday." Do you know what that means? I am sure you could all of you tell me when your birthday is—I mean on what day of the month you were

born; but can you tell me when your *new* birthday was? Let me explain what I mean.

There were two little boys standing at a fire; one was called Alick, and the other Willie. Alick was ten years old, and Willie only six. "Willie," said Alick, "it is just a year and a half since I began to live." "And I have not begun to live yet," said Willie in a sad voice.

Do you know what these two little boys meant? Alick meant it was just a year and a half since he had learned to love Jesus, and poor Willie meant that he did not love Jesus, that he was not converted or "born again" at all, and this made him very miserable; indeed, so miserable that a kind friend noticed his sad face, and got to know the cause of all his trouble. He soon found for him that beautiful verse, "He that believeth on the Son *hath* everlasting life;" and Willie believed this, and it made him so happy. He took a pencil and paper, and copied out the whole verse, which he called *his* text. He then took every Bible in the house and marked the verse with his pencil, so that

he might always be able to find it in any of the Bibles.

Now, the day Willie believed in Jesus was his "new birthday." We are not all converted in the same way that Willie was. Perhaps we may have been at a preaching, or at a children's meeting; or it may have been at our mother's knee, whilst she told us of the love of Jesus; or perhaps it was when we were quite alone that we felt unhappy about our sins, and found that Jesus had borne them all away—that He had died for us, and was our precious Saviour.

And some little children do not know when their birthday was at all; because God was so kind to them that He put them in a happy home with a mother who loved Jesus, and who taught them about His love, and trained them up for Him as soon as ever they had any sense at all, and so they have *always* known about Jesus and loved Him and tried to please Him even before they can remember. So these little children do not know *when* their new birthday was; but that does not signify, for they know *Jesus*, and that proves they have

one, though they do not know when it was; for the Bible says:—"He that hath the *Son* hath *life*," and God knows when it was.

There was once a little girl who had to write out a list of the names of Jesus. She could only remember a few, but last of all she put, "And He is *my own dear* Saviour." This little girl had a "new birth" day, or she could not have written this.

Now, without this "new birth" day we can never get to heaven, for Jesus says we "*must* be born again."

When we are born into this world we have only got a bad nature, which, as we grow older, shows itself in all kinds of sins. So that even a little baby, who has never done anything naughty, has a bad nature; and when a baby dies and goes to heaven, it does not go there because it is "a little angel," but because Jesus "came to seek and to save that which was lost".....ch.....v.....and this little baby was "lost" when it was born. But when we are born again we receive a new and holy nature like Christ's, a nature that cannot sin—1 John iii. 9.

Our first birthday is the beginning of our life on this earth ; it is the beginning of a short life, lasting at most but a few years. But our “ new birth ” day is the beginning of an eternal life in our souls ; it is the beginning of a life that belongs to heaven, and not to this earth at all—an endless life that can never die, that can never be lost.

Soon after we were born into this world we found out that we had kind parents who loved us dearly ; and, at our second birth, we find we have a Father in Heaven, and a Saviour too, and every day we are learning more of their love to us.

Now, my little friend, you are a believer in Jesus ; do you ever think of this wonderful love ? Do you ever think of what it cost God and the Lord Jesus to make you a child of God ? If you read the second text at the head of this chapter you will see that not only must we be born again, but that all the sins we have committed, because we have this old evil nature, must be washed away. Now, to get rid of these sins cost God His only begotten Son.

There was once a poor African mother who was starving with her children. There were five children, and she and her husband resolved to sell one of them for a slave, and to buy food with the money they would get for it, and so to save the rest. So all the five were placed in a row, and father and mother looked at them.

"Well, we can't sell Sam," said the father; "he is so strong and active, we couldn't do without him."

"Cassy certainly must not go," said the mother; "she minds the children, and is my greatest comfort."

"Well, poor Tom shall not be sold; he is so patient and gentle, and could not bear hard treatment," said the father, "and I am sure I will never part with Chloe, who is the life of us all—she is so merry."

"And would you have me give up my baby, then?" said the mother.

"No, we cannot spare one of them; we had better starve a little longer first."

These poor African parents had *five* dear children, and they could not spare *one*; but

God gave His *only* Son for our sakes. Oh, what love!

And then the love of Jesus! He came and died such a cruel, shameful death, to wash away our sins in His precious blood, that I am sure we should love Him all our lives for it.

We find out what a dreadful thing sin is, when we see that nothing but the blood of the Son of God can blot it out; and now if we believe in Him we need never think a single sin will be heard of again, for every one of them is gone for ever.

A little boy was once much puzzled about this. "I cannot think what becomes of all the sins that God forgives, mother," he said one day.

"Why Charlie, can you tell me where are all the figures you wrote on your slate yesterday?"

"I washed them all out, mother."

"And where are they then?"

"Why, they are nowhere, they are gone," said Charlie.

Now, when we believe in the Lord Jesus, it is just so with our sins, they are washed away

by the precious blood of Christ, and not a stain remains in God's book against us.

There is one other point about "my birthday" before we leave the subject. The Queen has a birthday, and the beggar has a birthday; but they are very different birthdays. The Queen was born in rank and luxury, whilst the beggar was born in poverty and misery. God may have given you plenty of everything; whilst many around you are in great need and distress. But our "*new* birthday" is the same for all. The Queen and the beggar who believe in Jesus are born into God's family in just the same way; there is no difference between them in God's sight. Whether we are rich or poor we have all the same loving Father, the same glorious home, the same precious Saviour, and the same eternal divine life.

And now let us close this chapter with one note of praise out of the Bible for this wonderful "new birth."

"Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift.".....ch.....v.....



CHAPTER II.


MY FATHER.

"Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus."

.....*ch.*.....*v.*.....

"I write unto you, little children, because ye have known the Father.".....*ch.*.....*v.*.....

"Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God.".....
ch......*v.*.....

 HIS chapter, I am sure, ought to be a very interesting one; for the subject is so wonderful, so grand, and yet so sweet, that it might well fill the whole of our book. Many children, however, have been so accustomed to say "Our Father which art in heaven," even long before they were children of God that they have no idea what a wonderful thing it is that we can call God "*our Father.*"

But, after all, if we are "*new born,*" God must be really our Father. Let me try to explain what it is to be a child of God. We are not adopted into God's family as a nobleman

might take up a beggar child, wash him, and clothe him, and call him his son, for the child would always feel that he was not a *real* son, and would be afraid to call the nobleman father. But you, who believe in Jesus, have been really born into God's family ; you have a new nature, and are actually by grace a *child* of God.

"To as many as received Him, to them gave He the *right* to become sons of God which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.".....ch.....v.....

It may be that some poor child will read this who has lost his father, and perhaps mother too. But we can never lose our Heavenly Father, for He can never die. If we are children of God now, we shall be for ever.

But how can we tell whether we are children of God? Ah, this is a solemn question! You see what *makes* you a child at the head of this chapter—"Faith," that is the Holy Spirit giving you to believe in what Christ has done for you. But we cannot see your faith, though God can.

Now, what *shows* you are a child is your works; and we can see your works though we cannot see your faith. “By their fruits ye shall know them.”.....ch.....v.....

But these works are not your works, though you do them; they are the Spirit of God's, for it is God who works *in us*. We are such poor things that we are not able to do anything ourselves. Neither the faith nor the works are our own; they are both of them the Spirit of God's, and the difference between them is that faith *makes* you a child of God, and works show that you *are* one.

Get your Bible now and turn to the First Epistle of Peter, and fill up these blank spaces from chapter i.

God's children must bev.....

God's children must bev.....

The royal house of Austria have long been known by a particular shape of lip, of which they are very proud; and there are many other noble families who have distinguishing features of which they are more proud than of all their riches. Now, just in the same way, the child-

ren of God have marks which show who is their Father, and which prove to others that they belong to the heavenly family. These are the two distinguishing features by which we can tell you are a child of God. The first is a feature of the Lord Jesus, who is God's first-born Son, and ever did God's will. It is called obedience. My dear child, think of this: for Jesus was God, and yet He was obedient, and had no will but His Father's. Try and show by your obedience to God first, and then to your parents and teachers, that you are seeking to be like Jesus. Oh! how God loves *obedient* children.

A dear girl, named Mary, about sixteen years old, was converted in my Sunday School. After a time I called on her parents.

"Well," said her mother, who was not a Christian, "I don't know what you have done to our Mary, but I must say there is a very great change in her. Whatever I tell her to do, she does at once, without a word. I wish you could make all my children so." You see, Mary *showed* her faith by her obedience.

Now, let every child of God who reads this book *do the same*.

The second feature is holiness; and this makes us like God. Always remember your Father's eye is upon you, and that every wicked or foolish word grieves Him.

Now that you are a child of His, don't let *cross words* be heard, or *angry deeds* be seen any more, because it is written, "Be ye holy, for I am holy." If you earnestly endeavour to show these qualities in your life, every one will know you are a child of God.

Now, I will tell you a story about Alice. Alice had been strictly forbidden to touch the ink on the study table. One day, when her mother had put on her a clean pinafore, she ran into the study, and thought she would try to write a letter. So she put a pen in the ink, and upset the bottle all over herself.

What must she do now? Her pinafore was covered with ink, and she could not make it clean. So she ran to her mother, and *confessed* her fault; her kind mother *forgave* her because she confessed it, and then she took off her

pinafore, and *washed* it clean from all the stains.

Does my young reader understand why I tell this story? Can you remember the first sin you fell into after your conversion, and how Satan came and whispered to you in your misery, "Ah, you are not a child of God at all?" Now, the devil is a liar from the beginning, and one of his commonest lies is to tell a disobedient child, he is not a child at all. When Alice disobeyed her mother, did she begin to think, "Why, I cannot be my mother's child at all?" Look now at 1. John i. 9, and you will see what to do the moment you sin, instead of listening to Satan's lies.

"If we *confess* our sins, He is faithful and just to *forgive* us our sins, and to *cleanse* us from all unrighteousness."

