



"My Little Friend."

PRIMROSES.

MY LITTLE FRIEND ANNUAL.



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L O N D O N :
OFFICE OF "MY LITTLE FRIEND," 20, PATERNOSTER SQUARE.

❖ P R E F A C E . ❖

MY DEAR LITTLE FRIENDS,



FEW weeks ago I was reminded of the near approach of the end of the year, and of the need there would be for me to write a few lines by way of preface for our new volume.

Near to where I live there are a great many large trees—Beeches, Poplars, Limes, and Oaks. When autumn time comes round we know that they gradually lose their leaves; but one morning I was very much surprised. There had been a fall of a few leaves, but on the morning of which I am now speaking, I started out early as usual, and found the pathway was quite covered with really a carpet of leaves.

There had been a heavy fall of rain in the night, and this had brought the leaves down in such numbers as to quite cover up the ground.

This then reminded me that winter is close upon us, and though we have not seen much of frost and snow, yet, no doubt, we shall have some before long.

But there is a little text that came to my mind also, which I should like to quote. It is found in Jeremiah viii. 20, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved."

This refers to the harvest and summer of this present day of grace, and sad indeed would it be for any boy or girl to have to add the words, "I am not saved."

We have sought in the pages of our Magazine to speak of that blessed One who alone can forgive our sins and save the soul, and He is waiting to be gracious, even yet before the year 1895 shall close.

Let me then urge you, every one who reads these lines, to remember that there will come a time of which that text speaks, when the summer will indeed be ended and gone.

In the December number you will have seen the notice that this is to be the last volume of this Magazine under its present title; but we hope it will appear under the new title of "Gospel Stories for the Young," and Mr. J. W. Nicholls has kindly promised to act as Editor for the new Magazine, and C. J. L. will continue her interesting "Talks with my Girls," if the Lord will, so we quite hope to retain all our old readers, as well as get a good many new ones.

Wishing you a very happy new year,

Yours faithfully,

THE EDITOR.

20, PATERNOSTER SQUARE,
LONDON, E.C.

December, 1895.





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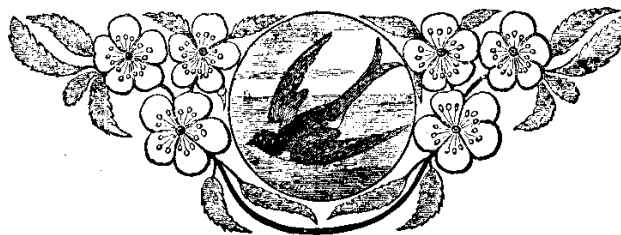
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Litt^{le} Alice and her Mother.
(1s. per year, post free.)

One Half-Penny.

What became of Alice's Sins.

THERE is a little girl living in the same house that I am in, named Alice. She is a very wild little thing, and never sits still for more than a few moments at a time. If I listen, I hear her running up and down the passages as hard as she can go, then her restless little feet fly to the door, to see if the muffin man is coming; then she catches sight of poor pussy, and hugs her until she gets a good scratch in return.

Sometimes she comes and stays with me, while I read to her, or tell her a little story.

One evening, hot and flushed she entered the room, and sat down on the little footstool beside the window.

I went on with my writing, but presently, hearing a deep drawn sigh, I looked up.

Alice was gazing out of the window, with a most unusually saddened look on her mischievous little face.

"I suppose God only likes the good little boys and girls," she said, with almost an impatient shrug of her shoulders.

"What makes you think that?" I answered.

"Well, I am quite sure He doesn't care about me."

"Why not?"

"Oh! because I've done such heaps of wicked things."

"Have you?"

"Yes—heaps—disobeyed mother, and slapped Johnnie, and, oh! ever so much more, I'm sure Jesus doesn't love me."

"Come here, Alice," I said, "and let us have a little talk about this. Now, if every one had been nice and good and obedient, do you think God would have thought it necessary to part with His dearly loved Son, and send Him into the world to die on the cross?"

"I don't know."

"Ah, Alice! if we could have saved ourselves, Jesus would never have come, but He knew how bad we all were, how sunken in sin and iniquity, so He left His Father's home and suffered on the cross instead of us, and now He cries, 'I came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.'"

"And does He really love the naughty ones?" asked Alice anxiously.

"Oh, yes," I answered, "and Alice, you know when you have been naughty or disobedient to your mamma, she doesn't cease to love you, does she? but she feels very grieved and sad, and she wants you to tell her you are sorry, doesn't she?"

"Oh yes, indeed she does," was the quick reply.

"And as soon as you have confessed your faults, and asked her forgiveness, she takes you in her arms, and kisses you, and tells you it's all right now, does she not? Well, that is what God does. 'If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.' If we go to Him and confess that we are sinners, He shews us Jesus on the cross, the One who died for us, and who wants for us to accept His full and free pardon."

"Then He does love me though I am so bad," said Alice, with a great sigh of relief. When mother came in a few minutes later with candles in hand to take Alice to bed, she was surprised to see the quiet look on her little girl's face, and even more so, when without a word she arose and followed her mother, instead of the usual entreaties to be allowed to sit up "just five minutes more." And oh! I trust that He who began a good work in that little girl's heart then, will complete it, that she may be the Lord's for time and eternity.

Yes, dear little reader, Jesus calls the naughty ones. I want you to say—

"I bring my sins to Thee,
The sins I cannot count;
That all may cleansed be
In Thy once opened fount;
Jesus paid it all,
All to Him I owe,
Sin had left a crimson stain,
He washed it white as snow."

"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."

John iii. 36.

Lily's Locket.

THE children were gathered in the twilight round the fire : they could not see to read any longer, and so the books were laid aside. This was the half-hour they loved best of all the twelve hours of the day.

It was now that mother usually came in, perhaps a little tired from her long round of visiting, and often sad because of the things she had seen and heard in the parish. This was just the time father managed to leave his study, and gather with his bright-faced lads and lassies for a little while before the tea-bell rang.

On this particular December evening their mamma was telling them of the poor families in the village, half-starving, because the fathers and brothers were out of work.

"I wish I was rich : I would buy such heaps of things—bread, and nice warm clothes, and everything," said Nellie.

"And I wish I hadn't spent the pennies in my money-box," sighed Bertie. And so the children ran on, and the conversation drifted into other things until the tea-bell rang, and there was a general rush.

Mother noticed that Lily, the eldest girl, had been very silent while the rest had been chatting. During tea her large thoughtful eyes looked a shade more thoughtful, and when the younger ones had been carried off to the nursery and put to bed, she stole away to where her mother sat with her sewing.

"Mamma," she said, "I think I should like to give my new silver locket and chain, that Uncle gave me, you know, to go towards getting something for those poor people you told us about."

The mother did not answer for a moment ; then looking into her little girl's face, she said, "What has made you wish to do that, Lily ?"

"I have told Jesus about it, Mamma, and I want to give it to *Him*."

"Well but Lily, I thought you liked your new locket and chain so very much."

"Yes, indeed I do," with a little sigh : "but I have been asking Jesus a long time to let me give Him something ; and so, now Mamma dear, next time you go into the town,

perhaps the jeweller will take it back, and give me the money instead."

Before this, Lily had given the Lord Jesus something which was of far more value than the locket and chain. A year or two back she had brought to His feet her young heart, and He had taken it, and made it His own. Since then she had longed to bring Him some little offering of her love ; and so had made up her mind He should have this—the most valuable thing amongst her little store of treasures.

Perhaps you will wonder how such a great God—the God who fills all heaven with the glory of His presence—could think anything about such little matters ; but He has told us in His word that the very hairs of our head are all numbered : and oh, we have very little idea how He watches the lives and actions of His own blood-bought ones. He loves for you to tell Him all that is in your heart ; and it must bring Him such great joy when He sees you making little sacrifices in order to win from him a smile, a loving look.

Lord Jesus !—

"One look of Thine makes heaven."

Have you ever brought Him that gift, the most precious, the most valuable, you *could* bring Him—your heart ? If not, just stop and think a moment.

The Lord Jesus, before whom myriads of holy angels bow their heads and worship, stoops to ask you to yield yourself to Him. Is not it past all human thought ? Will you grieve Him by refusing Him this gift ? No ! I think you will, with me, hand yourself over to Him, take the pardon He offers you, and live to serve Him ; gladly, freely, and joyfully.

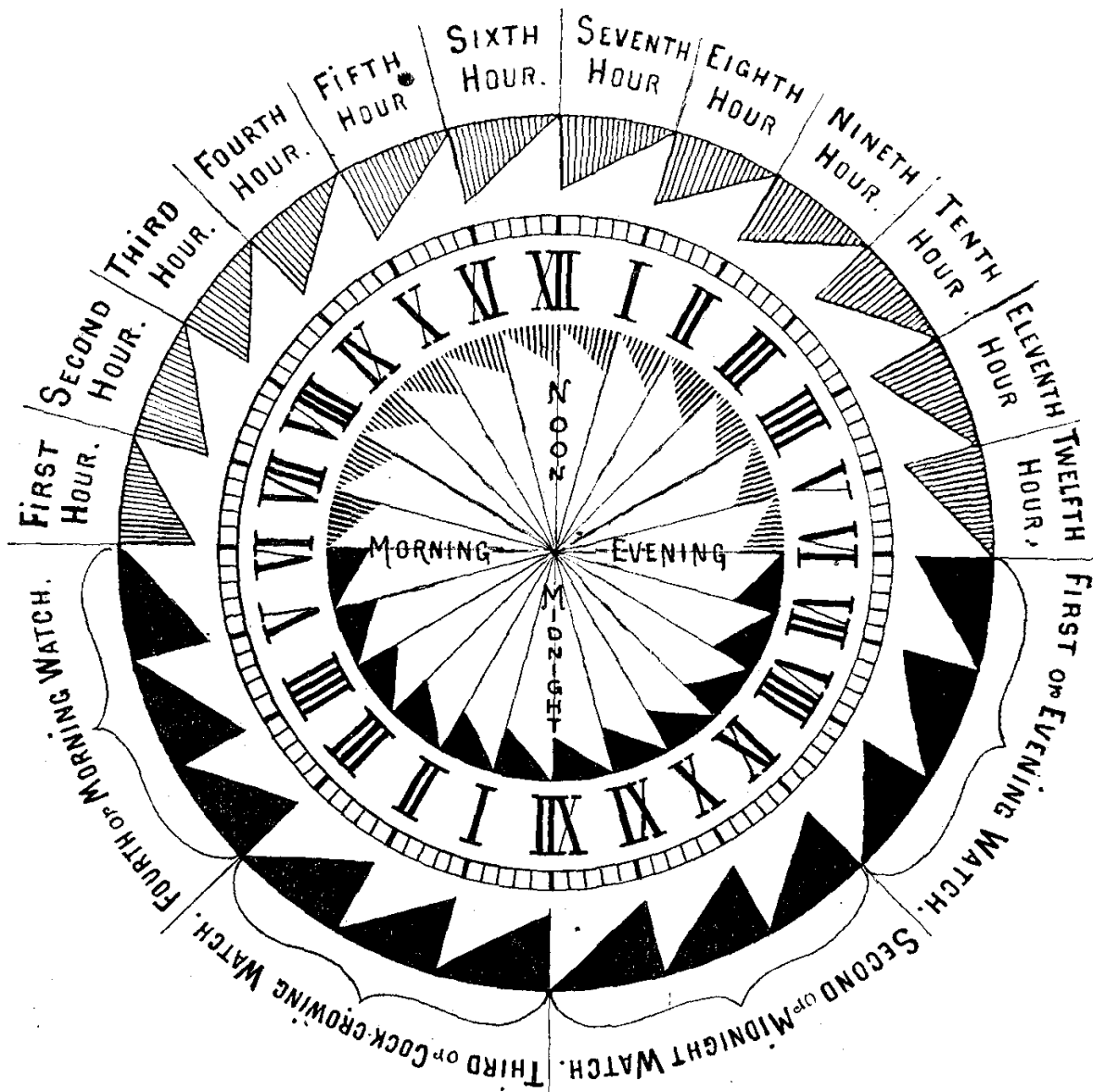
He will not disappoint the soul that seeks Him ; Jesus never turned any one away. Seek His beautiful face : and then your life from now shall indeed be a life worth living.

The Time Diagram.

THIS is called the time diagram, because it gives the period of one whole day, divided into 24 hours of 60 minutes. Each minute having 60 seconds, which gives us no less than 3,600 seconds in one hour, or 86,400 in a day.



Helping the Poor.



If my little reader will think of any old clock, or the neat little machine that father carries in his breast pocket, called a watch, and that it correctly records the time of day year in and year out, 86,400 times in 24 hours, he or she must think the old clock is not to be despised, and that the watch is indeed a wonderful and faithful little machine, though it has neither brains as you and I have, or steam like the railway engine, to regulate and propel it.

A friend has sent this time diagram, because he thinks it will help you all to understand the various times mentioned in the scriptures, such as the four watches into which the night was divided. For instance, we read in Matthew xiv. 25, "In the fourth

watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea." Well, if you look on the diagram, you will see it was some time between three and six o'clock in the morning, according to our time. Or again, on Luke xii. 38, speaking of the return of the absent Lord, it says: "If he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants." You can easily see from the diagram to what hours of the night the second and third watches refer.

Now let us think of some other hours named, such as in Acts x. 3, where Cornelius had a vision about the ninth hour of the day; again, in the ninth verse of the same chapter, Peter went up upon the house-top

to pray about the sixth hour. Also in Acts ii. 15 we read, "These are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day." All these times are clearly understood as soon as you look at the diagram.

But let me point out that in scripture the hour is named in the beginning, but in English at the end. Thus we say a quarter to four or half-past four, naming the hour last.

Well, let us suppose the little triangles in the diagram to be cones of sand, as in an egg-glass. Notice the cone under the seventh hour is full to begin the hour, and by time must part with every grain of sand before it can lose that expression. Whereas, under the Roman figures, the triangle in reversed order represents an empty cone, which by time receives the last grain of sand, to make it full, before it can be called one o'clock.

In Old Testament times the sabbath, or day of rest, came at the end of the week, and many people in the present day think that no one can know till the day of judgment whether they are saved or lost.

But since Christ came all this is changed. We now have the Lord's day, which is the first day of the week; and in the same way we can start on the road to heaven with the full knowledge of sin forgiven, through faith in His blessed name.

The night watches remind us that the Lord is coming, and in Luke xii. 38 we read: "If he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants."

"I expect I'm too Little."

THE crowd was fast dispersing in different directions, and the lights in the Mission Hall were being extinguished. Just inside the entrance door stood a little girl poorly clad, and with eyes that bore traces of tears. No one had noticed her until a christian lady, who had stayed behind to talk to those who had been anxious about their souls, suddenly caught sight of the little figure.