Our Father will *always* forgive a sin when it is confessed, but still we know how it grieves Him, and so John tells us: "My little children, these things write I unto you, that *ye sin not*."

.....ch.....v..... The more we love our Father and think of the love He has

bestowed upon us, the more we shall hate sin and the more we shall fear to offend Him.

The time is fast coming, my dear child, when you and I shall be together for the first time in our Father's house above, with all the members of God's great family.

Oh! what a happy time that will be, when we shall never grieve our loving Father any more.

That each of my young readers may be kept walking in obedience and holiness until that day, is my earnest prayer.

“Joyful, joyful, will the meeting be,
When from sin our hearts are pure and free,
And we shall gather, Saviour, with Thee,
In our eternal home.”





CHAPTER III.

MY FOOD.

“As new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby.”.....ch.....v.....

“Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.”.....ch.....v.

.....

NOTHING is more important for a young child than good nourishing food. Little infants live for a long time on pure milk and nothing else. In the above text therefore, the word of God is compared to this. Peter tells us too what all food is for—“to make us grow.”

The other day, a little girl came up to me in the Sunday School to have her name entered on the roll. She was such a little thing, I thought at first she was only about eight years old, and you may think how surprised I was, when, in an answer to my question, “How old are you?” she said, “Going on for seventeen, Sir.”

Poor girl, how I felt for her—so old and yet so very small; such a pitiable sight!

Now there are some children of God just like her. To look at them you would think them a few months old, and yet really they have been Christians many years. They have not grown, and why? In the first place, they have not had good food; and secondly, they have had no exercise.

Food and exercise will make the little reader of these pages one day into a fine man or woman, and I trust that, with spiritual food and exercise, you will also grow into a *Christian* man or woman.

But we will speak about this subject more particularly when we come to "My Growth." At present we are occupied with "My Food."

It is a great thing, in the first place, to take our food regularly. The Lord Jesus says, inch.....v..... "He wakeneth morning by morning; He wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned."

When the children of Israel were fed with manna in the wilderness, their first business every day was to gather it, for as soon as the sun was up it all melted away. In the same

manner our first care ought to be to gather our daily store of heavenly food.

The greatest safeguard for the day for a young Christian is, to begin by feeding on God's word. By this, I do not mean rushing through a chapter in five minutes. The best food gives but little nourishment if eaten hastily, and God's word can never be hurried over. You must have time to think about it, even if you only read a single verse. Never let Satan cheat you of the half or quarter of an hour in the morning, when you can shut yourself up with nothing but God and His word.

A few verses out of the Bible, thought and prayed over, will nourish you for the day.

Many books besides the Bible may help to feed your soul, and I hope God will so use this one; but nothing can nourish you like God's word. Man's books, at the best, are but milk and water; God's book alone is pure milk.

Many people I know, and even some young Christians, are very fond of puzzling over hard texts. Some time ago, one of them came to an old believer, and asked him the meaning of an

obscure verse, which had troubled him very much.

"I am not surprised," said he, "to find that babes cannot digest meat, for 'strong meat belongeth to them who are of full age;' the milk of the Word would be more suitable for *you*."

The Bible is the letter sent by God to guide us through this world. It is to be "a light to our *feet*," to enable us to walk by, rather than a light to our *mind*, to puff us up.

Many children, when they become Christians are puzzled to know what to read in the way of story-books. I will give my young friends a golden rule. Never read anything that causes a distaste for the Bible. If you can rise from a book and read a chapter of your Bible with pleasure, that book will do you no harm. Some story-books are good and helpful, but many others are like so much poison, sweet to the taste, but ruinous to the soul. Anyone who reads them cannot avoid neglecting his Bible.

Before closing this chapter, I will tell you an interesting story, which I read the other day, and know to be true.

There was a little boy living in a fishing village on the south coast, who loved his Bible even more than his breakfast or dinner, and every morning he would steal away with it to the sea shore. One day he was reading as usual, when a number of boys found him out and began to annoy him. So, to avoid them, he got into a little boat that was anchored near. Some of them cut the rope, which, the boy being intent on his Bible, did not notice till he found himself drifting out to sea on the ebbing tide. Darkness and mist soon came on, and the poor little boy was alone with his Bible on the wide ocean.

Three days after a large Norwegian vessel was passing up the channel, when a man at the look-out spied a black object on the water. The captain's telescope soon made out that it was a small boat, so the ship sailed up to it, and then they saw a little boy fast asleep clasping a Bible. They lifted him out and he awoke, but fainted away, from weakness for want of food, in a moment. However, kind care soon restored him, and then he told his story, and what a com-

fort his loved Bible had been to him in those long lonely hours on the water, until he was too weak to read. In this wonderful way God saved the boy that loved his Bible. Cromwell's pocket Bible once turned aside a bullet that was aimed at his heart; and, though we may not be in danger from bullets, our adversary, Satan, is ever ready to attack us with his fiery darts. A Bible in our pockets is no protection against these. It is only by having it in our hearts that we can quench the fiery darts of the enemy.

"Thy word have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against Thee."ch.v.





CHAPTER IV.

MY CLOTHES.

*"He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness.".....
ch.....v.....*

"Be clothed with humility.".....ch.....v.....

*"Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of
. . . . putting on of apparel, but let it be the orna-
ment of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God
of great price.".....ch.....v.....*

IN the part of the country where I live there is one particular Sunday in the year when every child that can possibly afford it comes out in new clothes. For weeks before every tailor in the town has been stitching away day and night, and on Whitsunday you may see every boy in a brand new suit of cloth; and, as for the little girls, I could not possibly describe how they are decked out. A girl who cannot afford new clothes will often stay away from

school sooner than appear in her old ones. Many kind mothers have been sitting up for nights in order not to disappoint their little girls.

Now, my dear child, God our Father not only provides us with food, but also with clothing.

Just as God made garments for Adam and Eve, and clothed them, so He clothes every child that believes on Him.

Most people, however, try to clothe themselves before they accept what God has provided; they try to clothe themselves in good works, prayers, and charity, and think that these things will help them to heaven. Now God has told us what He thinks of all this, which is of the greatest importance, because all these things are put on to please Him. He calls these attempts to clothe ourselves by one name—"Filthy rags." All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags.....ch.....v..... Can any dress be worse than filthy rags? Certainly it will never do for heaven.

I am sure my young friends can fill in the chapter and verse.....ch.v., where we are told of a man who thought his

own clothes good enough for the king's presence, and was cast into outer darkness because he had not on a wedding garment.

A man who becomes a soldier is not required to buy a new suit of clothes, but receives her Majesty's uniform free of expense.

By faith I accept Christ as *my* Saviour, and not only so, but as *my* righteousness..... ch.....v..... Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ.....ch.....v....., means that we are to be covered with Him as a dress down here, so that He is not only our robe of righteousness before God, but we are to "wear" Him every day before man. This is the dress that God provides for us.

Now God cannot condemn Christ! So He cannot condemn us who stand in Him. Nay, He it is who justifies us.

In Phil. iii., Paul lays aside all his own righteousness for Christ, "that he may be found in Him;" and he had more to lay aside than anybody has ever had since.

I am sure it will make my little friends very happy to count up how often Christians are

described as "in Christ" in the Epistles, for it shows how safe we are and how perfectly we are clothed.....times.

But besides all this, there is a little verse at the head of this chapter which shows how this glorious dress looks to other people—"Be ye clothed with humility." A person who is dressed up in *self-righteousness* is always proud, but one who is clothed with *Christ* before God, should be clothed with humility before men. If we read and think how humble Jesus was, I am sure we shall be very much ashamed of being proud ourselves.

As it is very possible that some of maturer years may be among the readers of these pages, I should like, before leaving the subject of "My Clothes," to call attention to the last verse that heads this chapter.

I fully believe that women and girls have a sphere for displaying Christ and speaking for Him that men have not.

The latter may be able more publicly to speak about Him in addresses and sermons, but the former in their dress have a peculiar

way of witnessing for Christ. The absence of outward worldly adornments, combined with the inward ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, is one of the strongest testimonies a woman can bear for Christ.

It is a happy thing to have the heart so set upon pleasing Christ that He is consulted even in the choosing of our outward dress.

“ Thus Mary chose the better part,
And meekly sat at Jesus’ feet ;
And Lydia’s gently opened heart,
Was made for God’s own temple meet.
Fairest and best adorned is she
Whose clothing is humility.

“ The saint that wears heaven’s highest crown,
In deepest adoration bends ;
The weight of glory bows him down
Then most when most his soul ascends.
Nearest the Throne itself must be
The footstool of *humility*.”






CHAPTER V.

MY LIFE.

"Your life is hid with Christ in God."ch.....v.....

"We also should walk in newness of life."ch.....v.....

"When Christ who is our life shall appear."ch.....v.....

 **C**N a scorching hot day, a traveller was once journeying across the desert, when he saw afar off a tree. Now, one might as soon expect to see a ship, as a tree in the desert; and, the nearer he approached, the more he wondered to see so fine a tree flourishing there. He looked down at the burning sand. That, at least, could not support it. The scorching heavens above would only wither it, and yet there it was, luxuriant and green, with all the freshness of life in the midst of death. A few more steps revealed the secret. In a small hollow behind the tree lay one of those precious pools of water, so rare in the desert, and doubtless the roots of the stately tree reached into it, and drew from it a never-failing supply of refreshment and strength.

Now find me the two places in which such a tree is described in the Bible.

First, in.....ch.....v.....and

Secondly, inch.....v.....

This is God's picture of a Christian : no strength in himself, or in anything around—all found in Christ, from whom his soul can draw the needed nourishment. This is the secret of our life. It explains how a fretful child can be calm and patient, how a passionate one can be gentle, how one in pain and sickness can be perfectly happy. God has made the Christian dependent only *on Christ*. Meetings of all sorts may be very refreshing and very happy, but even a little babe in Christ is not dependent on them.