Touched with the forlorn and wistful countenance, she stopped and addressed a few kindly words to the lonely little girl.

To her surprise, her only answer was a flood of tears.

"Wouldn't you like to love Jesus, dear?" asked the lady.

"Yes, ma'am."

"He loves you very much, you know; so much, that He died to win you for Himself."

"Yes, ma'am."

"Wouldn't you like to give yourself to Him, then, to-night—just here?"

"I expect I'm too little," was the answer this time.

"Too little? oh dear no. Jesus says, 'Suffer the little children to come unto me,'" was the bright reply.

"I thought He didn't take no notice of the little 'uns: He was so busy seein' after the big folk."

"Ah! but that's not true; the Lord Jesus has a heart large enough to take in everybody—little as well as big."

The lady sat down on one of the benches, and drew the little girl down beside her. It was growing late, but this was not of much consequence to her: people who live to win souls for their Master do not look much at their watches!

She soon learnt all about the lonely little waif: hers was no uncommon story; a father who cursed and swore, and a mother who spent much of her time in the neighbouring public houses.

Before they left the Mission Hall, she had, in her simple, child-like way, given herself into the keeping of the Good Shepherd, who, while He leaves the sheep to follow Him, carries the *lambs* in His bosom.

She came regularly after this to the services, and delighted in listening to the sweet gospel hymns. Once even she induced her mother to come with her—poor mother, who had grown hard and cruel through the terrible life she led.

Have *you* ever said to yourself, "I expect I'm too little for Jesus to care for me. I expect He is too busy looking after the big people"?

Oh, what a mistake! How the Lord loves to win you when you are boys and girls, instead of when your hair has grown grey, and your eyes dim.

Do you remember the little boy He called

many, many hundred years ago, who afterwards became a great prophet—the little boy Samuel, who ministered before the Lord? And since that He has called hundreds of other boys (and girls too), who have gone forth as witnesses of God into the world as burning and shining lights amid the surrounding darkness and gloom.


It says, in the word of God, that when the Lord wanted Samuel, "He came, and stood, and called" him. (1 Sam. iii. 10.) And that is what He is doing every day, in your case.

He has *come*—ah yes, we know that! He has walked this sin-stricken world; he has died, "the just for the unjust." Yes, He has come, He stands—where? At the door of your heart, and knocks. (Rev. iii. 20.) He calls! ah! how often has He called you, and you have turned a deaf ear to the loving, pleading voice of Jesus? How often? And as He comes to-day and calls you once again, will you stop and listen?

"Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth," was little Samuel's reply. Shall it be yours? Will you stop and listen to what God has to say to you? "If any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him and will sup with him, and he with me."

Talks with my Girls.

No. I.

HAT a lovely afternoon!" Yes, indeed it is. Only a few minutes ago a ray of sunlight peeped in at the open window and shone so brightly upon my desk, that I was quite glad to retreat to the other side of the room.

But Lizzie wants to know "why I did not close the window, or draw down the blind?" Partly because I knew that my visitor, the beautiful ray of light, that had travelled such a long, long way from its far-off home in the sun, would not stay with me very long; for in October most of us find ourselves saying, "Oh, how soon it begins to get dark." The mornings and evenings, too, are quite cold sometimes, and when we go for a walk into the woods or even into the garden, the falling leaves seem to make a soft carpet under our feet.

Have the leaves anything to say to us? Yes, I think they have, though I do not expect that

we shall all hear exactly the same message in the gentle, rustling sound their fall makes.

Kate, who is away at school, says they always make one think of Christmas holidays and New Year's gifts; while Mabel, who is older and who, I know, has begun to love and value her Bible, looks up and whispers, "We all do fade as a leaf." (Isa. lxiv. 6.)

Yes, dear Mabel; the falling leaves may indeed speak to our hearts, saying, "The time is short;" but if we belong to Christ, if we are children of God, the thought need not make us sad; for we can look up in faith and rejoice to know that we are going home to the Father's House, to be for ever with the Lord Jesus, the One whom through grace we have learnt to know and trust in, as our own precious Saviour.

But you want to know what the falling leaves are saying to me, do you not?

They seem to tell me the end of the year will soon be here, and though I desire that the Lord may keep the hope of His return bright and fresh in my heart, still I must not forget that in a few weeks from the time of my writing, quite ten thousand boys and girls, whose homes are very far scattered indeed, may be looking for the January number of *My Little Friend*, and again our Editor has been so kind as to say he can spare room enough in its pages month by month for me to have a pen and ink chat with my young friends.

And I really do want to talk very simply and lovingly to my little readers. I cannot get you all round me, just as I do the girls of my Sunday afternoon class, can I?

Frances says, with such a merry laugh, "No, it would be quite impossible. She is sure I could not find a room large enough to hold you all, and besides she thinks I should find it very hard work and soon get tired if I had to make my voice heard by even part of so very large a class."

Frances is right, I cannot have you all together, and yet I feel how very good it is of the Lord to allow me year after year to go on writing to and for the dear young readers of *My Little Friend*. I count it a very real pleasure and privilege, and a very solemn trust too, for I know that the all-seeing eye of God will rest upon every line I write, so of course it must be *all true*. And I know that of myself I cannot write one word that will really help or encourage one of Christ's little ones. His own words are: "Without me ye can do nothing." (John xv. 5.)

But I can and do thank Him for giving me to feel this far more deeply I think than I used to do, for the very sense of my own weakness helps me by casting me more simply on His strength, and leads me to pray more earnestly that these "Talks with my Girls" may be for His glory.

And now let me wish my dear young friends a "Happy New Year," one bright with the blessing of the Lord. Of course I do not know all your names, and my address book would have to be a very large one to hold all your addresses, and yet I often seem to take a peep into some of your homes.

Quite a number of the girls, who will, I hope, read this, live in busy towns. Martha M—, who writes to me sometimes from a manufacturing town in the North of England, says that often in the cold gray dawn of a winter's morning she wakes up to hear the loud ringing of the factory bell and the sound of many feet hurrying along the street.

I think her home must be a very different kind of place from that of Maggie, who breathes the pure air, and lives among the sights and sounds of a Scotch fishing village; and yet there is one way in which Maggie and Martha are very much alike. They have each owned before God that they were *lost*, and they have believed the sweet gospel message, "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." (Luke xix. 10.)

But I must not forget Grace in her pleasant home among green lanes and hop gardens in the lovely county of Kent. But all who will welcome our Magazine do not live in England or Scotland. "Have I any friends in Wales or Ireland?" some one is saying. Yes, I think we have readers in both Welsh and Irish children; but I am thinking just now of our young friends in the Colonies, and of the long voyage some of the numbers of *My Little Friend* must take before it can bear its New Year message to them in their far-away homes. And if you and I could follow our books for quite three thousand miles across the blue waves of the great Atlantic Ocean, we should find ourselves among people who spoke the same language as ourselves. I remember having read in one of my history books that when Henry the Seventh was king, England was the only English speaking country in the world, and even then barons and rich people almost always talked to each other in French. Most of the books, of which there were not many, were written in Latin, it being thought vulgar to speak or write the same language as that used by ploughmen and shepherd boys.

But all this is different now, and English is spoken by millions of people living on both sides of the Atlantic.

Perhaps a few numbers will even find their way to far-off Texas. Quite a long time ago, I received a letter bearing that post-mark, and signed "Bessie Horner." It was such an interesting letter, too. As I read, I seemed almost to see Bessie's home at the foot of a

mountain, so tall that its top is often hidden among the clouds. She told me of the broods of soft, downy little chickens "she raises," and of her home lessons, as the school is too far-off for her to attend, though her brothers ride in on their ponies nearly every day. She did not forget either to tell me about the baby, Cecil, then only a few months old.

Now I am quite sure such a kind and interesting letter deserved an answer by the very next mail. Don't you think it did? And as Bessie asked me to write her "a nice long letter," I am just as sure she expected to get what a little girl I know calls "a real letter."

Shall I tell Bessie why she has been disappointed? Because she forgot to send her address. But if she is still one of my readers, I hope she will accept very real thanks for the pleasure she gave me by writing, and understand why I could not answer her letter in just the way she expected.

But Florrie and Alice, who seem to think our talk has been rather a grave one, ask, "If I am going to tell them any true stories this year?"

Yes, dear ones, I hope to get at least one true story into almost every one of our "Talks." Sometimes I may tell you about some of the girls I know; at others we shall chat pleasantly together about the girlhood and school-days of some earnest worker for Christ.

Our next month's chat must, I think, begin with a story. But in the meantime I am going to ask any of you, who would like to do so, to write to me. Try and send your letters not later than the 21st of the month. Address—

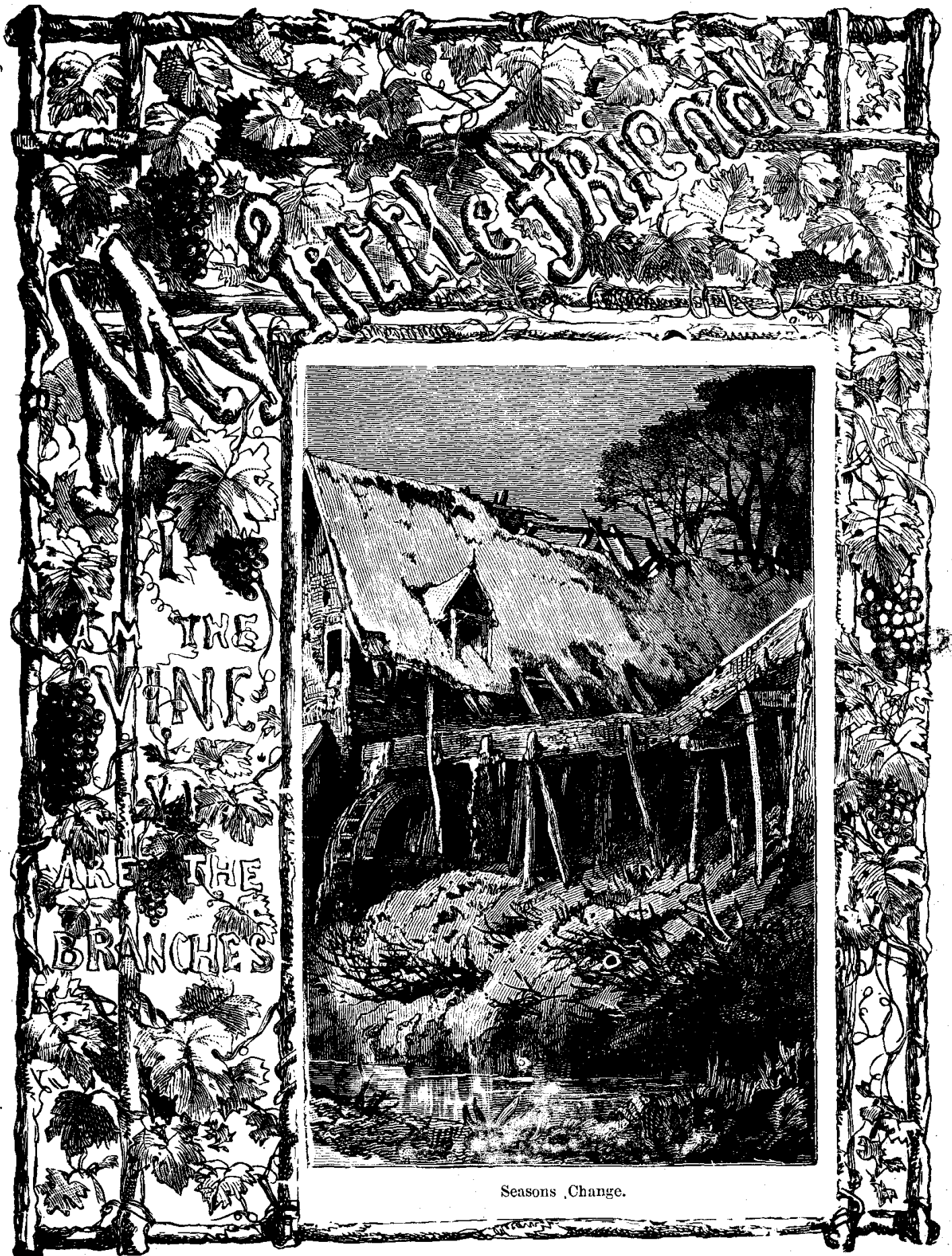
C. J. L., Office of *My Little Friend*,
20, Paternoster Square, London, E.C.

I am not going to offer any prizes for the best letters, as it would be hardly fair to some of the younger ones. But I will tell you what I hope to do—to answer every letter I receive, not by post, that would be quite out of the question, as I have only *one* pair of hands; but by a few words or lines addressed to each of my correspondents, known or unknown, as our "Talks" go on.

But some of my young friends say, "They don't like letter-writing, for they never know exactly what to write about." Well a good way to help these girls over their difficulty will I think be by giving them subjects to write about. So I will begin by asking all the girls who would like to help me to make our "Talks" helpful and interesting, to choose a text or verse as a motto for 1895.

Write on one side of the paper only, and please do not forget to put your names and tell me how old you are.

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Seasons Change.

Seasons Change.

WINTER.

WRAPPED in a white and hoary garb,
Nature is fast asleep;
The earth, like man, must have repose,
Or fruit we'll never reap.

Unsullied is the pure white snow
High on the mountain steep;
Like to the fleecy clouds of heaven,
The drifts are high and deep.

An unseen artist through the night,
In lovely crystal stains,
Has drawn the phantom fairy trees
Upon the window panes.

The rivers and the gurgling brooks
Are by the frost congealed;
The placid lakes and Northern seas,
A powerful hand has sealed.

At night athwart the heavens, bright
Meteors flash and gleam;
And far above the wintry waste,
The stars like jewels seem.

The wind moans through the leafless trees,
The firs with snow are clad;
The feathered minstrels now are mute,
So listless, dull, and sad.

Where are the flowers? alas! they're dead,
They slumber 'neath the ground;
And where the blooming rose once hung,
The icicle is found.

We, too, may die, but Spring-time comes,
This hope allays our fears;
The dead in Christ will live again,
Through never ending years.

"Just one turn more."

"**Y**OU always want your own way,
Alick."

"Perhaps I do, dear mother;
at all events, I want it *now*, so
do let us go, *just* this once, we
really will be back in good time," laughingly
replied Alick, and as he spoke, the bright,
manly boy stooped and impressed a loving
kiss on the fair, somewhat troubled brow of
the lady who had spoken.

"Not a minute later, then, than nine,"
continued she.

Glad of this tacit permission, after kissing

her again, he waved "farewell," and quickly
ran off, accompanied by his young brother
Bertie.