I saw a child of God the other day lying in a garret ; to reach her I had to wade through six inches of water on the bottom floor of her house, which was by the river Severn, and make my way up some rickety wooden steps. But the young woman, all alone and dying of consumption, was a *King's* daughter. I went up to comfort her, and asked her if she loved

Jesus. "Sir," she said in intervals, as her gasping breath would let her—the sunlight of Heaven shining from her face—"He is—the—chiefest—among ten—thousand, and the—altogether—lovely—one." Now there was the tree flourishing in all its heavenly greenness, in the *midst of misery*, because its roots were deep in the river, which is Christ.

I am sure the youngest reader will see the beauty of such a scene, but I trust he will not be satisfied until he has learned the secret of a happiness so independent of outward circumstances.

Reading the Bible and prayer are two blessed roots which enable us to feed on Christ; and, as we get into His own blessed presence, and fix our eyes on Himself as He sits at the right hand of God, we get our love drawn out to Him, and grow like Him whilst we look at Him; we drink into His meek and lowly spirit, and in some measure are enabled to reproduce Him down here.

Let none of us ever think that we have strength in ourselves to please Christ a single

day. He does not give us strength in that way at all.

Every one of my young friends knows the difference between a lamp and a gas-light. A lamp is a vessel with a certain amount of oil in it, and when the oil is used up the lamp goes out. A gas-light has not gas enough in the pipe to keep it burning a single minute. How, then, does it burn hour after hour all through the dark night? Simply because there is an uninterrupted connection between that tiny little light and the great gasometer, perhaps miles away. As long as this great reservoir is unexhausted, so long will the smallest light continue to burn, however distant, providing only that there is a free channel for the gas. But if the pipe is cut anywhere, the light immediately goes out. Now, this little gas-light is a beautiful picture of what each of my young readers should be—shining for Jesus in this world all through the dark night, because constantly drawing fresh strength from Him.

And when you are lying on your bed at night and see the bright moon beaming

through the window, you may say, "*There* is another beautiful picture of my life." The moon is all dark in herself, but she is so high up that she can see the sun when we cannot, and she reflects him down to us. Her face is always bright and beautiful when she is looking at the sun. Now, you can only be bright and happy when you are looking at the Lord Jesus, by faith, in heaven. "We see Jesus.".....ch.....v.....

The moment the pipe is cut, or the gas is turned off out goes the light; the moment the earth, or any other body, comes between the moon and the sun, she is eclipsed: and the moment the world or anything else comes between the young Christian and Christ, away goes the bright, happy face, and he is no longer a light for Christ.

We may be very thankful, however, that our life is not lost when our light goes out. Our life is "hid with Christ in God," and is eternal; but our light depends on our walk day by day.

You may have noticed in some trains there are two sorts of links between each carriage,

one composed of strong chains, and the other of a little india-rubber pipe along the top, that conveys the gas; the light of the carriages depends on the little india-rubber pipe, their safety on the strong iron chains. The pipe may easily be cut, and out goes the light, but even when the carriages are in darkness, they are still attached to the engine by the strong chains below. Each of us in like manner is united to Christ by two links.

The strong link that cannot be broken is called *union*: we are united to Christ by the Holy Ghost in an eternal bond; the other link is *communion*, and when this is broken there can be no *light* though there is still *life*.

But besides all this we must never forget that we have, each of us, an old wicked nature that does not love God at all. This nature certainly never can reflect Christ; so it must not be allowed to act, and we must look to Christ day by day, not only to give us grace to reflect Him, but also strength to keep down our old wicked heart.

And now, in closing, will each of my dear young friends not only find the following verse, but learn it, and repeat it before going to bed every night *for one month*.

“I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live: yet, not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.”.....ch.....v.....

(Repeated during the month of..18.....)





CHAPTER VI.

MY GROWTH.

"Grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.".....ch.... v....

"That we . . . may grow up unto Him in all things.".....ch.....v.

"I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for His name's sake. I write unto you, fathers, because ye have known Him that was from the beginning. I write unto young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one.".....ch.....v.....



TWO things are necessary to all growth—natural and spiritual—food and exercise. I will tell you a story to illustrate each.

Last autumn I went into a seedsman's shop to buy some crocuses for the spring. He showed me a number of bulbs. "These are purple, these are yellow, and these are white," he said, but I could see no difference. However, I bought some purple ones, and put them

in the ground ; and in a few months up came the green leaves, and soon after the purple flowers.

Now why did these grow while others of the same sort were still lying in the seedsman's drawer ? Just because they were nourished by the soil and the rain, while the others were not. It was suitable food that brought the purple flowers.

In London, some years ago, I knew a very respectable woman, who had two little girls, and one little boy called Frank. Their father, I am sorry to say, was a great drunkard. I saw them often playing about in the summer, but as soon as the cold weather came on they disappeared. In the following May or June I saw them again, but oh ! so pale and thin and miserable. I soon learnt their sad story. Their father had spent every penny, and their poor mother was quite unable to buy them anything warm enough for the winter, and sooner than let them go out in rags, she kept them indoors for six long months, till the warm weather came ; so these poor children got *no*

exercise, and the little boy was very ill for want of it.

We were talking all about the new life in the last chapter, and now I want you to understand that this life must have food and exercise. Some people have been Christians twenty years, and are only like babies yet. They have never *grown*. Paul speaks of such in Hebrews v. 12-14. Our new life is given us to *live out*. It is not enough to have the life inside us, it must come out of our members, our hands, feet, &c. (see Romans vi. 13). The Spirit of God which dwells in us is the power for this. He it is that strengthens the new life, directing it to suitable food, and bringing it out in exercise, for it is God who worketh in us to will and to do of His good pleasure.

In Eph. iv. 28 we read of the man who had used his hands to steal, now working with them for others. The very same members that in the old life used to steal, were now being used for Christ, because the new life was using them instead of the old.

Now, the more we speak, act, and think as

Christians *all* the day and *every* day, the stronger we shall get and the faster we shall grow. Nor need we be anxious about our growth. All we have to do is to live *for Christ* and to *feed on Christ*. If we want a child to become like his father, we have no need to mould his features. Give him good food and exercise, and he will grow, and he *must* grow like his parents if he grows at all. Now, that is a beautiful thought for babes in Christ. If you grow at all you must grow like God, because you are born of Him. The more we grow, the plainer His likeness can be seen in us. I hope none of my dear young readers are ashamed of Christ so that they keep the new life shut up inside. If they do, they will be babies all their life.

Too much food without exercise only tends to puff us up. The Word of God is not given for this, but that "we may grow thereby." Bread and meat are not flesh; but, by digestion and exercise, they become so, and form a part of me. So with the Bible. Supposing I read, "Be ye also patient".....ch.....v.....the Holy

Ghost applies this food to my soul, and gives me power to carry it out ; for my new nature, which is the life of Christ, is always patient ; and as by the Holy Ghost's power I let my new nature act, and refuse to let my old one have its way, I show out patience when I am provoked, and bear the fruit of the Spirit, and also show growth in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord.

This world is a capital place to exercise our life in, if we have the constitution to stand the climate.

A bracing climate, where strong cold winds blow, is the best for a healthy person ; but an invalid requires a milder climate. Many Christians are great invalids. If there comes a cold blast of ridicule, or a heavy shower of abuse, or the hot sun of persecution, they run away for shelter, or droop and wither beneath the storm. The beautiful tree we spoke of in the last chapter was not like this. It cares not for the howling wind or the burning sun. Its roots are by the river, and its constitution is therefore strong and good. This explains

what the apostle says :—" Be strong in the Lord."ch.....v.....

Oh ! my dear young friends, never be ashamed of Christ when persecutions arise. You will not grow if you are. Every time you stand for Christ in this world you acquire fresh experience, strength, and courage.

One more word, before we leave this subject, on that text, " Grow up *unto Him*." We are told that if we nip or cut off the top shoots of a tree, it will cease to grow upwards, and begin to spread. Take care, therefore, of the top shoots. Whatever in us is most like Christ is what Satan seeks to destroy. He does not mind our spreading, and perhaps getting a great name down here, if he can only stop us growing up into Christ. But we are not ignorant of his devices. Let us cleave closely to the Lord as our strength and object, so that, perhaps, though now only babes in Christ, we may yet grow into young men ; some day into fathers, ever bearing at each stage of our divine growth more of the " image of the heavenly."



CHAPTER VII.

MY HOME.

- "In my Father's house are many mansions.".....ch.....v.....*
"There remaineth a rest for the people of God.".....ch.....v.....
*"Father, I will that they also whom Thou hast given me be with
me where I am.".....ch.....v.....*



WELL remember when at school many years ago, my parents moved from the south to the north of England, and my curiosity was raised to the highest pitch as I got letter after letter describing my new home. And when at last the day came for leaving school, my impatience knew no bounds until I arrived at home.

Many little English children, born in India, are sent away from their parents before they are old enough to know them at all, to be brought up in England. They receive letters from them for years, and have, perhaps, some cherished likeness of the loved ones; but oh! what a day is that when the summons arrives

for them to return to their far-off home, or better still, if the news reaches them that their parents are on their way from India to take them back with them to their home!

Such are but feeble pictures of what the meeting will be between all the children of God and their loving Father in their eternal home!

Oh! my dear young fellow-Christians, what a glorious prospect is ours!

We are but strangers here: heaven is our home, and the time is rapidly approaching when we shall leave this world for ever. Do any of us think what a wonderful thing it will be to see Jesus for the first time and in Him to see God? For "he that hath seen me, hath seen the Father.".....ch.....v..... Even now a place is prepared in heaven for each one of us. Angels and archangels will have to retire before the company of redeemed sinners, young and old, that shall fill all heaven with their wonderful new song. Angels are but servants, strong and glorious though they be; we are His children, though weak and feeble. And any little child who believes in the Lord

Jesus will be as much nearer to God than an angel as a child is nearer than a servant.

It is a very good thing for even the youngest believer to learn to look at everything from God's point of view, and to know that this world is a wide wilderness, with only one narrow path through it, along which he is to walk as a pilgrim and a stranger.

How little does the captain of the homeward-bound ship regard the storms and tempests through which he has to pass. He counts them as nothing, for he knows it is but for a little while. His thoughts are far away upon his bright home where his dear ones await him.

Surely the Christian knows the meaning of this picture. He it is who sings :—

“ Should tribulations rise
And sore afflictions come,
Blest is the sorrow, kind the storm
That drives us nearer home.”

We were never so near heaven as we are at this moment.

Week after week passes by, each week a wave of the great ocean of time over which we

have sailed nearer and nearer to the harbour of rest.

“ One sweetly solemn thought
Comes to me, o'er and o'er :
I'm nearer home to-day,
Than I ever have been before.”

There is another thought, too, that is always a great joy to me. The Lord Jesus is more anxious to have us in heaven than we are to be there.

It is only a short time since all our thoughts were about things beneath the sun, and all we knew of God was that He is the great Ruler of the world. Now we are told to “set our affection on things above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God,” and to those who know Him surely this is easy, for “unto us who believe He is precious.”.....ch.....v....., and “where our treasure is there *will* our heart be also.”.....ch.....v..... We know but very little about our home, for it is so glorious and beautiful that no words can describe it, but we do know that not one child of God will be missing there. However rough the paths of some of us may be, they all end in heaven.

I think nothing takes away the attracting power of the world in its pleasures and snares like occupation and familiarity with the glories that are ours above. Let us not seek for ease and comfort here, where Jesus had not where to lay His head. The Lord Jesus has only one home here, and which of my young friends can tell me where that is? The word "*mansion*" or "*abode*" is only used twice in the New Testament. "In my Father's house are many mansions," (or abodes,) where it means our home in Heaven; and in the other place, "We will come unto him, and make our *abode* with him;" wonderful to say, it means Christ's home on earth in the one who is seeking to do His will. This is the only home for Jesus here. The heart of the *obedient* child, and the most glorious place in heaven, are called by the same name—the former the abode of Christ, the latter the abode of His people.

Have you a home for the Lord Jesus in your heart? He has been shut out of this world; Oh! open your young heart wide to His love, and seek to show your love to Him by your

obedience : ere long He Himself will come, and take you to *His* home.

He will not send an angel, but will come Himself, because He loves you so. Let us, then, in our lives, as pilgrims and strangers having here no continuing city, declare plainly that we seek a better, even a heavenly country, whose God is not ashamed to be called our God, for He hath prepared for us not a city but "a home."

Now, although this home is yet future, and we are still waiting for the "rest that remaineth for the people of God," we are not left homeless though in a wilderness. Surely if our Lord Jesus, while down here, ever found a home in the bosom of His Father, so it is our privilege not only to open our hearts as a home for Him, but to know His heart as a present home and resting-place for us. He cheers us by the way with His own presence.

"We have boldness to enter into the holiest of all."

A Christian child can therefore be perfectly happy not only in looking forward to his future

home in heaven, but in enjoying Christ now, and finding in his heart of love a present home and a refuge from every storm.

Let us never forget this, for indeed we cannot truly learn to be strangers here until we feel at home with God.

“ I have a home above,
From sin and sorrow free ;
A mansion which eternal love
Designed and formed for me.”





CHAPTER VIII.

MY FAMILY.

- “ Ye shall be my sons and daughters.”ch.v.*
“ All ye are brethren.”ch.v.
*“ We know that we have passed from death unto life, because
we love the brethren.”ch.v.*



HAT a great difference there is in families. Some we know are so happy and united that it is a pleasure to see them, whereas the members of others are always at variance.

In this sin-stricken world of ours, I know of no more beautiful sight than a loving family, living together in peace and happiness.

Is my young friend a member of such a family, where brothers and sisters are never known to quarrel?

In order to maintain such a happy state of things it is necessary, as an old writer once said, to have two bears in every house: “ Bear and Forbear,” reminding us of the texts, “ For-

bearing one another in love,".....ch.....
 v..... and "Bear ye one another's burdens."
ch.....v.....

Now if all this be needed in earthly relationships, how much more so in heavenly ones.

As soon as we are born again we not only become children of God, but also members of a very large family, composed of "every tongue and people and nation," but all so really *one* in Christ, that not only are we members of Him, but also one of another.....
 ch.....v.....

This new relationship is very strong, and will endure for ever. No member of this family ever dies, or can be lost. The love, too, of one Christian to another is to be the very strongest: "This is my commandment, that ye love one another as I have loved you,"
ch.....v....., and who can tell how much that is, since the apostle himself says, "It passes knowledge?".....ch.....
 v.....

I was in a wild country place a few years since, far from any inn or friend's house. I

sought for some place where I might find rest and refreshment, and was directed to a large farm. Here, as I was an entire stranger to the district, I was received with some amount of distrust.

While a meal was being prepared, previous to driving me over to the nearest town, many miles away, my eyes fell on a small tract I knew. I began speaking of our heavenly Father, and at once discovered I was at the house of one of His children. How can I describe the wonderful change that the discovery of this relationship made? Reserve was all laid aside, for were we not members of the same family? My host would not hear of my leaving the house, but prepared the best room in it with a readiness and cheerfulness that spoke volumes, and a very happy evening we spent together talking over the interests of the one family, of our Father, and of our home.

Surely this relationship between Christians is a very real thing; it establishes a bond between utter strangers of a closer kind than that between near relations.

Let me beg each of my readers who wishes to know God's thoughts about "my family," to read attentively the 3rd chapter of 1 John. After first unfolding the Father's wonderful love to us in making us His dear children. He goes on to tell us in the plainest language what should be our conduct towards His other children. "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed, and in truth.".....ch.....v.....

Now, one of the duties of real love is to "wash one another's feet.".....ch.....v..... Supposing my little friend, who is reading this, sees a young disciple of Christ dishonouring Him in some way, perhaps by giddy, thoughtless conduct, or some other sin, the first thing Satan will tell you to do is to talk all about it to those you may meet. Now, this is not a family feeling. Brothers do not publish each other's faults abroad, however they may speak of them at home. How careful we should be about speaking of and magnifying the faults and failings of our fellow-Christians before the careless and unconverted. "What must I do then? Am I to pass them by?" By no means; this would not be love.

Suppose you were going out one day with some mud on your coat, would it be kind of a brother or sister to let you go without saying a word? Ought they not rather to tell you of it, and brush it away? If we see a Christian defiled by the world, our duty is not to magnify his fault to others, but to tell him of it in real love, and seek to bring him back to the right path. God always speaks well of His people behind their backs, and tells them all their faults, in love, to their face.

About Job, God says: "There is none like him in all the earth, a perfect and an upright man.".....ch.....v.

To Job, He says: "Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?"..... ch.v.....

About Israel, He says: "I have not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither have I seen perverseness in Israel.".....ch.....v.....

To Israel, He says: "A perverse and crooked generation — a stiff-necked people.".....ch.v.....

Satan is ever seeking to divide and scatter this great family, and to set one child against

another. Too well has he succeeded, and we can never hope on earth outwardly to unite again God's great family; but we may, at least on our part, show love and care for all its members.

I often think when Satan tempts me to neglect and slight some Christian, "Ah! Christ thought it worth His while to come from heaven to save that one, and surely I should care for those He loves." A family is always strong as long as it is united, but dissension and discord make it as weak as water. "Cursed is he that soweth discord among brethren."
.....ch.....v.....

If any young reader wants to please the Lord Jesus Christ very much, let him, from this day forth, love and care for every member of God's family, and show especial attention to those poor, despised, neglected ones, whom the world does not know, and of whom it is not worthy, but who, before God, are "rich in faith, and heirs of God's kingdom which He hath promised to them that love Him."ch.....v.....

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CHAPTER IX.

MY FRIEND.

"Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command ye."

.....ch.v.

"Abraham was called the friend of God.".....ch.....v.....

*He is "a Friend that sticketh closer than a brother.".....
ch.....v.....*

IN the part of the country where I live we have a curious custom. Every girl has a special friend whom she "goes with," as they say; they often work at the same factory, and are hardly ever apart; they attend the same Sunday-school, and love each other like sisters. If a girl loses her friend she looks about for another, for no girl would like to be without one who is known as "her companion." One or other of the two girls is sure to be a leader for good or for evil. Many a girl have I known led astray by her bad "companion," and some happy cases I have known where the "companion" has brought

the girl to school and been the means of her salvation.

One lamentable case I remember of an old scholar, called Mary, who brought her companion Jane to school. Before long Jane was happily converted, and soon after Mary died, herself unsaved.

Now, though the above custom may not be generally established, yet very few young people are without a particular friend, who is the sharer of all their joys and sorrows, and in whom they thoroughly confide.

It is our privilege to know such a one in heaven, whose love is infinitely beyond that of any earthly friend. Can each of my young readers sing—

“ Now I have found a Friend,
Jesus is mine ;
His love shall never end,
Jesus is mine ? ”

The greatest joy on earth is to have the Lord Jesus for our friend. May we trust in Him more. If you were to hide something from your bosom friend, and he afterwards heard it

from some one else, would not he rightly feel grieved at your want of confidence? And does not Christ feel grieved? Of course He knows all because He is God: but He wishes us to tell Him everything, because it shows we trust Him. Never let a day pass without speaking to Him. If you have any little plans or projects, tell Him all about them. Nothing is too small for our great Friend. He not only delights to share our joys, but He loves to hear us pouring all our cares out of our burdened heart, and making room for Him to fill it with His peace. I am sure we know what a relief it is when in trouble to have a kind friend who will listen to and sympathise in all our sorrows: and yet none can do this like the Lord Jesus: "He is a Friend that sticketh closer than a brother.".....ch....., v..... And He can do more. He is not merely loving, He is powerful. He can not only sympathise, He can succour. He is also unchangeable: "The same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.".....ch....., v.....