Fairly content for the time being, though
with an oppression upon her that she could
not account for or shake off, Mrs. Grey
busied herself in making preparation for
her sons' return.

A simple meal of milk, fruit, bread and
butter spread, she drew the curtains across
the window, made up the fire, and taking
her needlework, sat down to await her boys.

As she stitched, her thoughts occupied
with them, she recalled to mind many acts
of wilfulness committed by Alick; and dwelt
with apprehensive forebodings upon the yield-
ing, self-indulgent nature of her Bertie, so
easily led by his elder brother, for whom he
entertained the greatest admiration, and who,
to his thinking, never could do wrong.

As these thoughts passed through her
mind, her work fell from her usually busy
hands, and she owned to herself how often,
through mistaken fondness, she had lacked
firmness in dealing with her sons, and it
was deeply impressed upon her that obedi-
ence is the first principle to enjoin upon a
child; and above all, that those whom God
loves He chastens; and as the conviction
grew upon her that she had erred in her
training, she breathed a prayer for strength
to guide her fatherless boys, so that she
might be to them in the place of both
parents, and henceforth exert the quality of
justice as well as that of mercy.

Thus occupied, the time slipped quickly
by, and nine o'clock struck, then ten, and
then the chimes of eleven, and yet, alas!
no boys.

As one quarter of an hour followed another,
the mother's fears deepened, and when mid-
night sounded, her anxiety was too great
for words.

She fell upon her knees and besought the
Lord to take care of her bright, wilful boys.
By-and-by rising greatly comforted, for she
knew that He is mighty to save, with
renewed confidence she drew aside a curtain
and looked out on the lovely wintry scene.

The air was clear and still, the sky a
pearly grey, every leaf and twig sparkled
with frost, whilst a mantle of snow covered

all things, beautifying even defects, like charity covering a multitude of sins.

A full moon shone upon all with its pale, pure light. It was keenly cold, and the few passers-by hurried on, vainly trying to warm their chilled hands and feet, and yet another hour and that dreadful night passed, she hardly knew how, without bringing her any tidings.

Meanwhile, the moonlight bathed the Hampstead ponds in beauty, and as the church clock chimed nine, the younger skater prepared to leave the ice; but the elder boy, exclaiming "Just one turn more," suited the action to the word, and sped away again across the shining ice.

Ah me! how truly it is said, that "there is but a step between us and death;" a crack, a crash, a plunge, and the icy waters have engulfed Alick.

Swift as an arrow, without a moment's hesitation, Bertie dashed after him. Calling loudly for help, he cautiously approached the place where his brother had gone in, and contriving to get hold of him, upheld Alick on the edge of the ice, which broke again and again under their united weight, as again and again they threw themselves forward on to the yet unbroken part.

It seemed a lifetime before the sorely needed help arrived, but it *did* at length, and they were both rescued from their perilous position, and taken out of the freezing water, more dead than alive.

As soon as might be, after kind hands had tended and warmed their chilled frames, they were accompanied to their home, and restored to their anxious mother's loving care, who in the joy of reunion forgot the misery of that dreadful night, although the lesson learned amidst such deep anxiety had its lasting effect, and she henceforth ruled her boys with a firmer hand, requiring *immediate* obedience to her just commands.

And the experiences of that terrible time had not been without their teaching to Alick and Bertie, and they too realised, and ever after remembered, that "To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." And thankful too they were that through God's goodness neither of them lost their lives.

A. W.

A Light unto our Path.



VERY rich gentleman once met two poor children; he pitied them very much, and thought he would like to take them and make them his own children, so he said to them: "This road will take you to a large castle, which you shall live in, and lest you should lose your way, I am going to give you a lantern, which will only shine on the path which you are to follow."

They took the lamp and followed the road, but soon they came to a path which was very rough and stony. They did not want to go along such a path as that, but the light from the lamp shone brightly on it. What was to be done? Perhaps if they turned the lamp round, the light would shine on another path, which seemed much easier, and looked as if it went in the same direction. They tried again and again to make the light shine on the easy road, but without success.

They shut one side of the lantern, but the light which could still be seen, only turned to the stony way. They shut it a little more, but the faithful light never shone on the wrong road. At last they shut it altogether and tried to go on without it.

After wandering about in the dark for a long time, they met a man who asked where they were going. The children told him all that had happened, and then he wanted to know what they were carrying. They told him it was a lamp.

"But of what use is it?" he asked.

"We were told that the light would shine on the path we were to follow," they answered.

"Then why have you shut it?"

"Oh, we did not like the road it shone on, it was so rough and narrow."

"Ah, my children," said the stranger, "open your lantern again, and let its light guide you. It will never deceive you, and you will soon find your way."

So the children followed his advice, and very soon found the path they had turned away from. This time they gladly followed it, in spite of the stones and brambles, and soon arrived at the castle.



Dear children, our conduct is often like that of these two little ones.

Like the lantern which was given to them, the word of God has been given to us, and is the light which is to shine on our path while we are down here on our way home. God, in His great love, has given us His word, to tell us how we are to act in this world, and what we are to do. But very often we do not like to obey it, and we try to forget it;

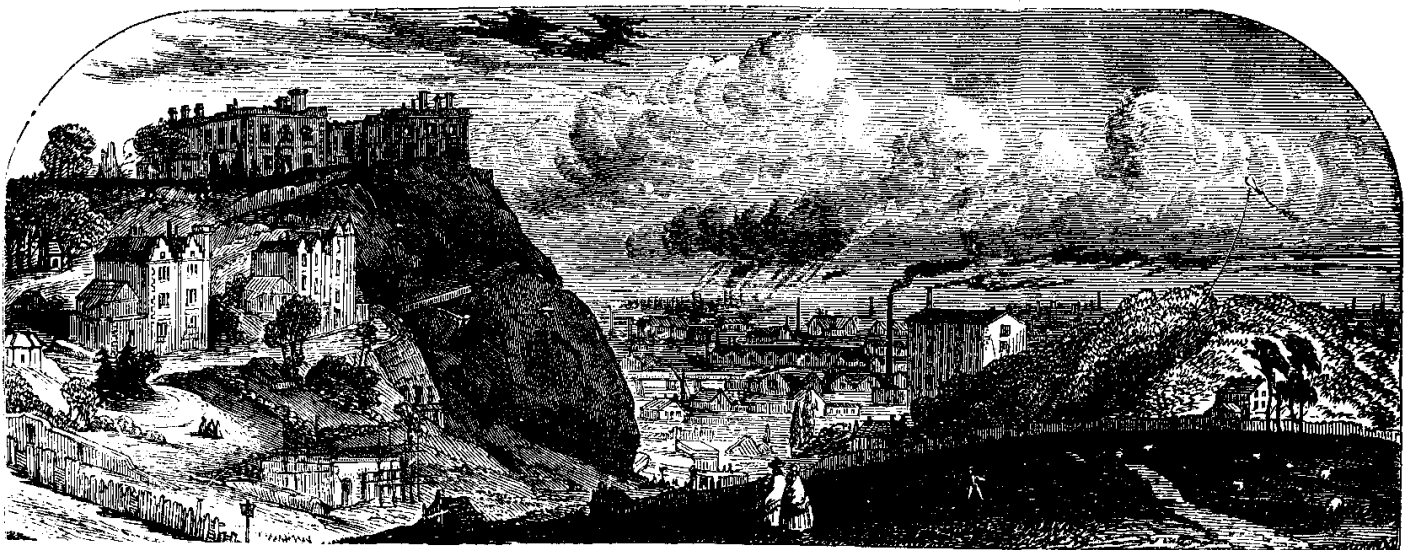
we shut it up, as the children shut the lantern, and we try to walk alone in the darkness of our own hearts. We like to go our own way, instead of following the path pointed out by the word of God, and then we get unhappy. But God loves His children too much to let them always wander away from Him, and so He sends His servants to warn them, and tell them to let the light shine again, and guide them to the path He would have them walk in.

Dear children, never allow yourselves to shut up the word of God because you do not seem to want to follow it. Sometimes you may find the road difficult; perhaps your companions will laugh at you when you want to read God's word; or perhaps it may cost you something to give up your own will; but never mind how difficult and rough it may seem; follow it, and you will soon find it is the only road to real happiness and blessing.

"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path." (Ps. cxix. 105.)

"Enter ye in at the strait gate, for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat.

"Because strait is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life; and few there be that find it." (Matt. vii. 13, 14.)





The Golden Calf.

WHEN the children of Israel were being led by Moses all the way from Egypt to the land of Canaan, many wonderful things took place, before they at last left the sandy desert that separated the two countries, Egypt from which they were going, and Canaan the land of promise to which they were wending their way.

God used to speak to Moses from Mount Sinai, and on one occasion Moses stayed a long while up in the mount with God; he was there for forty days and nights, and the people wondered what had become of him. They were weary of waiting, and wanted to go on with their journey, but who should lead them if Moses was not there? Then the evil thought came into their hearts to make them gods that should go before them, and the people asked Aaron to make them a god, and Aaron, instead of checking the evil, did as the people wanted, and made a golden calf. Then he said, "These be thy gods, O

Israel, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt."

Oh what a sad sight for God to look down upon just at the very time when He was giving Moses the tables of stone containing the law up in the mount, for the people to forget all the wonders He had done in their midst in saving them from the hand of Pharaoh, and keeping them alive day by day in the wilderness.

But nothing escapes the eye of God, and He said to Moses, "Go, get thee down; for thy people, which thou broughtest out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves."

So Moses went down from the mount, and what a sight did he see! First he heard the sound of singing, and when he came near to the camp he saw the calf, and the people dancing. Moses was very angry when he saw this, and he threw down the tables of the law and broke them on the ground.

Then Moses took the calf and ground it to fine powder, and put it in the water that the people should drink it as a punishment. But there was something more than that. Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and

said, "Who is on the Lord's side? let him come unto me. And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together unto him."

What a solemn question it was that Moses asked, "Who is on the Lord's side?" Why, all the Israelites ought to have been on the Lord's side, for they were His people; but you see sin had come in and turned their hearts away from God, so judgment must now fall on them.

And Moses said to them, "Thus saith the Lord, Put every man his sword by his side, and go in and out from gate to gate through out the camp, and slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbour."

This was very sad, to have to kill their own friends; but they wanted to be on the Lord's side, so they did as Moses had told them, and there fell of the people that day about three thousand men.

All this tells us very plainly that God will not have to do with sin, He must punish it; and it is just the same in the present day as it was then, only God does not take our lives away now, because this is a day of grace and long suffering. But the great thing for boys and girls is to be on the Lord's side, and then there will be no fear of judgment, for Christ has already borne judgment for those who trust in Him.

White Frocks and Clean Pinafores.

I KNOW a little girl, a dear little thing with curly brown hair, and soft grey eyes. She has got a little brother, of whom she is very fond, only sometimes he tries her patience very much, when he *will* tear up her picture books, and upset the chairs and tables in her doll's house, but mamma tells her he doesn't know any better, so she tries to bear it patiently.

They are so glad when their mamma tells them stories, and this little girl has learnt to love Joseph, and the little baby Moses in the bulrushes, and brave Daniel in the lions' den—and above all, the sweet and lovely Babe who was born in the lowly manger, and who, when He grew to be a boy, went

into the Temple and astonished all the doctors and wise men, by the wonderful things He told them.

She is not too young to understand how this same Boy grew up to be the Man of Sorrows, who walked about the Galilean roads, sad and weary, but bringing healing and joy to hearts and homes, and then ended His life on earth, by suffering and death, for a world of sinners.

Their mamma tells them that this same Jesus is now at God's right hand, and that He is coming again to take His people to their home beyond the skies.

"Oh! that'll be nice," says this little girl, clapping her hands. "I wish He would be quick and come!"

"Ah! but we must be ready, dear," replies mamma, "and have our garments made white in the blood of the Lamb, or we shall not be fit to meet Him."

The little woman is silent for a minute, deep in thought, then turning to baby she says gravely:

"We had better get on our white frocks and clean pinafores, so that He will find us all ready dressed to meet Him."

But this was not what mother meant, and she tried to explain that God does not look at the outside appearance, but at the heart.

In Revelation we hear of those who have "washed their robes and made them white,"—and they have had to have that done down here. It is here in this world that Jesus makes our garments white. Until we come to Him for this cleansing, the garments we are wearing are only "filthy rags," and so long as we keep them on we shall never enter the realms of endless day, but oh! if we bring them to Him, and ask Him to exchange them for His own spotless robe of righteousness, we shall be fit to welcome the Bridegroom when He comes.

Have you got on your robe, dear little reader? If not, do not rest until you have asked Him for it. How terrible it would be if He were to come to-day, and you were not ready.

It would be no use asking and knocking, and seeking then, the door would be shut, and you would be left out in the cold. Is it not nice to think it isn't too late yet, that

Jesus waits to take away your "filthy rags" and give you a garment washed white and clean in His blood.

Perhaps you think, "I should like to have it, but how am I to get it?" Ah! but Jesus Himself will tell you the way—He is the way. Come straight to Him with your sins, and your guilt, and trust Him to pardon and put it away. Though you will not be able to see the robe the Father gives you, God will see it, and as you walk through this world, He will know you by that dress. "The Lord knoweth them that are his."

"Have you been to Jesus for the cleansing power?"

Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?"

Are you? May the dear Lord help you to seek Him.

Talks with my Girls.

No. II.

KEEPING MY PROMISE.



WO of my girls remind me of my promise that our February chat should begin with a story, and as most of our young friends are by this time at school again, after, I hope, very happy holidays, I think the present will be a good time for telling you the true story of an Indian school girl, who had a great desire to become, when old enough, a missionary to her own people. When I heard it, not many weeks ago, I felt as if I wanted to get all my girls round me, and tell it over again. It seemed to have a message for me, saying to my heart: "Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him." (Ps. xxxvii. 7.)

But I know you are quite ready for my story.

Mohana was an Indian child of high caste. You know that among the Hindus the people are divided into several classes called castes, and those belonging to one caste are never allowed to be on friendly terms with or even to take food or water from those of another.

But long before Mohana was old enough to understand anything about what are called "the laws of caste," both her parents died, and as there was no one to care for the poor little orphan, it might have died too, as many a baby in India has died, from starvation and neglect, had not the Lord put it into the hearts of some of "His own" to open a home not

many miles from the place where Mohana was born, into which orphan children could be received, lovingly cared for, and taught to read (in their own language) the sweet Bible stories, and sing the hymns most of us know and love so well.

A Christian lady, who heard from a native teacher the little girl's sad story, went at once to fetch her, and from the very first day the Orphan House became a happy home to the lonely stranger child. She grew fast, and when old enough to attend school, shewed that she could learn quickly. She was very fond of reading, and was greatly delighted when a Testament in her own language was given to her. Her teachers often found her in the children's play-room, reading some gospel story to a Hindu nurse who could not read for herself.