I have sometimes found that, when I most

wanted a word of kindness from a friend, some trouble or care of his own prevented his feeling for me. But it is our privilege to know that the ear of the Lord is ever open to our cry.

Let us now look a little at the texts that head our chapter.

“Ye are my friends if ye do whatever I command you.”

Let each of my young readers ponder this well. Obedience is the condition of friendship with the Lord Jesus. And yet, if we love Him, it is not a forced obedience, for His service is perfect freedom. I wonder how many of us the Lord Jesus counts among His friends. There is a great difference between having Him for our Friend and being a friend to Him.

I will tell you a story about little Mary. Mary had a very particular friend, to whom she confided all her troubles. One day little Mary had been very naughty, and, when spoken to, she said the reason was she had not been able to talk to her friend for a long time. She had often seen her, but never had had time to

talk to her. Then Mary wrote the following lines to her friend, who, I should tell you, was a great deal older and wiser than herself:—

My own, my dearest Annie,
Do have a talk with me,
I'm getting just as bad again
Without a talk with thee.
If I could *once* in every *week*
Have a little talk with you,
I should be quite a different child—
I told mamma that too.

Now don't you think there is some truth in little Mary's verses? Does it not remind us of the Saviour's desire that His disciples should have a childlike spirit? A little child is simple and trustful. Mary had perfect confidence in her friend, whom she knew was so much older and wiser than herself. And is Mary's trust in *her* friend to be more perfect and entire than our trust in Christ? If her friend had experience and wisdom, ours, though once the lowly Jesus, is "the only wise God," and is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. Do not you think that if you oftener had "a little

talk" with Jesus, you would be different in many ways? I am sure you would. A talk with Him is the remedy for every sort of evil.

Little Mary, when she had a talk with her friend, always tried to act on her advice, and to do what she knew would please her. And if we speak with the Lord Jesus, we too must have the desire to please Him, and be ready to do what He would wish; and if we have this desire, He not only makes known to us His wishes, but does, what Annie could never do for her little friend, He gives us power to carry them out.

Mary never could get much good out of her friend when with others: they must be alone, and then little Mary would sit down at her feet and tell her all her troubles, and get counsel for the future. Our "talks with Jesus" too, must be alone with Him, when no eye but His is resting on us. Far from feeling lonely, we shall feel we are in the best of company, and we shall come out with fresh strength and desire to serve Him.

A little talk with Jesus,
How it smooths the rugged road,
How it seems to help me onward,
When I faint beneath my load.
When my heart is crushed with sorrow,
And my eyes with tears are dim,
There's nought can yield me comfort
Like a little talk with Him.

But this is what I'm wanting,
His lovely face to see ;
And I'm not afraid to say it,
I know He's wanting me !
He gave His life a ransom,
To make me all His own,
And He can't forget His promise
To me, His purchased one.

I know the way is dreary
To yonder far off clime,
But a little talk with Jesus
Will wile away the time.
And yet the more I know Him,
And all His grace explore,
It only sets me longing
To know Him more and more.

I cannot live without Him,
Nor would I if I could,
He is my daily portion,
My medicine and my food.

He's altogether lovely,
None can with Him compare,
The chief among ten thousand,
The fairest of the fair.

I often feel impatient,
And mourn His long delay,
I never can be settled
While He remains away.
But we shall not long be parted,
For I know He'll quickly come,
And we shall dwell together
In that *happy, happy* home.

So I'll wait a little longer,
Till His appointed time,
And glory in the knowledge
That such a hope is mine.
Then in my Father's dwelling,
Where "many mansions" be,
I'll sweetly talk with Jesus,
And He shall talk with me.





CHAPTER X.

MY SCHOOL.

"The heir as long as he is a child is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father.".....ch.....v.....

"Thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee to humble thee and to prove thee, and to know what was in thine heart, and He humbled thee and fed thee with manna that He might make thee know that man doth not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live.".....ch.....v



REMEMBER that I was a great deal older than the generality of boys who leave home for the first time, when I was sent to school. Before I went, whenever I grumbled at anything at home, I was told I should be treated very differently at school, and when I got there I found it all true. The first few days I spent were very miserable. No one seemed to care for me, and everything was entirely different from my home.

But I learned a great deal at school—not merely my lessons. I learned to value my home and my parents. I also learned by being with other boys to give up my own will, and to consider others besides myself.

. Now, this world is the Christian's school, and heaven is the Christian's home; and we have some very hard lessons to learn of which we will speak in our next chapter.

Some children go to school for years, and yet learn very little; while some get on so fast that they are ready to leave long before the others.

It is very much the same with Christians, though their lessons are not all the same. God has lessons for each of us, and some learn much more quickly than others, and get on much farther. Some, however, stop at school to be teachers as well as learners.

The greatest mistake the young Christian can make, and one which every boy makes when he first leaves home, is to think that he knows something. The first thing to learn is that we know nothing, and this is often one of

our hardest lessons. When I was at school the older boys often helped me with my studies, and indeed this is what I am now trying to do for my young friends in writing this little book ; and well shall I be rewarded if I find, when we meet in heaven, that it has been of any use to them in the school down here.

Let none of us waste the time now. Let each of us be thoroughly in earnest to learn the lessons God would teach us, for there is a day coming when it will be seen how we have profited by being down here. God has a different course of lessons for each one of us. One dear Christian I know, has been an invalid for 20 years ; and the purpose of this severe lesson, as she believes, is to keep down and subdue her self-will, which would otherwise be completely her master. Another perhaps has to be plunged into poverty, or passed through seas of sorrow. All these are trials of faith, and each lesson learned with God leaves the faith stronger, brighter, and purer. The wilderness was the school of the children of Israel. God was going to bring them out of it into

Canaan, when He found they had not learnt their lesson at all, and He had to send them back again into the wilderness, for forty years, to learn it.

We have been looking at school life as a rather hard time, but it is not so to all. The Lord is very gentle and loving, and always remembers that we are not only scholars, but are also His children, so He bears a long time with our dulness. He would lead rather than drive us, would bend rather than break.

On the other hand, too, we know that all the scholars are not dull and stupid. Some "dear children" are very apt scholars, and are so desirous of learning the lessons the Lord sets them, that they master the most difficult in a very short time.

It is a happy thing when this is the case, and when any suffering that may be endured is felt to be from a Father's hand, rather than a chastening from a master's. Still God has always something for us to learn when suffering.

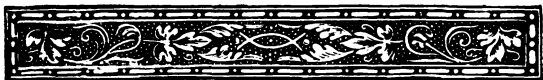
Whenever a trial or sorrow comes, our first

thought should be, "God has surely something to teach me in all this."

A Christian who has thus been educated by God is easily distinguished from a beginner. Not that we can ever know enough down here. Only *there* we shall know even as we are known, which is perfectly. Until then let us remember that we are not at home, where we can take our ease, but at a school where many hard lessons are taught, though always by a kind and loving Master, who knows each lesson Himself that He teaches to us.

"O teach me more of Thy blest ways,
Thou holy Lamb of God,
And fix and root me in Thy grace,
As one redeemed by blood."





CHAPTER XI.

MY TEACHER.

"The law was our schoolmaster unto (or until) Christ."
..... ch..... v.....

"Being under the law to Christ.".....
ch..... v.....

"Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that we should follow His steps."..... ch..... v.....

"The Holy Ghost shall teach you all things.".....
ch..... v.....



WHAT a great difference there is in teachers; some are so kind and gentle, while others are quite a terror to their scholars.

I remember well that, when I was at school many years ago, we heard there was a new master coming. As you may suppose, we were very anxious to see what sort of a teacher he would be; for the master whom we had, though very clever, was very severe, and never thought of helping us boys. He would set us very hard sums, and if we had not the answer ready

in a very short time, he would often punish us severely.

We soon found out that our new master was a very different man. He appeared quite as clever as the former one, but he had such a different way with us. Instead of scolding us for what we did not know, he would take our slates and patiently show us the way to do it. It is astonishing how much faster we got on under the new master than under the old one.

Now these two answer to the law, the old master, and Christ, our new Teacher by the Spirit. The law commands what is to be done, but never shows how to do it, nor gives the required power. The result is that *as a teacher* it failed, except to show us we had no power to obey its commands—the cause of the failure being in the weakness of the scholar, not that of the teacher. Therefore we required a new Teacher, even the Lord Jesus Christ who is our example, and the Holy Spirit who gives us the power.

“Though He were a Son yet learned He

obedience by the things which He suffered."ch.....v..... What lesson is harder for us to learn in "my school" than *obedience*. Is it not a blessed thing to see our great Teacher treading first a lowly path of perfect obedience? We are poor scholars enough as it is, but we should never get on at all were it not that we have such a patient, loving Teacher to bear with us.

I remember that one of the hardest things I had to do at school was to write a "copy." The master wrote the first line, and I did my best to copy that; but very soon I got careless, and by the time I was at the bottom of the page I found I was copying my own bad writing, and not the master's good writing. But afterwards we had "copy slips" instead of having the copy written at the top, and then I could take it all down the page with me, and I got on much better.

In the four Gospels our Teacher has, as it were, written the "copy slips" that we have to follow in our lives, for we are not left here merely to improve ourselves, but *to copy*

Him; but alas, what blurred and blotted copies ours are!

I wonder what the great Teacher has taught my little friends since they believed on Him; for though it is the Bible that tells us *what* to do, it is the Lord who shows us *how* it is done, and it is the Holy Ghost who gives us the power to do it.

The great thing we need is the desire to learn. If we are at school, and determined to trifle away our time, the very best teacher in the world cannot help us. It is only those who are willing to learn of the Lord that He teaches.

Let us look at an example of His teaching. Turn to Matt. xi. In verse.....we find Him saying:—"Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls." Now, where He tells us to learn of Him you may be sure He has just been giving us a beautiful example of what He has to teach.

It would appear in the beginning of the chapter that His own messenger, John the

Baptist, was beginning to doubt if Jesus was the Christ. Oh, what a wound this must have been to His tender heart! In the 19th verse we find that the people rejected and scoffed at Him, the blessed Jesus, as a "gluttonous man and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners." Then in the 20th verse He shows the hardened unbelief of the cities where His mighty works had been done. We thus see in this one chapter that He had the bitterest griefs to bear. And now in v. 25 He shows us how to meet all this.

Instead of getting vexed or downcast at such treatment, and saying (as we should) "I will never speak a word to these people again," the Lord finds His joy in the fact that it was His Father's will to hide these things from the wise and to reveal them unto babes. His Father's will was His delight, and He cared not how bitter His own rejection might be, if He were but carrying out this will.

Now in this way our Master teaches us to meet slights, scorn, and trials of all sorts; not by getting downcast or put out, and becoming

frozen up in all our sympathies like icicles, but by carrying them all into the sunshine of God's love, we get warmed and melted into a fresh stream of blessing, and act as Jesus did.

After all this rejection of His love, He gives one of the most blessed invitations in the Word of God, "Come unto me all ye that labour, &c." Can we do this? Have we so learned of our great Teacher, that we can turn round with the greatest love to the very ones who have slighted and scorned us, and invite them to Christ? "Consider Him," says the apostle, inch.....v....., "who endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds." This reminds us of the very picture we have been looking at in Matt. xi.

Are any of us anxious to know how we should try and please others? We read:—"Let every one of us please his neighbour for his *good to edification*, even as Christ pleased not Himself."ch.....v.....

If it be a question of giving money, the apostle again brings our great Teacher before

us:—"For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, though He was *rich*, for our sakes became *poor*.".....ch.....v.....

And so with every instance of the lesson of faith in this school of ours. The apostle sums all up in these well-known verses, which refer to the *whole time we are at school*:—"Looking off unto Jesus, the author and finisher of faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.".....ch.....v.....

My earnest desire is, that each of my young friends may be more and more occupied with his great Teacher.

O patient, spotless One,
Our hearts in meekness train ;
To bear Thy yoke and learn of Thee,
That we may rest obtain !





CHAPTER XII.

MY LESSONS.

“Let children learn first to show piety at home, and to requite their parents, for that is good and acceptable before God.”..... ch..... v.....

“Let ours also learn to maintain good works.”..... ch..... v.....

“I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.”..... ch..... v.....

A YOUNG man who thought a good deal of himself once came up to an old Christian in some anxiety of mind to know how he could be saved. “Ah! John,” said the old man, “you have three lessons to learn first.”

“And what are they?” said John.

“In the first place, John, you must learn that you *are nothing*.

“And in the second place you must learn that you can *do nothing*.

“And, thirdly, you must learn that there is *nothing for you to do.*”

Now these are three very important lessons for each of us; but I am writing to those who have learned what I call the A B C.

Let us now look at your lessons, which, like those of your early school days, may be divided into reading, writing, and arithmetic.

Reading.

The first lesson, of course, for every child is his A B C; now, here is our A B C:—

A All have sinned, and come short of the glory
of God.....ch.....v.....

B Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou
shalt be saved.....ch.....v.....

C Christ died for the ungodly.....ch.....
v.....

A tells us what we are by nature;

B tells us God's way of salvation; and

C tells us the work that procures this salvation.

If we go further on in the alphabet, we reach
D Doing.

E Experience.

F Feelings.

These, then, ought to follow the A B C, but never to come before it. But some children want to read the alphabet backwards.

Indeed there are many hundreds of people who won't learn this A B C, because they want to begin the alphabet with F—feelings; and they are waiting to *feel* saved, and to *feel* better, instead of simply resting on God's word.

A little girl who was converted not long ago wrote to me as follows:—"Satan often would trouble me with doubts and fears, but I know God is satisfied with Christ's work for me, and I can rest in that."

Can each of my young readers say as much as this? If so, we may leave the alphabet and just look at the first word we should learn to spell in our lives, which is "obedience."

"Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice."
.....ch.....v..... Obedience to God,
and obedience at home, as at the head of this
chapter. It is often easier for us to do anything

rather than to obey. Whether in conversion at first, or in our Christian life after, we never like to yield our will to God's. Therefore to the unsaved Jesus says, "And this is the will of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent.".....ch.....v..... While to the young believer who reads these pages the apostle writes, "I beseech *you* by the mercies of God that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service; and be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect *will* of God.".....ch.....v..... We have here, however, more than obedience. We have another lesson—'not conformed' meaning 'not like unto;' that is, we are not to be following the ways of this world, but the ways of Christ.

Writing.

This subject we looked at in our last chapter, when talking of Christ, our great Teacher

who sets us in the four Gospels the copy we are to follow in our lives; we will also find something very interesting on this subject when we consider "My character" in the next chapter.

Arithmetic.

Let us now look a little at the Christian's *Arithmetic*; you will find the first sum in addition in.....ch.....v.....

Add to your FAITH:—

Virtue
Knowledge
Temperance
Patience
Godliness
Brotherly kindness
Charity

Seven Graces.

But *you* cannot add all these to your faith just because you see them here or in the Bible. They must be written in your hearts and lives first.

Now, of course, you have faith to start with. Faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, who has saved your soul. The first thing to add to this is virtue, which in this place means "courage." Have you added *courage* to this faith, or *cowardice*, which is it? Have you been brave enough to confess Christ? Let your heart answer this important question to God.

Now, the next figure is *knowledge*. What knowledge are you seeking? Is it knowledge of God's Word and of His will, of your Home, of your Father, and all that you have been reading about?

This is the only knowledge that can be added to faith.

Now comes "temperance"—that is, self-control; not the mere signing of a pledge, but "Be ye temperate in *all* things.".....ch.....v..... Does my young friend know what this means? I think even in a child's play it is well to remember such a word as this. Not to be rushing into pleasure as if it were the one aim of life. At such times we are apt to forget

ourselves, and Satan often takes advantage of this, and by means of some trifling disappointment causes us to display impatience or anger. The Lord Jesus was the direct opposite of this. There was no unevenness in Him. Not that it is nice to see children stiff and formal in their ways, but rather what another verse teaches—"Let your yieldingness (moderation) be known unto all men; the Lord is at hand."ch.....v..... This temperance, or yieldingness, in all things is the more beautiful in the young because it is not natural to them in any way.

Add to temperance "patience." This quality, I think, is more generally understood than the former one; but it is a hard lesson to learn, as some of you know who are at school. A sick bed is another hard place to learn it, though I hope none of you will need to be taught it in this way. We should be saved the hardest part of this lesson if we first gave up our own wills. Jesus had no will contrary to God's; so, of course, it was never crossed. Whatever He had to do He delighted in, because it

was His Father's will. Now, we often get impatient under a cross of this sort:—

God's My self-will. will.	Caused by the crossing of the
	two wills, which, however, at
	once disappears when we can
	say:—

‘Not my will,
but Thine be done.’

Patience is easy when obedience is learned first.

And we have a beautiful reason for being patient. “Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.”.....ch.....v..... It is the coming of Christ before our hearts that will make us patient in all our cares and troubles. “Let patience, therefore, have her perfect work.”ch.....v..... Now, these four — courage, knowledge, temperance, and patience—are inward qualities; the three that follow are more outward and active. “Godliness” comes first. I think the way to get this character in our lives is by having the fear of God before us: not a slavish dread of Him, but

that fear of Him which is wisdom, and "the price of wisdom is above rubies." (See Job xxviii.) Having God before us for an object, as Jesus had, gives us this character—"I have set the Lord always before me.".....ch.....v.....

I have known some children display this "godliness" so remarkably in their lives as to be a standing reproof to the giddy and careless around them. A child that refuses to join in jests or jokes on sacred subjects has learnt something of this fifth figure.

The next thing we get in our wonderful sum is "brotherly kindness." Of course we all understand that this means kindness towards the whole family of God, not merely towards my earthly relations. What a wonderful thing kindness is, and how beautiful to see it displayed in this world of ours, especially when it is shown from love to Christ to those who have no natural claim upon us.

And now we reach the last on the list—the topstone and yet the foundation of all—"love." That which shall endure when all else shall cease—the very character of God Himself.

“Love is of God, and he that loveth is born of God, for God is love.”.....ch.....v.....

For a better explanation of this last figure than any I can give, I must refer my young reader to.....ch....., where Paul speaks of nothing else from beginning to end.

History.

History is taught in most schools, and certainly is in “my school.” God intends this to be one of our most valuable lessons, and is it not wonderful that He Himself has written our history-book?

The first half of the Old Testament contains the history of 4000 years, written by God for our instruction. Let none of my readers neglect it. Here, in the lives of Abraham, Joseph, Moses, David, and others, we get lessons of the deepest value. And, if this be ancient history, we are not left without the record of more modern times. Still confining ourselves to the Bible, that marvellous storehouse of all knowledge, in the Gospels and Acts we find God’s account of the most wonderful events that ever happened on this earth.

We must always take care, however, lest we read about all these things for their interest, without feeling that in every page there is the voice of God speaking to our hearts.

I might go on for pages describing one lesson after another, but I will stop now and let my young readers find out the others for themselves, only giving them one word in parting. The lesson-time is short. There will be no learning in Heaven; but then will be seen how much each has learnt; whether that first sum in addition that Peter set us has ever been done, and many others that I have not mentioned.

I hope my dear little friends will work hard at their lessons until schooltime is over, and the school on earth is exchanged for the home in Heaven.





CHAPTER XIII.

MY CHARACTER.

"Ye are the epistle of Christ, known and read of all men."
.....*ch.*.....*v.*.....

"Be ye holy in all manner of conversation.".....*ch.*.....
v......

"Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles that
. . . . they may by your good works glorify God."
.....*..ch.*.....*v.*.....



HE Christian ought to be like Christ,
for he is left down here to represent
Him.