I cannot tell you how glad and thankful Mohana's friends at the orphanage were when she confessed Christ as her own trusted Saviour, giving many proofs, too, by the unselfish, gentle spirit she shewed among her companions, that in her every-day life she was really seeking to serve and please the Lord Jesus Christ.

As Mohana grew older one great wish seemed to fill her heart, the desire to help in teaching her own people; very many Hindu girls and women she knew had never even heard of the precious Saviour, in whom she trusted, and how she longed to tell some of them about the Lord Jesus.

It was thought that the best way of fitting the young girl, whose story I am now telling, for her life work, would be by sending her away from the Orphan House, and allowing her to live for two or three years at the Mission Hospital, at that time under the care of an earnest lady worker for Christ.

Daisy, I see, has a question to ask. What is it, dear? She only wants to know why Mohana should go to a hospital if she was not ill; she always thought, she says, that only sick people were taken into hospitals.

Ah! Daisy, you are forgetting the patients, as the sick people are called, need doctors and nurses. They must have wise heads to think for them, as well as loving, skilful hands to care for them.

Mohana was to be trained as a nurse. I cannot stop now to tell you half the things she would have to learn; only just one, she was to be taught how to dispense and mix or give medicines. Of course she would need to be very careful to remember all she was told about the contents of the different jars and bottles that stood all neatly labelled on the shelves of the surgery, as to make a mistake and give the wrong kind of medicine, or to put in too

much or too little of any of the drugs of which she was learning the names and uses, might make some one very, very ill, or perhaps even lead to the hospital being closed and all the missionaries sent out of the country.

For about a year Mohana's life at the hospital was a very happy one, for though it often made her feel sad to see so much suffering and sometimes she could not help crying when little children, who were in great pain or had been badly hurt, were brought to the hospital, yet she was soon comforted by the thought that all that care and good nursing could do for the relief of their pain-worn bodies would be done, and not one would go away without hearing of the Lord Jesus and his love. And more than once some old patient had come from his far-off home in a mountain village to ask for a fresh supply of tracts, or to tell how he had read the copy of a gospel given him on leaving the hospital to his friends and neighbours; and so the work had gone on till some had trusted in that Saviour, of whose love he had heard for the first time while he lay in one of its pleasant wards.

And dearly did Mohana love, when her morning's duties were all done, to take her little Testament, and sitting by the bedside of one of the patients, read some gospel story, or sing, in a low, sweet voice, the hymns she had learned at the Orphan School.

So you are not surprised to hear that nurses and patients loved the gentle girl who never seemed to grow tired of trying to help and comfort others; are you?

But Mohana had to learn to trust God and own that He knew best where and how she could serve Him, even when His Hand led her in a way that must have seemed a very dark and rough one.

One day when she was sent to the surgery for some medicine, the kind doctor noticed a mark on her face he had never seen there before. Calling her to him, he began to ask her questions, and in a short time he felt quite sure that what he feared was true—Mohana was a leper.

It must have been a very sad day for Mohana, and I have no doubt she cried on being told that she could not be allowed to stay more than a few days at the hospital, and must not on any account go near the patients.

I do not think the trial would have been so great if she could have returned to her old home, at the Orphanage. But this she knew was not to be thought of. There are numbers of lepers in India, and the greatest possible care has to be taken to keep the terrible disease from spreading.

The laws of India do not allow lepers to remain in their own homes, or even among

their own friends. As soon as any one is known to be afflicted with leprosy, he or she is sent to the Leper House, there to live with those who are like themselves, lepers. There is no cure for the disease; it keeps on getting worse and worse, till the poor body is quite worn out.

Before being sent to the Leper House, Mohana received many little presents as tokens of love from her christian friends, and there was much prayer that God, "the God of all comfort" (2 Cor. i. 7), would bless and keep His poor suffering child, and use her, too, as His own messenger; that some might hear from her of that Saviour who came to seek and save sinners.

And prayer was answered, for the Lord gave Mohana the joy of being a real missionary, and though her life had to be lived and her work done within the gloomy walls of the Leper House, many loved to hear her read her Testament, or to listen to her singing, and in a letter she wrote about a year ago to the old teacher, she was able to tell of more than one who had given up the idols the Hindus worship, and were simply trusting in Christ for salvation.

Now just for a few words about our letters. I am afraid that some of my young friends will feel quite disappointed at not seeing my promised answers to their letters in this month's number of *My Little Friend*. I think I can explain the delay in a way they will understand.

When anything is written that is going to be printed, it must be ready in good time for what our kind editor calls "going to press," so that I have not received your January letters yet, though I expect to have quite a nice packet, as several of the girls I know have promised to write.

Carrie tells me that her brother John wants to know "If the girls are going to have all the letter writing to themselves this year?"

Oh, no, I shall be very glad to get a letter from him, or any other of my boy friends who would like to write.

Our subject for February shall be "A Favourite Hymn." I want each letter I receive to give me just one verse of a hymn the writer likes very much, and if possible a reason for choosing it.

Be sure you send your letters in not later than the 21st of the month. Address—

C. J. L., care of Editor of *My Little Friend*,
20, Paternoster Square, London, E.C.
C. J. L.

Children of Many Lands. By C. J. L. Price 1s.
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One Half-Penny.

A Welcome.



A YOUNG woman, who is an orphan and homeless, is about to pay a visit to a small cottage in the country where she has never been before. It is called Rose Cottage, and Rachel is wondering what sort of a welcome she will receive.

God who is the Father of the fatherless has inclined a christian lady to invite Rachel to spend a few weeks with her, while waiting for another situation as a governess, and poor Rachel, having nowhere else to go, is only too thankful for this home and shelter for the time being.

Still, as I said, she is wondering what sort of a welcome she will receive.

The cottage and all its surroundings were pretty enough. Virginia creeper and climbing roses covered the little cottage, giving it an air of sweetness and comfort.

When Rachel arrived, she found that peace and happiness reigned inside the house, as much as they appeared to do outside.

Before ever she had taken off her hat and cloak, a bright Irish girl brought her a cup of hot tea, which Rachel found most refreshing after her long journey. Then, while taking off her things, she heard her friend at the piano, playing and singing—

“There is a home, 'tis better far
Than any earthly home can be.”

This took Rachel's thoughts away from earth and all its troubles to the bright home in heaven, where her dear friends had gone, and where she hopes to follow in God's own time.

A very happy evening it was for Rachel, the first of many spent at Rose Cottage, and before going to rest, her kind friend, Mrs. A., read John xiv. 27, “Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.” And then an earnest prayer followed for God's blessing to rest upon them all.

Now the welcome that Rachel received was a hearty one, and it made her feel happy, and I have told you about her that you may understand about the welcome that is waiting for all boys and girls who come to the Lord Jesus.

You will remember that when He was on earth He said, “Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not;” and though He has gone back to heaven, He has still left us those words. He still invites us to come to Him. There is only one thing that keeps us away from so loving a Saviour, and that is our sins. But the very reason why we should go to Him is, because He can forgive our sins. He can make us happy, He will give us a hearty welcome, for He says, “Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out.”

The Soldier's Story.



SOME years ago, it was my privilege to work as a visitor in one of our London parishes. In a cellar in one of the courts I used to visit lived a pious old soldier, who had lost one of his legs.

This, however, did not trouble him much, nor yet his deep poverty, but his one trouble was that his wife was not a Christian, and it was a burden that lay heavy on his heart.

The simple faith of the old soldier at once won my heart, and I often visited him to have a little reading of the word together.

One day they had no food in the house, and a penny was the only coin they possessed. The soldier's wife asked him to go to the baker's to buy a penny roll, and while going he met a man with a wife and three children, who were, if possible, worse off than himself, for they were sick and hungry. His heart was so touched that he gave the man his penny instead of buying bread.

Then he thought, “What will my wife say?” and not liking to go home empty-handed, he walked up and down, asking the Lord all the time to supply his need.

Just then a gentleman asked him the way to the Post Office; the soldier offered to shew him the way, and while walking together, the gentleman asked him if he were not the soldier he had known years ago. He replied that he was, upon which the gentleman put a shilling in his hand, and bade him farewell.

“Is not our Master ever true to His word, and does He not bless a hundredfold all we do for His sake?” said the old soldier.

I was greatly touched by his story, and felt how wonderful are the links in the chain of our lives, that shew to those who look for them the love and care of the Lord Jesus for His people.

The Name of Jesus.

NO voice can sing, no heart can frame,
Nor can the mind conceive
A sweeter sound than Jesus' name,
To sinners, who believe.
O hope of every contrite heart,
O joy of all the meek,
To those who fall how kind Thou art,
How good to those who seek!
But what to those who find? Ah, this
No tongue nor pen can shew
The love of Jesus, what it is,
None but His loved ones know.
When once Thou visitest the heart
Then truth begins to shine,
Then earthly vanities depart,
Then kindles love divine.
Jesus! our only joy be Thou,
As Thou our Prize wilt be:
In Thee be all our glory now,
And through eternity.

"How camest thou in hither?"

THERE are many beautiful stories in the word of God which we delight to read time after time. Some of them are so plain and simple that a child can understand them; but there are others that have a hidden meaning, and these we call parables. A parable is a story, the meaning of which does not lie on the surface, but we have to search for it.

The disciples came to Jesus one day and asked Him why He spoke to the people in parables, but not to them; and the Lord said, because that to the disciples it was given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to the people it was not given. And He goes on to explain that the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed, lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, understand with their hearts, and should be converted, and He should heal them. But

Jesus did not stop here. He added a few words which must have been a great comfort to the disciples:

"Blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear."

I think God always gives light on His own word to those who really desire to learn His mind, but some things are hidden from the wise and prudent in this world, yet are revealed unto babes.

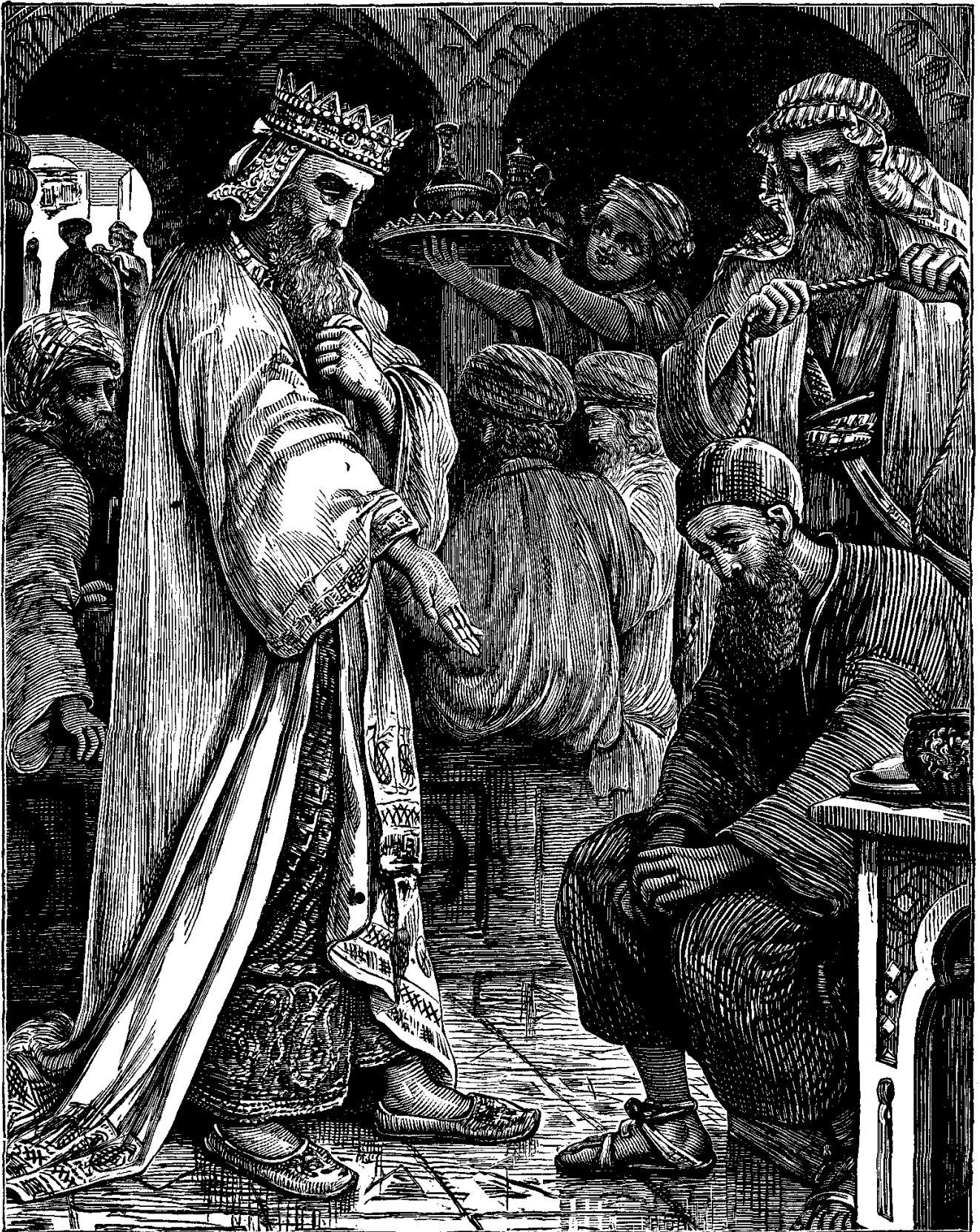
Well, let us look at the parable of the man without the wedding garment, a picture of which you will see over leaf.

It was at a wedding feast which a certain king made for his son. At first there was a difficulty in getting any guests, for those who were invited made light of it, and would not come; but the king said he would have the house filled, so invited any people his servants could find in the streets and lanes of the city.

What a comfort it must have been for those poor people to find that the king had provided some robes for them to put on. We are not told the colour of these robes, but I feel sure that they were white.

When the king came in his eye passed over all the guests, and at once his glance rested on one man who was different from the rest. This man had failed to put on the wedding garment. I suppose he thought his own things were good enough, and he need not trouble to put on the robe provided; but if good enough for himself they would not suit the king.

In gentle tones the king, said "Friend, how camest thou in hither, not having on a wedding garment?" and the man was speechless, he had no excuse to make. He was just like a boy or girl who has heard about Jesus dying for them, and yet they have never gone to Him, never trusted Him for themselves. What excuse could such an one make? None whatever, they would be like this man, speechless. Then the king told his servants to bind him hand and foot and cast him into outer darkness, where there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Oh what an awful position that, for all who refuse to be clothed, pardoned, and made fit for the presence of God. Reader, do not let this be your portion.