Whether young or old, we are the epistle of
Christ known and read of all men.

Have my young friends ever noticed that we
have no epistle of Christ in the Bible? We
have the gospels and we have the epistles
written by Paul, Peter, James, John, and Jude;
though we have His *own words* both on earth
and addressed to us from heaven, we have no
epistle by Christ.

We read of what Christ *did* and *said*, but of

nothing that He *wrote*. How is this? The apostle tells us in 2 Cor. iii. The epistle of Christ is written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tables of stone (or on paper), but on the fleshy tables of the heart. If you look at the picture at the beginning of this book you will see a dear little girl who loves Jesus writing on the sand "God is Love." She is doing this that other children may know it too; and hundreds of little girls like her are busy in the summer writing beautiful texts on the sands for passers by to read. The next wave, however, will wash this little girl's text out, but what Jesus writes in our hearts will endure for ever, for none of His writing can be destroyed. Is it not a solemn thing to think that you are part of this epistle (or letter) from Christ, written by Him to this world.

Now the Lord Jesus begins His letter very much like the apostles. Most of their letters begin "Paul, an apostle," or "Peter, an apostle." They begin with their own names, and then tell us what they are.

The first words Christ writes on every young convert's heart are "Jesus *my* Saviour." Can all your friends plainly read these three precious words displayed in your character? God can read them in your heart, but man must read them in your life.

Now, if you are known as a saved child, and as one who loves the Lord Jesus, what comes next in the letter?

Jesus my Saviour was *obedient* (.....ch.v.....), *meek* (.....ch.....v.....), *lowly* (.....ch.....v.....), *holy* (.....ch.....v.....), *harmless* (.....ch.....v.....), *undefiled* (.....ch.....v.....), and *faithful* (.....ch.....v.....).

Each of these seven graces should be engraved on our hearts and displayed in our characters.

You see it is not enough for a Christian to have a good character; he must have the character of *Christ*, because he represents Him. Alas! how much our lives are like blotted sentences, so that few can read them—few can trace in us a likeness to our Master!

Surely it must grieve the Lord Jesus Christ to be so misrepresented. Men can read what Christ *did* in the gospels, but when they try to read what He *wrote* in His epistle (the Christians), they are much puzzled. In the gospels they find that Christ pleased not Himself; in the epistle they often see the opposite written on the lives of His people. In the gospels He is the obedient One; how far is this expressed in us, His epistle? And so we might go through the list. Let each young Christian who reads these pages remember that what Christ has first written in his heart is His own name, and that everything he does brings honour or dishonour on that holy name. I am sure many of my young readers have never really thought of this before, and I trust that the Lord may impress these few remarks upon each heart, so that we may better represent our absent Master.

Peter, in his first letter, gives us another beautiful thought about the Christian's character. In ch.....v....., we read that "if any obey not the word, they may without the word be

won by the conversation, while they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear." Here, though the apostle is not speaking to the young, but especially to Christian women who have unbelieving husbands, the truth he teaches can be applied by each one of us to himself. The question is how to influence those who will not read the Bible for themselves.

"Why," says Peter, "you must win them by illustrating it in your lives."

Did you ever see a picture-Bible? A short time ago I heard of a lady in Ireland who had a splendid one; but she, alas! was a poor Roman Catholic. However, she had a large family of children, who were very fond of looking at Joseph in the pit, Moses in the bulrushes, Daniel in the lions' den, and all the beautiful pictures we have often seen, and these children kept asking their mother, "What does this mean? and what does that mean"? So she was obliged to read the Bible in order to explain the pictures, and the result was she was truly saved by believing the Word which the pictures illustrated.

It is quite possible that my young friend may have a father or mother, a brother or sister, who does not care for the Lord Jesus, and who will not read the Bible.

Now you are to be a Bible-picture to them. If they won't read God's book, I know they will look at pictures, and I want you to illustrate the Bible. Many will not read about the meek and lowly Jesus, who yet will look at a picture of a meek and lowly child.

Parents that do not love the Bible still love to have obedient children.

Will you then try to be Bible-pictures at home? try to illustrate in your lives and *characters* the book that you love?

The apostle James also speaks of illustrating the Bible, in a lovely verse, "Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge amongst you?

Let him show

out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom." James, ch.....v.....

Of course we know that conversation here and elsewhere in the Bible does not mean words, but deeds that speak louder than words.

I will close by asking my little friends to fill in the blanks in the following sentences from the 1st Epistle of Peter:—

Before we are converted our conversation is.....

After we are saved, it is to be, 1st,.....
2nd,....., and 3rd,.....

First.....before God, then.....
and.....before man.





CHAPTER XIV.

MY PURSUITS.

"This one thing I do, forgetting those things that are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."..... ch..... v.....

"Faint yet pursuing."..... ch..... v.....

"Leaving us an example that ye should follow His steps."..... ch..... v.....

"Follow peace with all men, and holiness without which no man shall see the Lord."..... ch..... v.....

NOT long ago there was a great fire in the town in the middle of the night, and in a short time hundreds of people were running towards it.

I saw them passing by, each of their faces lighted up by the glare of the fire in front. They were all pressing to one point, and all looking the same way, and so they reflected in their faces the ruddy glow of the flames.

"But we all with open face, beholding as in a glass (or reflecting as in a mirror) the glory of the Lord : are changed into the same image from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord.".....ch.....v.....

Can you tell who "we all" means? I think it means those who are pressing after Christ, who are following Him.

If I have my back to Christ I cannot possibly be reflecting His glory : it is only as I look at Him, and follow Him, that I can get like Him.

The question, therefore, for each of my young readers is, What are your pursuits? What are you pursuing or following after?

An old Christian once put this question to a bright intelligent boy on his leaving school, asking him what he intended to do next.

"Why, I am going to college to study for the bar."

"And what then?"

"Why, then in time I expect to be made a judge."

"And what then?"

“Why, of course I shall be married to a charming wife, and be surrounded by a large circle of friends.”

“And what then?”

“Then I hope to enjoy myself for many a long year at the head of my profession.”

“And what then?”

“Then I shall retire and spend the rest of my years in comfort and quietness.”

“And what then?”

“Then of course I shall be getting old.”

“And what then?”

“Why, of course I cannot expect to live for ever, and I must die.”

“And what then?”

“Why, then I shall be buried with a grand funeral, and mourned over by all my friends.”

“And what then?” again solemnly asked the old man.

“Why then—why then,” said the young man, “*I cannot tell what then!*”

Are some of my young readers perhaps dazzled with prospects of riches and honour? Let them hear God’s warning voice. “And the

rich man died and was *buried*,.....and in hell he lifted up his eyes, *being in torment*"ch..... ..v.....

"Seek ye *first* the kingdom of God and His righteousness."ch.....v.....

"There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death."ch.....v.....

Let us now question some true Christian as to what his future is.

"Why, I am hoping to be more like Christ."

"And what then?"

"Why, then I may have to pass through trials and persecutions for His sake."

"And what then?"

"Why, many of my friends will leave me."

"And what then?"

"Why, His love will more than make up for it, and I shall get strength and patience to bear it all."

"And what then?"

"Goodness and mercy *shall* follow me all the days of my life."

"And what then?"

"I *shall* dwell in the house of the Lord forever."

"I may sleep in Jesus, or He may come for me and take me to spend eternity with Him."

"But if you die, what then?"

"Why, I shall go to be with Christ, which is far better, and my body will sleep in the grave until He comes for me; and then the dead in Christ shall rise first, and I shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall I be *for ever* with the Lord."

I am sure you can see at once the wonderful difference between the end of the young man and of the Christian, and that each of you would covet the latter. "Let me *die* the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his."ch.....v.....

Ah! my dear children, it is not Heaven we shrink from so often; it is the *path* that leads to it. And that is why I write this chapter, to encourage you to follow on, *not* turning aside to the right hand or the left.

Some time ago I was walking across a very rough moor, full of ups and downs, with hollows and ravines running in every direction.

The only way to go straight was to fix my eyes on some distant object, and make for it. I noticed a long way off a pillar standing up against the sky, and made this my object. Of course when down in one of the hollows I lost sight of the pillar, and being tired I followed the course of the ravine, instead of ascending the other side. When I got out of the hollow, I found I had wandered out of sight of my pillar. At last I turned round, and there it was, straight behind my back! I started for it again; but this time it mattered not what hills were in the way, I walked in a straight line, always keeping my eye on the object in front.

Now, we are in danger of falling into the very same mistake in our Christian life. Instead of keeping our eye on Christ, finding the way very rough and hard to tread, in order to avoid some slight or scorn we turn a little aside to walk in an easier path; and, alas! we find when we come to think of Christ we can see Him no more, for we have gradually turned our back on Him and left the right path.

Perhaps, when we are very happy and going on right, Satan presents some pleasure to us with the plea "there is no harm in it;" and for fear of ridicule we are led to join in it. Next he leads to something else, at each step getting us further from the right way. Now I earnestly beg of every young Christian to beware of turning aside from following Christ. Do not ask, "Is this wrong?" but "Is this what would please Him?"

I once heard a Christian speaking to a large congregation as to whether it was wrong for a Christian to take wine. "As far as I am concerned," he said, "I never touch a drop; but with regard to others I would only ask, that whenever you raise a glass of wine to your lips, it may be with the knowledge that it is to the glory of God." "Whether ye eat or *drink*, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.".....ch.....v.....

You will find no happiness in having one foot following the world and the other trying to follow Christ. We must make up our minds to follow Him wholly, cost what it may. "He *has*

left us an example that we should follow His steps." Try and tread in them more closely, and let all your pursuits be those on which Christ can look with an approving eye.

The following lines beautifully express what should be the desire of each Christian heart. I hope my young friends will commit them to memory :—

" Morn, noon, and night,
Thro' days o'ercast and bright,
My purpose still is one ;
I have one end in view,
Daily one thing I do,
Until my object's won.