"How camest thou in hither?"

MY LITTLE FRIEND.

21



Little Birds in time of Snow.

SEE how the birds crowd around the little girl in our picture. Neither robins, nor ravens, nor sparrows are afraid of her. The ground is thickly covered with snow, the berries are all eaten from the trees, so in love, to the birds, she has gathered up the crumbs, prepared a plentiful breakfast, and when she opens the window, there they all are, and they seem to say, "Good morning, dear little miss;" and when they have eaten to their full, they nod their little heads, as if to say, "Thank you, thank you," and away they fly.

Every such little child is carrying out the will of God. The Bible asks, "Who provideth for the raven his food?" (Job xxxviii. 41.) The Lord Jesus gives the answer: "They neither sow nor reap; neither have storehouse nor barn; and God feedeth them." (Luke xii. 24.) As to the sparrows, He says, "Not one of them is forgotten before

God." When the snow has covered up their food, you may have thought "now the poor birds must all die." Ah! no; it is just then He puts it into the heart of a little child, like the one in the picture, to love them; and so by her little fingers He gives them food. Birds belong to God, and He never forgets a single one. Won't you, dear children, remember them too?

But this is a sad world even for pretty little birds! A little story will tell you what I mean. Behind my house, just outside big London, there is a fine clump of trees. There the black-bird, the robin, and the sparrow have their home. When first I went there, we threw a few crumbs of bread on the balcony. The sparrows saw them at once; they hopped nearer and nearer, until led on by one little bold fellow, half a dozen were soon pecking away as boldly as possible. So it went on for about a week, and then came a sad calamity. One morning, in the midst of their breakfast, there was a sudden fright, and off they flew in great alarm! What can be the trouble? Ah! there is pussy with a pretty little bird in her mouth, and it is dead in a moment! Dear children, what does this mean? Do you think there was anything like this in Paradise? Ah! no, all was very good there. But when Adam sinned against God every-



thing was altered. Sin changed even the nature of animals.* Cold winters and cruel natures, as well as wicked hearts, are all the fruit of sin. What a sad thing it is then to sin against God!

God says, "The wages of sin is death;" and again He says, "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." This is very sad, but very true.

But this will not last long, for the Lord Jesus will soon come back, and then He will put all things right again; and then there will be no more wild beasts, and the little birds will no longer be devoured. God says in that day, "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf and the young lion, and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them." And better still, the time is coming when He will make a new heaven and a new earth; and then there will be neither pain nor sorrow, and no more death, and God Himself will wipe all tears from all eyes.

And little children who have found out they are really guilty before God, and have believed in His love in giving His beloved Son Jesus the Lord to die for them, even now belong to God's new creation, and most surely will have their place in the new heaven and new earth. How blessed to be a child of God!

"But Jesus loves you, Mother!"

THE rush of passengers, the shrill whistle of trains coming and going on the different platforms, the hurrying of porters with trucks full of luggage, made the scene at this great London terminus one of confusion and disquiet.

Seated on one of the long sofas of a second-class waiting room was a young woman with sad, downcast looks, and dressed in deepest mourning. Her whole attitude denoted the greatest sorrow, almost despair. Beside her sat a little girl with long fair hair. Now and again she cast a furtive look into her mother's face, and heaved a little sigh, but no word fell from the mother's lips,

so little Nellie turned again to watch from the open door the restless scene without.

People came in and out, looked at the clock, turned over the leaves of the timetable, and hurried away again, while the young widow and her sweet-faced little girl sat on.

"Mother," she said, presently, unable to bear the long dreary silence, "don't look so sad; you used to tell me that Jesus never would leave us."

"Oh yes, dear, I know," sighed the mother, "but there doesn't seem any one to love us now."

"But Jesus loves you, mother," persisted the little one.

Like a ray of light and warmth those simple words went home to the heart, dark and cold with the sense of overwhelming sorrow.

"Yes, Nellie, Jesus loves us," was the answer, and the tears were wiped away.

Another shrill whistle from an engine, another rush of passengers, porters, and luggage, and in a few minutes the young widow and her little child had disappeared among the hurrying crowd.

Yes, Jesus loves us! Oh! what a comfort to know this.

The sweet messages from the God of love come stealing to us over the waves and billows of this loveless world. How many lonely hearts there are seeking for something to love, some one to love, and looking at every other object but the God of love, who waits and yearns to make Himself known to them.

Are you feeling that if you had some one to love you you would be so happy? Are you thinking of the sweet-faced mother who lies in the churchyard, whose gentle voice has died away, and who now lives in a brighter, sunnier clime? and as you think and long for her back again, to take you once more in her arms, the sorrow and loneliness seem very hard to bear.

The Lord Jesus knows just how you feel about this, and He says, "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you, and you shall be comforted." He will be all to you—father, mother, everything, and He longs for the lonely hearts of His little ones,

that He may fill them with Himself. Will you not come to this loving One, and find that He can really help you and save you? He tells us in His beautiful word that when our fathers and mothers leave us, He never will; though the whole world may turn against us, Jesus Christ will not. He is "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever."

Talks with my Girls.

No. III.

A WONDERFUL LAMP.

MES, Daisy dear, I know you are a little disappointed; you quite expected to get just a line or two as my promised answer to your letter. You say you posted it more than a month ago, and you thought I should have had time just to let you know I was very glad to get it. Well, I am sorry you have been kept waiting so long, but please do not get vexed with C. J. L., or say you will not write to her again. The delay is, as I tried to explain last month, caused by having "to go to press early." I wonder if some of our younger girls quite understood my meaning? Nellie and Mabel shake their heads, so I am going to put it into other words. If I do not send the paper I am writing to our Editor in a few days, I may perhaps get a note from him saying, "He is waiting for my MSS. to send to the printer;" and he is so kind to us all, that I am sure we should not like to waste his time by keeping him waiting, so we will be content to wait for our talk on paper, won't we, Daisy?

But we are not going to waste our waiting time. I wish I could gather you all round me, just as I do the girls of my Bible Class, and shew you something that I value very much; it is standing near me on the table as I write, and I look at it with interest—I was just going to write with respect—for though it is very small, and not at all strong, it has been a great traveller, having been made in Jerusalem. So you see it must have taken quite a long journey from the land where the Bible was written, from the very city where the beautiful temple of Solomon once stood—"A house of prayer for all nations."

But I will not keep you waiting any longer for an introduction to my Palestine lamp, for the traveller I am telling you about is really a lamp, though when I shewed it for the first time to my girls, Kate and Clara said they

thought it was a vase to put flowers in, and I expect we all smiled when Lizzie asked "if it was a sugar basin?" I suppose its being open at the top, and so quite unlike any of the lamps she had seen, led to her mistake.

The little lamp is made of some kind of terra cotta earth or clay. It may have been formed into shape "on the potter's wheel," of which we read in the prophet Jeremiah. I do not mean the very same wheel the prophet saw when God gave His servant a picture lesson by sending him to watch the potter busy at his work; but as we know the people in Syria and Palestine go on doing things in the same way year after year, it is quite possible that if you and I could have stood near the workman who made our lamp, we might have seen him turn his wheel just as it was turned by Jewish workmen hundreds of years ago.

I could go on telling you about my lamp for a long time yet, but I must stop, or I shall have to leave a far more wonderful story than that of this little lamp untold. It is the story of another lamp. The lamp I have been telling you about is small and might be easily broken. A rough blow might crush it into dust; but the lamp we are going to talk about has never been put out. It has been burnt over and over again; chained, so that no one could carry it away; hidden in all kinds of strange, out-of-the-way places; and yet all this rough usage has only made its light seem to grow brighter, and perhaps the number of these lamps was never so great as it is at the present time.

Mary holds up her Bible, and asks, "If it is the lamp I mean?" Yes, Mary; and as I think you wonder a little at my speaking of the Bible as a lamp, I will ask you to open yours at Psalm cxix. 105: "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."

Thank you, Mary; you had forgotten, I think, that King David called the Hebrew rolls he loved so well his lamp. I expect you have all seen a picture of one or more of these rolls, so unlike our neatly bound Bibles, and yet telling the same wondrous story. Only last evening a friend shewed me a photograph that interested me greatly; it was part of a roll quite fourteen hundred years old, and covered all over with what my friend said were Greek letters.

But Violet is quite in a puzzle, I can see by the almost troubled look on her face. What is it, dear little friend?

She says she cannot quite understand what I mean; only just now I said these rolls were Hebrew, and then I told you something about a Greek one.

Well, darling, please don't think me unkind

for saying I am almost glad you could not understand; because I think your puzzle may be a help to all of us. The story of our English Bible is one that I never get tired of listening to. I cannot tell all that I have heard or read about it, you would get tired and want to run off to your play; but I am going to try to tell you just enough to make you wish to hear more in such easy words that I think even Edith, who is not yet nine years old, will be able to understand and remember nearly, if not all, we are talking about.

We are quite right in calling the Bible a lamp given to us by God to give light, a light that is so bright and clear, that if by faith we are really looking to the Lord Jesus, the precious Saviour of whose love and grace we read in almost every page, we may always see just the next step that He our Lord and Master would have us take. But it is also a voice to speak to us. We have, I hope, each got our own Bible. Florence asked if she could have a pocket Bible for her New Year's present, and I remember how pleased she was to shew me her beautiful new Bible. I wonder if she thought of her new Bible as a very old book, really the oldest book in the world?

Its name of 'Bible' is a Greek one, and means the same in Greek that the word 'book' does in English.

You know that a little baby does not become a full-grown man or woman all at once. The Bible began to grow in the days of Moses. God watched over it and took care of it; and it became full-grown in the time of John and Paul.

For many, many years the Bible spoke in only one language, the Hebrew. In those far-away days, it spoke only to one people, the Jews. But the years rolled on, and so many of the Jews had gone to live in countries where the people spoke only Greek, that after a time the children forgot or only remembered very little Hebrew, and spoke Greek just like their Gentile neighbours.

So it is said that seventy very learned men set to work to translate the Hebrew Bible into Greek. We may be sure they took great pains with their work, and tried to give the exact meaning of every word. This translation was made about two hundred and eighty years before the Lord Jesus became the Babe of Bethlehem.

The four Gospels were written in Greek, so were the Epistles or letters of Paul, Peter, John and the other apostles. They were gathered together, and with the Revelation, also written by John; the Acts being from the pen of the same Luke who wrote the Gospel bearing his name. They form what we know and love as the New Testament.

We spoke just now of the Hebrew Rolls as the Bible; but I must not forget to tell you that during all the long years we have been talking of, no one, as far as we know, had ever thought of calling the scriptures by the name we are so used to, that it seems to us almost like an English word, though we know it to be really a Greek one. A very loving and true-hearted servant of the Lord, whose name was Chrysos-tom, is said to have given the book he loved so much its name of Bible; and as Chrysos-tom was not born till about four hundred years after the Lord Jesus Christ had taken the new place at His Father's right hand, that is His as Son of God, His too as a risen living Saviour, you may be sure that for numbers of years people had gone on calling the word of God by the name of the scriptures.

But do you think that all the people who wished very much to read the scriptures for themselves could do so in Greek and Hebrew?

No, they could not. You have all heard of the Romans. Maggie answers, "They were very brave soldiers, but she thinks they were rather too fond of fighting." I quite agree with her, but as our time is almost gone, we won't begin to talk about their wars. I only want to tell you that they always spoke and wrote in Latin. So some time during the fourth century, Jerome set to work with the Hebrew Rolls and Greek MSS. and worked away patiently till a Latin Bible was ready for use.

About the year 1380 Wycliffe made a noble attempt at giving the Bible to the people of England in their own language.

What is to be the subject of our next letter? I cannot, I think, do better than pass on to my girls a question I was asked only a few days since:

"Are our talks to be something like a Bible Class?"

Tell me in your letters how you would like a Bible Class on paper, and if you are willing to join. Perhaps our editor will allow me to print one or two nice, thoughtful letters. You see I quite expect to get some that are written by thoughtful, painstaking girls. Address to—

C. J. L., care of Editor of *My Little Friend*,
20, Paternoster Square, London, E.C.

Send your letters not later than the 21st of the month.

C. J. L.

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One Half-Penny.

His Only Friend.



POOOR Artist who lived in a small room at the top of a high house was one day visited by a little girl who lived in the same house, on the floor underneath his.

This little girl had often seen the artist on the stairs when he was either going out to make a small purchase or else when he was just returning to his room.

So one day, when he was sitting down to tea, she came to his room with a piece of bread and butter in her hand, and asked the artist if she might eat her tea with him. He did not say no but let her come in, and as his poor room did not contain a second chair, he placed the dear child on his knee.

She became quite a cheer to the desolate man, and after this he seemed to be able to paint his pictures better. A little love and sympathy often works wonders, and this little girl, by her constant visits from this time, shed love and brightness in the lonely room.

Now what one little girl could do in this way others can do too, but the great thing is, first to let the love of God shine into our own hearts, and then we can let it shine out to others afterwards.

A Cheerful Giver.



THERE is a little text in our Bible that reads thus: "God loveth a cheerful giver," and I was thinking of this text when I heard of how a farmer and his wife acted.

They had been to a missionary meeting, where the question of giving away copies of the Bible to the poor had been talked over, and how much money would be wanted to carry out the purpose.

When they came home the wife said that she would like to put aside a guinea a year for the purpose, but the farmer replied that he intended to give a guinea a year, and he did not think they could afford two guineas, but she reminded him that he had given her a few days before a guinea to buy a hive of bees, and she would rather give the money for the Lord's work and go without the bees.

They agreed to this, and strange to say

the next day a swarm of bees settled on a tree in their garden, and was soon safely placed in an empty hive.

The farmer and his wife were both struck with this circumstance. It seemed as if the Lord were rewarding them for giving money for His service, and they made up their minds that all the honey that came from this hive of bees should be given to the Lord, and also any other swarms that might come from the same hive.

This little colony of bees increased so fast that after a few years quite a large sum of money was given away year by year.

God is Good.

THE flowers which deck my pathway round
And skirt the shady wood,
Proclaim, as with a thousand tongues,
That God is very *good*.

The ripened fields of waving grain,
For man and beast assigned,
Tell that the great Creator is
Not only good, but *kind*.

The glorious sun and peerless moon,
And stars which round them wait,
Prove God to be not only good
And kind, but very *great*.

But O! the Cross where Jesus hung,
Doth yet more strongly prove
That, though so *good*, and *kind*, and *great*,
The mighty God is LOVE.

A Noble Boy.



SOME years ago a serious accident occurred in a coal-pit in Gloucestershire. The cage with men in it was being lowered when suddenly a piece of iron broke which caused the cage to drop to the bottom of the pit. At the moment that this happened a man and a boy were hanging on the rope above, and feeling something giving way, with great presence of mind made a sudden spring and laid hold of a chain which is always hanging at the side of the pit as a guide.

As soon as it was known at the top of the pit that an accident had occurred, a man was sent down with a rope and a noose to render what assistance he could.

In his descent he first came to a boy named Dan, but the noble lad said, "Don't mind me, I can hold on a little longer, save

Joe, who is lower down, as he is nearly exhausted." The man went on and found Joe, as described by his companion. He managed to bring him safely to the top and then went down again for Dan, who by this time had been hanging to the chain for fully fifteen minutes.

The Old Shed.



HE church clock had just chimed six. It was getting dark, and slowly a damp, hazy mist was beginning to gather over the little village of W—. In most of the cottage windows the lights were glimmering ; here and there were standing groups of labouring men, laughing, chatting and discussing the news, whilst the wives in the cottages hard by were preparing the evening meal. Just off the main street, lying in the shadow of a clump of trees, was a small square building, scarcely larger than a good sized room. From its windows a bright light streamed, and the sweet sound of girlish voices rose on the still evening air. The door was closed, but just outside the threshold stood a girl, with her head bent eagerly forward and eyes wet with tears. Suddenly the door opened, and about a dozen young girls issued from it, "Oh, Alice," they cried, almost in one breath, "you here" ?

Instantly the tears were brushed away, and with a defiant toss of the head the girl flung herself off, mortified and thoroughly ashamed at herself having been caught in the act of listening.

"Stop a moment dear," said a gentle voice at her elbow. "I am going your way, and so we can walk home together."

"It's no use talking to me, Mary," answered Alice with an impatient shrug of her shoulders, "it's only a waste of time ; there, leave me alone !"

But it was useless to endeavour to shake the other off, so, with another impatient toss of the head, the girl allowed herself to be led through the lane, until they were out of sight of the others.

"Why didn't you come in, dear ?" said Mary, then stopping quite still she put her arms round her friend, "Oh ! Alice, we have all been praying for you to-night and asking

God to change your heart ; let Him do it." "It's no use, Mary, I am much too wicked, so leave me alone. Good-night ; and don't bother to pray for me."

By this time they had reached the pretty little farm which belonged to Alice's father, and opening the gate, without another word, she rushed up the little footpath, leaving Mary to go on her way with a heavy heart.

Within, father, mother, and the boys were seated at the table, over their evening meal.

"I don't want anything to eat," said Alice, "so don't keep anything for me, mother."

"In one of your tantrums again, I suppose," said the eldest of the boys, looking up for a moment, from his brown bread and butter.

Alice took no notice of this remark, but closed the door again, and went upstairs. Her heart was very heavy ! no wonder, for she had begun to realise her own sinfulness, and beneath the seeming indifference, and open defiance, was a great yearning to be what she knew those girls were, who had been gathered together that evening to meet the Master they so loved.

She longed to be alone, and this would be impossible presently, for there would be cries for "Alice" to do a dozen different things.

Quick as thought she hurried into the farm yard, and there in an old broken-down shed she flung herself on her knees, and sobbed as though her heart would break. "Oh, Lord Jesus, please forgive me, and make me thine," she cried again and again.

And don't you think the Lord heard that prayer ? Ah ! yes, He came there in that tumble-down shed, and spoke peace to her soul.

An hour later Alice was sitting with her friend Mary, and both were rejoicing over the fact that God had heard the many prayers for this naughty, wayward girl, and had brought her that night safely into the fold.

Cannot He do the same for you ? You know He can, and even now, as you read this, He is speaking to your heart. He is asking you to give it to Him. He is telling you that He died for you and that He is waiting to take you as you are. Do not disappoint Him.



The Pretty Farm.

Joseph's Dreams.

IN olden time dreams were thought a great deal more of than they are in the present day, because God often used to send dreams for the purpose of making His mind known. We get among others the dreams of Jacob, Solomon, Daniel, etc., in the Old Testament, and Pilate's wife, Joseph, the wise men, etc., in the New Testament.

The written books of the Bible were not complete in those days, so God spoke by the

way, although perhaps he could not help being drawn to this his most loving and obedient boy.

But the fact of being loved by his father, and wearing a coat of many colours, only made him despised and hated by his brothers. Then came the time when Joseph had his two strange dreams, which he afterwards told to his brothers.

He dreamed that they were all binding sheaves of corn together in the fields, and his own sheaf stood straight up, while the sheaves of his brothers seemed to bow down



Joseph's Dreams.

means of dreams, but now everything is different. We have the complete word of God, which is His message to us all, and there is not now the same need for dreams and visions.

But our picture is about Joseph's dream, and that is the one I was going to speak about. We all know that little Joseph was his father's favourite boy, and as a mark of his love and esteem for him he made him a coat of many colours. Jacob was not wise thus to shew favour to Joseph in this marked

to his sheaf. The next dream was that the sun, moon, and stars bowed down to him and made obeisance.

We need not be surprised that his brethren only hated him yet the more for his sayings and dreams, and even his father chided him for this dream, saying, "Shall I and thy mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth?"

Joseph did not really know the meaning of his dreams, or how that in after years they would come quite true. Joseph was

despised and hated by his brothers, but God often takes up those who are despised and thought little of by us, and makes much of them, and that was what He was going to do with Joseph.

No one could see how it was possible for all those proud elder brothers, and even his father and mother, to bow down to Joseph, but you all know how it came true. The brothers hated him, and sold him for a slave; but God took care of Joseph and used him to save up the corn for the time of famine, and oh! how glad were Jacob's sons to go down into Egypt, where Joseph was, to buy corn to be kept alive till the seven years of famine should be all past, and the corn grow again.

Thus we see that when Joseph dreamed it was like God telling him what was going to take place in years to come, although he did not understand it at the time.

"Found Out," or Little Robert's Disobedience.

MOST of my little friends are no doubt familiar with the text, "Be sure your sin will find you out," and some have, perhaps, found it true for themselves, as I did many a time when I was a boy; and as did little Robert, of whom I am going to tell you.

Robert was about five or six years old at the time of which I write, and was a very inquisitive little boy, and sometimes his curiosity led him into mischief.

One day while his mamma had gone out for a while, and had left him at home, he began looking about him, and presently his eye fell on the hanging gas lamp, which his parents had always strictly forbidden him to touch.

"Now," thought Robert, "I should like to be able to turn that 'on' and 'off' like mamma and papa do." So he got a stick, as it was beyond his reach, and managed to push the tap till he had turned the gas "on;" but he found it was not quite so easy to turn it "off" again, and before he succeeded some amount of gas had escaped. Robert put the stick back again, and although he

did not feel much more satisfied at being clever enough to find out how to turn the gas; and also felt rather uneasy, knowing that he had done that which he was forbidden; still he thought no one had seen him do it, and it would be all right.

Presently however mamma came home, and after a minute or two said, "Have you been touching the gas?" and Robert, finding that she knew it had been turned on, had to tell it all out, and presently papa came home to his dinner and had to hear about it too, and then little Robert was told that if any one had brought in a light there might have been an explosion, and the house set on fire.

Robert was too much frightened to meddle with the gas again till he was older; but how did his mamma know what he had done? She could smell the gas.

Yes; she had not seen him, but some one had seen all—God had seen all that had been done. Please turn to the first book of the Bible, and see if you can find the text, "Thou God seest me." God can see right into your hearts, and knows if you intend doing wrong; He knows if your sins are washed away or not, so never try to hide anything from Him.

"Come, youthful reader, come! oh do not stop—

Confess to God thy sins, trust to the blood
Of Christ alone, and know thy happy lot
Of being saved and made a child of God!"

W. M.

Talks with my Girls.

No. IV.

OUR MOTTOES.



QUITE a number of letters have come to hand, and I think our talk this month must begin by my telling the dear girls, known and unknown, who have written to me, how much real pleasure their letters have given. Some of the mottoes sent are very beautiful, and my desire and prayer is that they may become so interwoven with my everyday life that our monthly chat on paper may be a help and cheer to each of us. But I must not forget that "my girls" have waited long, and in most cases patiently, for my promised answers to their letters.

MY LITTLE FRIEND.

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Elsie B., Liverpool, writes a very loving and thoughtful letter. I am so glad, dear Elsie, that you enjoyed reading "A Story of Mission Work in Burmah." I like your choice of a motto much. May you and I, through grace, be found among those who have *done* the will of God.

Winnie D., Liverpool. Thank you so much, dear, for your interesting letter. You ask me to say a little about your motto text: "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ." Only the Holy Spirit of God can teach you the true, deep meaning of the beautiful verse you have chosen; but I think you will like to know that when I was quite a little girl, about eleven years old, the Lord Jesus attracted my heart to Himself, and yours was one of the first texts I remember learning, and I have loved it ever since. Perhaps some day we may have a talk all about burden-bearing.

Ethel B. B., Weston-super-Mare. Your motto for 1895 is so lovely that I think I must copy it as a whole, in the hope that all our girls will learn it, as I have done.

"Let each day upon its wing
Its allotted burden bring;
Load it not beside with sorrow
Which belongeth to the morrow.
Strength is promised, strength is given,
When the heart by God is riven;
But foredate the day of woe,
And *alone* thou bear'st the blow."

I shall be much pleased to hear from you again, dear Ethel.

Nellie H., Romford, age 10, is one of our younger girls; but I want her to know how pleased I was to get her nicely written letter. Nellie and I love the sunshine and the spring-time, do we not, Nellie? And I trust we have each heard and answered the voice that once spoke on earth, but is speaking from the glory now—the voice of the Lord Jesus still calling, in the words of her motto text: "Come unto me . . . and I will give you rest" (Matt. xi. 28.)

Mabel H., Romford. Dear Mabel, your letter is very neatly written for a little girl only seven years old, and I hope you will write to me again. You forgot to send me a text, so I am going to send you one, all in short words: "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." (Luke xix. 10.)

Florence B., Leyton. Your loving letter has been quite a cheer. I am so glad to know that you can say of the Lord Jesus, "He is my own precious Saviour." He is a Friend, too, dear Florence, One who will always love and never leave you. The poem you so kindly copied for me ("At His Feet"), has been posted to a friend who will, I am sure, enjoy it too.

Mary R., Cleethorpes, sends a question, "What think ye of Christ?" as her motto text. "Saved about four years ago" were you, dear Mary? and, like all who really trust the Lord Jesus, you find the more you think of the One who has saved you, the more wonderful and beautiful it seems that He should have loved and given Himself for us.

Carrie and Charlotte S., Upton Park. Thanks, dear little friends, for your loving notes and motto texts. I was much interested in hearing of Carrie's friend, who writes to her from far-off Queensland. The pretty card you sent, "Birds in Snowtime," was quite a picture lesson, bringing a sweet memory of the Master's words: "Your heavenly Father feedeth them." (Matt. vi. 26)

I was so glad to get a letter from a boy, seven years old. William B., Cleethorpes, writes: "I know I am saved, because I believe on the Lord Jesus Christ." May he go on to learn more and more of the love and care of the Good Shepherd, who never forgets one of His blood-bought lambs.

Alice B., Thorpe-le-Soken, age 8. Your motto verse, "My God shall supply all your need," is lovely. Did you choose it for me, dear Alice? I shall hope to get another letter from you soon.

Daisy J., Stratford. Your note is very neatly written, and your motto tells me of a Giver and a gift—the Giver is God, the gift is eternal life. May you and I shew by our everyday lives that we have not only accepted the gift, but are seeking to please and thank the Giver.

Five letters, bearing the Tunbridge Wells postmark, have given me very real pleasure. Edith C. Thank you, dear, for your kind, thoughtful letter. Your text has often proved a comfort and help to me. I think, with you, that the birds and flowers may often be our teachers, for they have much to say to our hearts about the care and goodness of the One who feeds the sparrows and clothes the grass of the field. I shall quite expect to hear from you on this month's subject.

Laura C. Your letter seems to me like the face of an old and dear friend. Thanks for telling me the "Peeps into Wonderland" and "Low down on the Ladder" have helped you by leading you to think more of God as our All-wise Creator. But you and I have, through grace, been led to see and rejoice in still greater wonders of His love, so that we have indeed much to praise Him for. I shall always be glad to hear from you.

Nellie C. Dear Nellie, your writing and spelling are very good indeed for your age, and on the whole your letter is a well-composed letter. Some day the Lord will, I trust,

Himself teach you to understand the real meaning of the beautiful lines you have copied, so that they may become your very *own* motto.

Lilian C. Your loving little note was very welcome, and your motto text is one that I often think about and pray over. I think sometimes that it is not so much by our words as by our ways, that those among whom we live are to see something of the beauty of Christ shining out in the daily lives of those who love Him.

Violet C. My heart echoes your wish and it is a cheer to remember that such desires could have been formed in us only by the Holy Spirit given to all who really trust in the Lord Jesus. For us "the darkness is past;" Light from God has been given, and now our high calling is to "walk as children of light." (Eph. v. 8.) We do not give marks for composition or writing, though in yours, both are very good. C. J. L. hopes to hear from Violet very often.

Nellie W., Taunton, sends a short but very beautiful motto text, "Trust in Him at all times." (Ps. lxii. 8.) Dear Nellie is only eight years old, but I hope she has really trusted the Lord Jesus as her Saviour, and will go on trusting till her work on earth is done, and she sees His Face in the Glory where He now is.

Florrie T., Cullompton, aged eight years. Thank you, dear Florrie, for sending such a lovely verse. "The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good." I think your verse, if we remember and think about it, will help us both, you at your lessons or your play, and I at my daily work, because it should make us each very careful not to do anything that All-seeing eye would not like. I think this month's subject will be easy to a girl whose home is among the lanes of Devon.

Lily H., Sleaford. Your letter leads me to think you would very much like to know who C. J. L. is? Shall I give you just one peep at my own childhood? My home, dear Lily, was a very different one from yours. You are the eldest of six boys and girls, I had no brothers or sisters, and was often a very lonely little girl. When not more than four or five years old, I remember feeling a great longing for some one who would love me, and as I grew older I think it was just that longing the Lord used to attract my heart to Himself. When about eleven years old I owned to God that I was a lost and sinful child, and trusted in Christ for Salvation.

Nellie S., Fendochty. Nellie wants to know how she can help with our "Talks on paper?" In two ways. First, writing every month on the subject given, and asking her young friends to do so too. And by prayer that the blessing of the Lord may rest on our little Magazine and its readers. I could not write in this way to one who had not begun to pray for herself, but

Nellie tells me she has been saved about two years.

Edith M., Gray Hill, sends a very short motto, but one which I hope she will never forget. "Thou God seest me." (Gen. xvi. 13.) Your writing, dear, is very neat indeed, but please try to send more of a letter next time.