" Behind my back I fling,
Like an unvalued thing,
My former self and ways ;
And' reaching forward far,
I seek the things that are
Beyond time's lagging days.

" I have the prize in view,
Whose worth no words can shew ;
This prize I seek alone :
All things are dung and dross,
All things I count but loss,
For Jesus fully known.

“ The day declineth fast,
Almost its hours are past,
Its lustre waneth now ;
That other heavenly day
With its enduring ray,
Shall soon light up my brow.

“ Oh ! may I follow still—
Faith’s pilgrimage fulfil,
With steps both sure and fleet ;
The longed-for goal I see ;
Jesus waits there for me ;
Haste ! haste ! my weary feet.”





CHAPTER XV.

MY SORROWS.

"He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief."

.....*ch*.....*v*.....

"As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing.".....*ch*.....*v*.....

"Weep with those that weep.".....*ch*.....*v*.....



FEW children know very much about sorrow, and yet none can live long in this world without meeting it in some form, for "man is born to trouble, as the sparks fly upward.".....*ch*.....*v*.....

I do not intend, however, to go through the little troubles in the life of every child, but only those that belong specially to the young Christian.

A young Christian went to stay with a friend, a short time ago, and, in answer to a letter of mine, wrote to me as follows:—"This would be the happiest time of my life but for a great sorrow that is always pressing upon me."

I wonder if any of my young readers can guess what that was? "When I came here," she continued, "I soon found my friend was not a Christian. I have been praying for her ever since; often when she has been asleep I have prayed and wept over her to think she was lying there, and knowing nothing of the love of Jesus. I have spoken to her, and sometimes she listens, but she is still unsaved. Oh! is it not dreadful to think of her state?" Now this is one of the Christian's sorrows.

And has my young reader no darling brother, sister, or friend, who, it may be, is careless about Christ and unsaved? How often, alas! we smooth the downward road for our friends, though on the narrow path ourselves, by joining in their worldliness, instead of sorrowing over them, and warning them of their danger.

Another sorrow that Christians often feel is on account of sin. Do we wander away from the right path and fall into sin? oh, how we should grieve when we think how it pains our loving Father and our Saviour! Not merely

sorry on account of any punishment that may follow, but because we have grieved the Lord who died for us.

And when we see others in sin, should we not grieve? Some, I know, seem rather to rejoice. If a Christian sin, they mention it with but little concern, instead of sorrowing for the dishonour done to their Master's name.

Naturally our sorrows are selfish ; a *Christian's* sorrows are unselfish. How often have I seen a child grieving half a day over some deferred pleasure, or some ungratified wish. The sorrows of childhood are especially selfish. It is the more beautiful, therefore, to see *a child* showing unselfish sorrow, because it shows such real likeness to Christ.

I shall never forget, after a children's meeting a short time since, I went up to speak to three girls who remained behind. Two of them were about fifteen, and the other about ten years old.

I spoke to the little one first. Her face was like a little sun, as she answered with joy that she loved Jesus, and had been saved just one week.

Turning to the others, I found them unconverted, and one of them careless. I spoke solemnly to them, begging them to decide for Christ; and while I was pleading with them I happened to see my little friend, her two large blue eyes fixed on her friend's face with such a sad, pleading look; and at last, when one of them began to weep, the tears trickled down her face in sympathy. I asked her why she cried. "Because Bessie does not love Jesus," was the answer.

I am glad to be able to add that in a few days the little girl was enabled to rejoice over her friends, both of whom accepted Christ as their Saviour.

Sorrow is often felt when we are persecuted in some way for Christ's sake. Perhaps unkind, mocking, cruel things are said that wound our feelings in the keenest manner, or things may be done to vex us and try our temper. Joy, however, is always mingled with this sorrow. As the apostle says at the head of this chapter, "Sorrowful, yet always rejoicing." For whatever it is that is said against us, if it

be hard to bear at the time, we are filled with happiness when we think that we are bearing it for *His* name's sake.

I could mention many other causes of sorrow to the young Christian in this world, but I dare say you can find them out quite soon enough for yourselves. Some may have more and others less, but none can escape sorrow in this world; it is full of it. What a relief to turn our thoughts to the time when "there shall be no more crying nor pain, when God shall wipe away tears from all eyes.".....
ch..v.....

I hope that, whatever sorrow or trial you may be called to pass through, you may ever, with the apostle Paul, be able to "reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.".....ch.....v.....

It is not, however, the glory of the future that most sustains the heart, but the knowledge that Christ feels for us and sympathizes with us in it all. Having trodden all the path Himself, "the man of sorrows" knows them all.

Surely the burden is light when He bears it
with us.

“We know Him as we could not know
Through Heaven’s golden years;
We there shall see His glorious face,
But Mary saw His tears.

“The touch that heals a broken heart
Is never felt above;
His angels know His blessedness—
His *wayworn* saints His *love*.”





CHAPTER XVI.

MY JOYS.

"Ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory."
.....*ch*.....*v*.....

"In thy presence is fulness of joy: at thy right hand are pleasures for evermore.".....*ch*.....*v*.....

"Rejoice evermore.".....*ch*.....*v*.....



OUR concluding chapter will be a bright and happy one, for who has joys like a Christian?

These joys are of two classes—present and future.

It is a great mistake to suppose that because we have been going through the Christian's sorrows which are *only* present, that he has no joys.

Indeed, so much is joy mingled even with the Christian's sorrow, that we could not speak of the one in the last chapter without touching on the other.

Let us briefly review some of our present joys.

It is a joy to know that all our sins are washed away.....ch.....v.....

It is a joy to know that we are saved for ever.....ch.....v.....

It is a joy to know that God will never forsake us.....ch.....v.....

It is a joy to know we are children of God.
.....ch.....v.....

It is a joy to know that we are united to Christ.....ch.....v.....

It is a joy to suffer for Christ.....ch.....
v.....

It is a joy to know that in each sorrow "He bears a part.".....ch.....v.....

It is a joy to speak of Him and read His word.....ch.....v.....

It is a joy to know that He is our great High Priest.....ch.....v.....

It is a joy to bring others to Christ.....
ch.....v.....

It is a joy to meet those that love Him.....
ch.....v.....

It is a joy to speak to Himself, and to enter into His joys.....ch.....v.....

If these are some of the present joys of a Christian, what shall we say of the eternity of joy that lies before us? Well indeed may the apostle say the present affliction is not "worthy to be compared" with it!

Shall we make a list of some of them?

What a joy it will be to hear the voice of the Lord when He comes to call us up!.....ch.....v.....

What a joy it will be to be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air!.....ch.....v.....

What a joy it will be to behold His face!.....ch.....v.....

What a joy it will be to be changed into His image!.....ch.....v.....

What a joy it will be to dwell for ever in His presence!.....ch.....v.....

What a joy it will be to meet all those who have gone before!.....ch.....v.....

What a joy it will be to know even as we are known!.....ch.....v.....

What a joy it will be to sing the new song !
ch.....v.....

What a joy it will be to gaze on all the
 glories of the New Jerusalem !.....ch.....
 v.....

Is it not wonderful to think that each of
 these joys will be realized by the young Chris-
 tian who reads this ?

Surely we should lift up our heads, for our
 redemption draweth nigh.....ch.....v.....

Let us ever remember, however, that our joy
 is *in the Lord*, and it is only as we are pleasing
 Him, and following Him, that we can have joy.
 I know a large circle of young Christians, and
 can always tell when they are going on well
 by their happy faces. When a Christian loses
 his happy face, you may know there is some-
 thing wrong. As you grow older you will find
 out, too, the wonderful meaning of that verse,
 "The joy of the Lord is your strength.".....
 ch.....v..... If your path in life is not
 exactly what you could have wished, if trials
 and sorrows press upon you, the only safeguard
 against a murmuring spirit is to "joy in the

Lord." Count up all your mercies; they always outnumber the sorrows.

Those who look down are likeliest always to stumble; those who look up are safest.

I shall never forget, when at the Sunday school one morning, the faces of two girls who came up to speak to me: they were beaming so brightly that I knew the girls had some good news to tell. And what was it? At the mill where they were employed they worked one on each side of a girl for whom they had long been praying, and a week or two before for the first time she had shown real anxiety of soul, and now she had confessed Christ. Surely, if there is joy in the presence of the angels over one sinner that repenteth (..... ch.....v.....), there is also joy among the people of God.

Among earthly joys there is surely none purer than that which arises from the approval of our parents. Obedience always brings joy, and disobedience ever brings sorrow.

How true this is amongst the children of God! If, on the one hand, it is a joy to God

to have obedient children, and even an apostle can say, "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth" (..... ch..... ..v.....), on the other hand, we can truly say we are never so happy as when we are trying to please the Lord.

I wonder if my young readers have ever noticed the two joys Peter speaks of (1 Pet. i.). "Wherein *ye greatly* rejoice," he says, referring to the inheritance incorruptible, reserved for us in heaven; and surely our joy is great when we think of this wonderful prospect. But there is another joy surpassing this in v. 8. "Whom not having seen ye love; in whom though now ye see Him not, yet believing ye rejoice with joy *unspeakable and full of glory*." This joy is on account of *Christ*, not of *Heaven*. If when we think of Heaven our joy is "*great*," when we think of Christ it is "*unspeakable and full of glory*." And I am sure we shall find it so; for

"The Lamb is all the glory
Of Emmanuel's land."

And now, my dear children, having gone through the leading features of the Christian

life, we must part company for a time—each of us, I trust, encouraged and refreshed by reviewing all that we have in Christ, and, I hope, understanding more clearly and fully the duties and responsibilities attaching to our new life. One word as we close. The time is short, you may not have long to put in practice all that we have been talking about. Begin to-day: and remember, only “a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry.” Oh, be true to Him! be not ashamed of Him! Remember His approving smile in *that* day will more than recompense you for all you may endure till then. May the Lord keep your feet in the narrow way, and your hearts in the sunlight of His love!

“Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy; to the only wise God, our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.”.....ch.....v.....

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