Fanny A., Meer End. I am so glad, dear Fanny, that you enjoy reading "My Little Friend." I have been so much pleased with your text that I want to give you one in exchange. "His children shall have a place of refuge." (Prov. xiv. 26.) You are quite right in thinking that girls, and boys too, have troubles sometimes, quite as real and as keenly felt as those of their elders; so that we each need a Friend who is not only "Mighty to save, but able to comfort." A Divine Friend.

Florrie C., Putney. Yes, dear, I think your verse, "I love them that love Me, and those that seek Me early shall find Me" (Prov. viii. 17) will do very nicely. I think you will like to know that it was, I think, almost the first Bible verse I knew and loved even before I understood that it was because the Lord Jesus loved He sought for Me. And now Florrie and I can say "We love him, because he first loved us." (1 John iv. 19.)

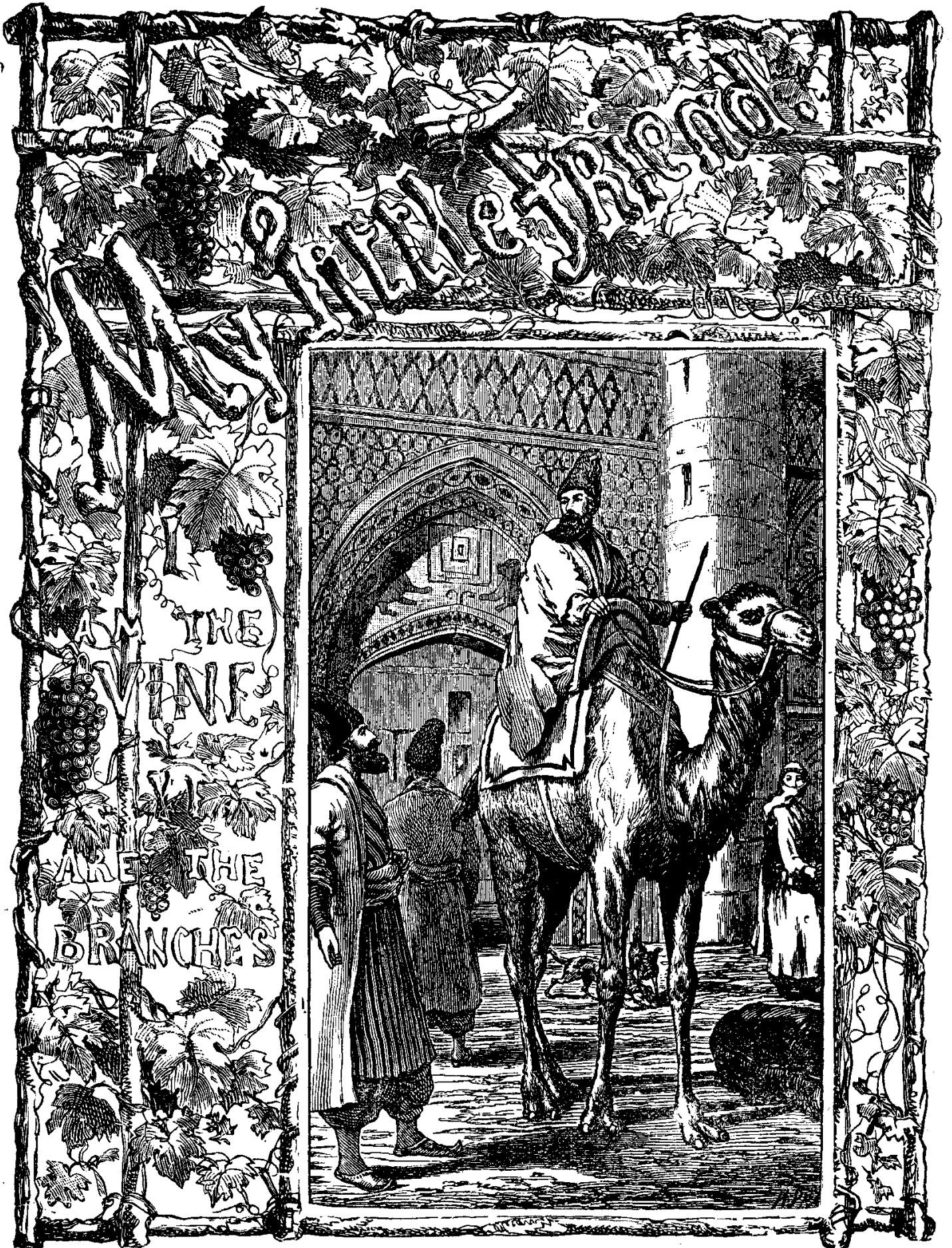
Edith M., Tottenham. The letters from my girls are, as far as possible, answered in the order in which they are opened, so C. J. L. hopes Edith will understand why her very neatly written letter is the last to be answered this month. If she has begun to love and enjoy the truth contained in the beautiful verse chosen as her motto, the glad tidings of the Gospel will seem sweeter and dearer as she grows older and her life will be crowned by the loving-kindness of the Lord.

My girls will hardly expect that after having answered twenty-six letters I shall be able to do more than give them a subject to write about. We all, I am sure, had a welcome for the spring-time with its sunshine and its flowers. Shall our subject for this month's letter be "Flowers?" I know many of you would like to send me a flower, but the flower would fade and die before it could reach me, so will you please send instead a verse about "flowers." You may either look for a flower text in your Bibles or quote a verse from any poem about flowers you have read. Get your letters in by the 21st.

Address:—

C. J. L.,
Office of "My Little Friend,"
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One Half-Penny.

The Eye of a Needle.

NE day when Jesus was speaking to His disciples He told them that it was easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.

What a strange thing that was for Jesus to say, and when we look at the long neck and legs of the camel, and then at the great hump on his back, we know it is impossible for it to go through the eye of a needle.

Then, too, it must be impossible from man's point of view for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. Why is that, do you think? Well, there is a text in John iii. 3 which will, I think, explain it. We read there that "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Yes; that is the reason, if he wants to enter God's kingdom he must be born again.

The disciples were amazed at this, and ask, "Who, then, can be saved?" Jesus explained that with men this was impossible, but with God all things are possible.

God can bow the proud heart of a rich man, as easily as that of a child, to the feet of Jesus, so that he may be born again and enter God's kingdom. There is one other text I should like to point out, it is Luke xviii. 16, 17: "Jesus . . . said, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein."

Now, is not that wonderful, a rich man with all his power and riches cannot of himself enter the kingdom of God, and yet Jesus invites little children to come unto Him, and says all must receive the kingdom of God as a little child.

Has my reader come to Jesus to be numbered among His own? if not, now is the accepted time, and now the day of salvation.

People in the East are very fond of such expressions as that of a camel going through the eye of a needle, it is a figure of speech which is called an hyperbole; only I must not use such long words as this, or you will

have to get down the big dictionary to find out what they mean.

When the Lord said, Woe! to the scribes and Pharisees, He said that they strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel. (See Matt. xxiii. 24.) This is another expression similar to that of the needle. It means that they made a fuss about little things, and carefully paid the tithes of the smallest herbs, while more important things they overlooked.

We must not, then, be like the Pharisees in this way, for God looks at the heart, and we can only be cleansed from our sins by faith in the Lord Jesus, and by the work which He has done.

Tottie's Christmas Treat.



SUPPOSE some of you would think Tottie was a very fortunate little girl, because she had everything she wanted. A beautiful home, nice kind friends, pets of all descriptions, from a beautiful St. Bernard dog, down to the tiniest little white mice. Plenty of lovely flowers and fruit, and in fact everything her heart could desire.

It was nearly Christmas time, and just about now Tottie had been accustomed to have a children's party, when she invited all her little friends who lived in the neighbouring houses to spend the evening with her. For many weeks ere this grand event took place, she and her mama were busy buying ornaments and gifts to hang on the Christmas tree, but this year Tottie wasn't quite the same little girl, and shall I tell you why?

She had discovered that Jesus loved the little ones as well as the grown-up people, and was so happy in finding this out, that she began very soon to love Him in return. Everybody saw a change coming over the little girl: she commenced to speak gently and kindly to the servants now, and to want to do little acts of kindness and love to the poor children in the village, instead of shunning them as she used to do. For many weeks a plan had been turning over itself in her mind, and at last she summoned up courage enough to lay it before her mama. Instead of the party and the Christmas tree, with its many costly presents, Tottie trem-

blingly pleaded that she might be allowed to have all the children in the village to have tea in the kitchen, and "Mother dear," hesitatingly she said, "I would so like it, if you would let me tell them after tea, that Jesus has made me His own little girl, and that He can do the same for them."

Tottie's mama was a long time giving her consent to what she thought was a very strange and unreasonable request, but after much coaxing and pleading, the desired permission was given, and Tottie, half wild with delight, set about sending out her invitations.

Everybody must come, she gave orders, "All the children, and they were not to mind their boots or anything else."

Christmas Eve found the large old-fashioned kitchen full of happy, though rather bashful faces, and as Tottie flitted about like a little fairy among the tables loaded with cakes and buns, her delight knew no bounds.

"It's better than all the parties in the world," she said, with a happy little laugh. Then when the tables were cleared, the little maiden, with smiles and tears in turn, told them that Jesus had given her a new heart, and that "He'd like to do the same for them."

Tottie is growing a big girl now, and from that Christmas Eve a strong desire took possession of her to tell all with whom she came in contact, about the Saviour who had drawn her to His breast. It may be that God will call her to leave her beautiful home, some day, and work for Him as a missionary. I think she will be quite willing to follow the Lord, wherever He leads, even if it means a path of sorrow and suffering, and after all, it's only for a little while. The day is soon coming when we shall have to give an account to God of a life lived to His glory, a life lived to save others, or in anguish of spirit to own before Him that it has been a wasted life, spent for Satan, and in following the ways of a world that hated and crucified Him.

Oh! which shall it be, dear little reader? God has left it for you to decide.

Choose the straight and narrow way that leads to life eternal.

What joy to be among the "blessed few" who find it. Jesus is the way; seek Him and your soul shall live.

At the Forge.

NOT far from the house where I lived when a boy was a blacksmith's forge, where every day horses were taken to be shod.

It was pleasant to hear the sharp ring of the man's hammer, as it fell on the iron anvil, and to see the bright sparks that fell in showers when he had a piece of red hot iron and was altering its shape by the help of his hammer.

This was easy enough while the metal was hot and soft, but it soon cooled down and was then too hard to be shaped, so the blacksmith had learned to "strike while the iron was hot." I dare say it was from someone watching a blacksmith at work that caused this saying to become so common.

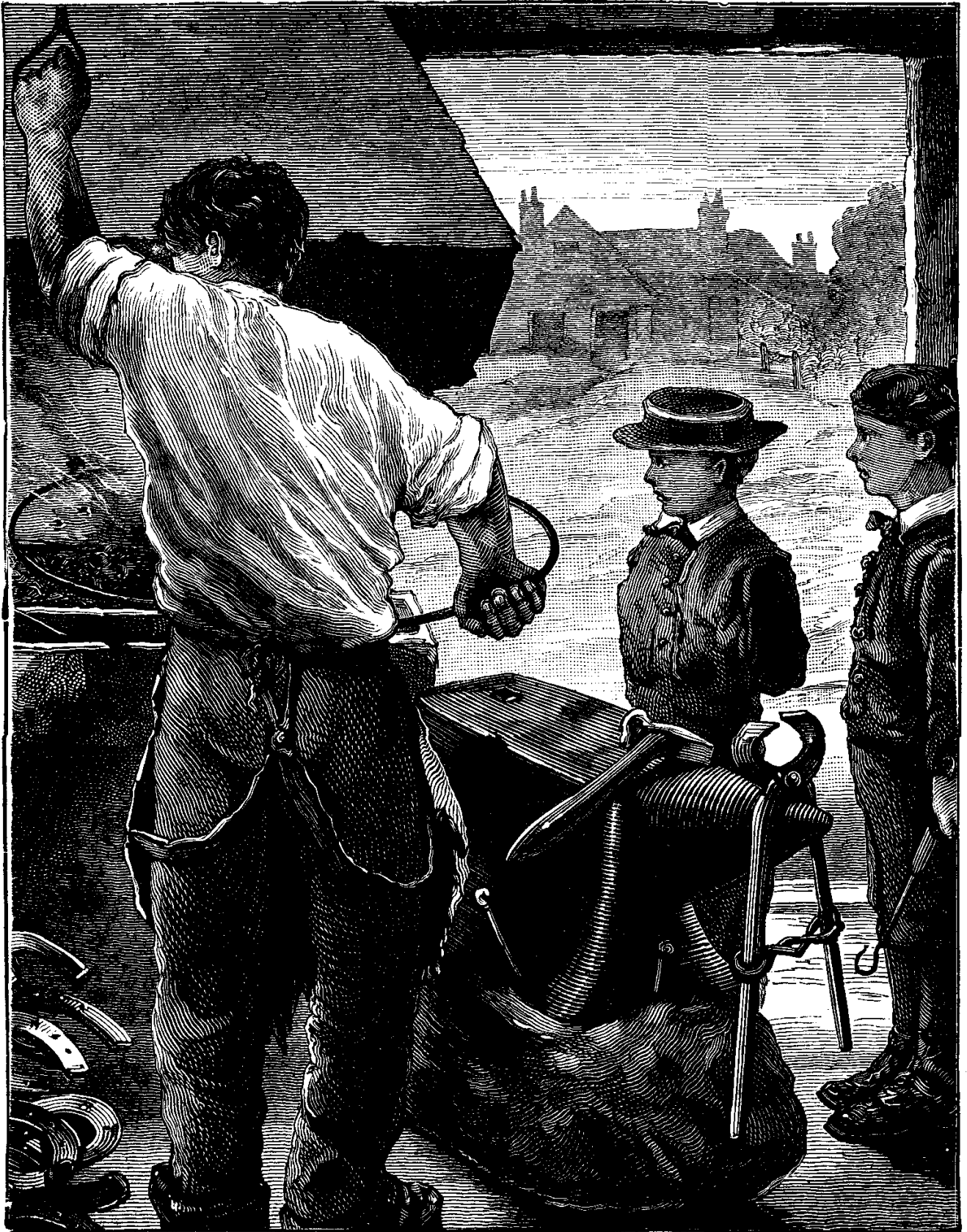
Well, when we were boys and had among other toys iron hoops to play with, we often had to visit the forge to get them mended. Being made of rather thin iron, a sharp blow with the stick would sometimes break them.

The blacksmith's forge thus became a well-known spot, and often when going home from school, though having no hoop to mend, we would stop there and linger round the door to see what the man was doing, and in hopes of seeing a large piece of hot iron taken from the fire and placed on the anvil.

The work is laborious but very necessary. Very few of us would like to be blacksmiths, but what would farmers do without some one to shoe their horses and mend the many tools and implements they need? In fact in every house we see things made of iron and steel, all of which have been in a forge of some kind or other.

I dare say you will remember that if we go back to the time of Samuel there was no smith found in all the land of Israel (1 Sam. xiii. 19), and the result was that all the Israelites had to go to the Philistines to sharpen his share, his coulter and axe.

Then, too, in the day of battle there was no sword or spear found in the hands of any of the people of Israel, for the same reason; they had no smith to make them or sharpen them. So we see how necessary is the work of the smith, both in the day of battle and in the homely work of every-day life.



At the Forge.



The Kindness of God.

A LADY in Scotland, who owned an estate, but had learned what was more enduring riches than anything on the earth, that is, the love of Christ for sinners, was accustomed to have meetings for prayer and reading the scriptures and conversation in her house. At one of these meetings they were speaking of the kindness of God in times of sorrow and trial, and it was asked if there were not many there who could tell of some things in their own life, that shewed this in a special way.

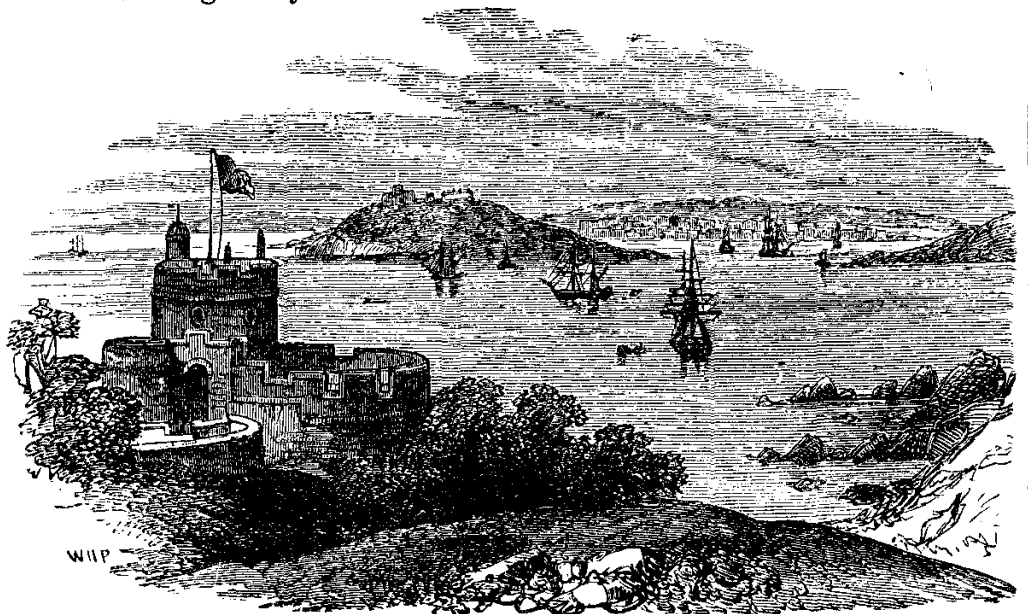
An old man who was present, then related this story of the Lord's goodness to him. He said:—

"Many years ago, at the time of famine

in this region of country, my wife and myself were suffering great want. At last we had come down to have nothing in the house to eat. And then the question came from my wife, 'What shall we do?' I told her to put on the pot for porridge, and we would look to the Lord for oatmeal to make the porridge in it. So she put the water on the fire, and then we bowed before our gracious Father in prayer, asking him to give us oatmeal to keep us from starving, as He had given us salvation through Christ. And now, dear friends, mark this, as the token of His being a living and ever present God. While we were at prayer, we heard a noise near the door, and upon our rising from our knees, we opened the door, and there stood a sack of oatmeal ready for our use! We could see nobody anywhere near, but feeling sure that the Lord meant it for us, took it in, rejoicing in our blessed Lord who had so wonderfully provided for us. We never learned through whose hands it came, but we know well that it was from the Lord, and that He had sent it just at the right time. He is worthy of all praise."

All listened with deep interest to the old man's account, but especially the lady at whose house they were gathered. Deeply affected, she told her story, which was really an explanation of this very matter. She said:—

"I remember very clearly one evening,



during that time, in which there seemed to be laid on my heart a great weight, the condition of the poor about me, so that I could not go to sleep. I thought, Here I was, having plenty, and some might be at the very point of starving. Oh, if only I knew how to find them out! So deeply did I feel the matter that I arose and called a servant, and bade him take a sack of meal at that very hour of night.

“‘But where shall I go?’ he asked.

“‘Take the horse, and put the sack on his back, and let him go for himself, and wherever he stops put down your sack at the nearest door, and come home.’

“Then I asked the Lord to direct the whole matter, leading the beast to the place where the meal was most needed, as He led the oxen which bore the ark, when the Philistines sent them with it (1 Sam. vi. 14); and as He led the ravens to His prophet Elijah in his need. The servant returned in due time, telling me he had left the sack as I directed, the horse having stopped at a cottage at some distance. After putting down the sack he came at once back, without seeing any one. And now, dear friends, I see the movement of the Lord's hand in all this, and praise Him who has brought it all out to-night. How rich is His mercy. It endureth for ever.”

Now, was not this a precious token of God's kind care, in taking from one of His children to provide for others, just at the right time? If that had happened to you, either as giver or receiver, would you not feel quieted with the thought of how near He was? And if He comes to you to forgive your sins, and make you His own, is He not as near? You may safely rest in Him. “He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not, with him, also freely give us *all things*?”

O Lord! how does Thy mercy throw
Its guardian shadow o'er me,
Preserving while I'm here below,
And guiding safe to glory.

An Invitation.

COME to the Saviour, O sin-stricken soul!
To the streams from the fountain which
cleanseth the soul—

The blood and the water that came from His
side,

When Jesus, the Saviour of sinners, had died.

'Tis the blood that alone for the soul can atone,
Saith the High and the Holy that sits on the
throne;

The blood of Christ Jesus atonement hath made,
Thus now for the soul a foundation is laid.

Trust not to thy works, build not on thy deeds,
These never, oh never! can meet thy soul's needs.
'Tis faith in His blood whom God hath set forth,
Alone is of value, alone is of worth.

Believe in the Saviour! Oh, make no delay!
For Jesus is coming to take us away;
And, O precious soul, if wash'd in the blood,
Thou wilt live thy for ever in the glory of God.

Talks with my Girls.

No. V.

HYMNS AND HYMN WRITERS.



THE February letters (forwarded by our kind Editor) have just been received, and my writing-table looks almost like one of the desks in the office where Amy's father spends so many of his working hours, it is so covered with correspondence. But do I really care to have so many letters to read and answer? Yes, very much indeed, and again I desire to thank the young friends, whose simple, loving letters have given so much real pleasure to one who loves and longs, as the Lord may enable me, in some little measure to help and encourage every dear girl or boy, (for quite a number of boys have joined our "Talks.") Who has written to her?

Our letter subject was "A Favourite Hymn," and I am sure some of us found it anything but an easy one, not because we did not know and love many hymns, but just because of the number that seemed to us almost like old and very dear friends, that it was rather difficult to be quite sure which to choose.

Ethel B. B., Weston-super-Mare, sends a verse of Miss Havergal's beautiful hymn—

"Precious, precious blood of Jesus."

MY LITTLE FRIEND.

39

I wonder if dear Ethel has read or heard much about the writer, now gone to be for ever with the Lord. I am sure she has often seen hymns, leaflets, &c., written by Frances Ridley Havergal, and it would be easy for me to fill quite a long letter, writing about the girlhood of one whose poems have often cheered me; but I have only room to give you just one little peep at her school days. When Miss Havergal was about fourteen she was sent to boarding school. The school was one taught by a very earnest christian lady, and among the elder girls were several who had openly confessed Christ. One of the rules of the school was, that French was always spoken by the girls even in their playtime, and it was to one of her school-fellows that Frances at last found courage to tell out her great trouble, saying, that she wanted to love God, but did not know how. Very simply and lovingly her friend urged her to "go to Jesus, tell Him she wanted to love Him but could not, and He would teach her how."

C. D., South Wimbledon, has sent a verse of the same hymn, saying it is the one he likes best. I think by the writing C. D. is a boy. He does not say how old he is, but I do hope he has already been to the Saviour, trusting Him for pardon through His own precious blood, shed on Calvary.

William P., Wimbledon. Thank you for writing. The hymn you have chosen will be all true for you if you are willing to take forgiveness as a free gift from God. The next time you write, please address to C. J. L. You got the wrong initials, and so gave some trouble in finding out who your letter was really intended for.

Clara H., West Ham. Your letter, dear Clara, was indeed a welcome one. I am so glad to know that you are trusting the Lord Jesus as your own precious Saviour; but my joy is only a poor faint echo of the deeper joy that fills the heart of Christ, when a soul for whom He died looks in faith to Him. May He keep you in the sunshine of His love. "He carries the lambs in his bosom." I quite understand why you chose the hymn—

"I love my precious Saviour,
Because He first loved me."

"We love him, because he first loved us."
(1 John iv. 19.)

Daisy J., Leyton, chooses a hymn from our school hymn book—

"Look to Jesus! look and live!"

and says her reason for liking it is because it seems so wonderful that the Lord should suffer and die upon the cross for sinners, and then only tell them to look to Him and be saved. I quite agree with Daisy, and am glad to know

the One who has saved her is able to keep her every step of the way.

Six letters all written by boys living at Peterborough are the next to be answered. I know these boys attend the same Sunday school, indeed, I believe they are in the same class. They sing the same hymns, kneel together in prayer, they learn the same Bible texts, and listen to loving, earnest words about Jesus from their teacher; but I wonder so much if every one of that class of merry-hearted boys is saved? if each name in Miss A.'s class book is written in the Lamb's book of Life?

Perhaps some of their letters will tell me.

James H., who writes very neatly for a boy of ten, has chosen as his favourite hymn—

"Precious, precious blood of Jesus,"
and says he is trusting that precious blood. May he have grace so to live at home and school, at lessons or play, that all who know him may see that he belongs to Christ.

William C. has chosen a lovely hymn—

"There is a name I love to hear;"
and writes, "I like this because it is true."

Happy boy! to have so early learnt something of the sweetness of the precious name of Jesus.

George B. chooses his hymn out of the Gospel Tent Hymn Book—

"Safe in Christ, safe in Christ!"

I am not quite sure who wrote George's favourite hymn, but I think he would like to know that it made me think of one we all know—

"Safe in the arms of Jesus,"
written by an American lady, Miss Crossby, who has been blind all her life.

Arthur C. chooses such a bright hymn—

"Oh, I am so happy in Jesus;"
and says he can sing it now because he knows his sins are all forgiven. May he go on learning more and more of the peace that flows from simply trusting Christ. Am I right in thinking that these four boys all attend the same day school? I only judge from their writing, which is very neat in each letter.

Frank P. has chosen a hymn that is, I think, a great favourite with most of our young friends. I remember being once at a large meeting (for the young) some miles from London. Some bright gospel addresses had been given, and several hymns sung, then the children were told they might choose the closing hymn, and if Frank could have heard how many voices joined in saying, "No. 12 on the sheet, please Sir," he would have known how dear his hymn, "Precious, precious blood of Jesus," was to others.

George P., who is, I expect, Frank's brother, chooses a grand old hymn, "There is a Name I

love to hear," and writes:—"I like it because it is the Saviour's Name we sing of."

"The pardoned sinner's memory holds
None other half so dear."

Two very interesting letters from girls who live in Ottawa, Canada, have already had a journey of so many miles over land and sea that I am sure we shall all agree that it would be unkind to keep the writers waiting any longer for their answers.

The first is from Bernice L., who writes a very kind letter. Thank you so much, dear, for giving me such a nice account of your Sunday School. I read your letter to the girls in my own Bible Class, and am sure they were interested. I am glad your prize was a Bible, and hope that you may early know the Lord Jesus as your own precious Saviour, Guide and Friend.

Minnie McK. C. J. L. was quite pleased to hear that so many of the children of Canada are among the readers of *My Little Friend*, and is sure Minnie would like to see what a nice large packet of letters she has received from her young friends. But we live such a long way from each other that it is hardly likely we shall ever see and speak to one another on earth; we may pray for friends whose faces we have never seen. Paul often did so, and if we are children of God by faith in Christ, we are sure to meet some day in our Father's house. (John xiv. 2.) I hope Bernice and Minnie will write again.

Lucy M. G., Forest Gate. Thank you, dear Lucy, for your neatly written letter. You are quite right in thinking that we should be kind to and help each other, but shall I tell you what always seems to me such good, glad news, that it makes me happy even to think about it? God loves sinners, Christ died to save sinners. I think I was about as old as you are now when the Holy Spirit opened the eyes of my heart to see that as a lost and sinful child I needed to be saved, saved by Jesus.

Adeline T., Altrincham. Your letter, dear little friend, has given me real pleasure. You say you are nearly seven years old, so I think you are the youngest of my correspondents this month. I like your hymn, for it tells how the Good Shepherd, the Lord Jesus, came from heaven to earth to seek and save the lost. He is in the glory now, but He is glad when He finds one of His straying lambs, when even a little girl or boy trusts Him as a Saviour.

Elizabeth W., Ingrow, is the fourth of our young friends who chooses Miss Havergal's hymn, "Precious, precious blood of Jesus," and writes, "The hymn says it was shed for sinners, so I know it includes me."

Nellie H., Romford, chooses such a bright hymn that it seems almost like a ray of sun-

shine. I have only room to copy a very few lines, but the hymn is one we all know:

"Jesus bids us shine, with a pure clear light,
Like a little candle, burning in the night."

Nellie writes she would like very much to be a hospital nurse and take care of poor sick people when she is old enough, so I am sure she will be interested in reading our next talk on paper, as I hope, if the Lord will, not only to answer the letters of my young friends, but to tell them how a lady, who when grown up did good work as a nurse, began when quite a little girl to train herself by playing her dolls were sick and must be nursed and taken care of.

John B., Lincoln, sends as his hymn:

"Come to the Saviour, make no delay."

He says he has heard, and wants others to hear, the voice of Jesus bidding them "Come." The Voice that once spoke on earth, is speaking from the glory now.

Lillie F., Leytonstone. I like your choice of a hymn, dear Lillie, and thank you for your interesting letter, and for telling me so much about your brothers. What a loving, unselfish spirit dear Freddie shewed in the incident you relate. I think he must have learnt something of the meaning of the Master's words when He said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." (Acts xx. 35.)

I am sorry to find you are just a little disappointed that your baby sister is to be named Alice instead of Winnie. Alice is a German name, though it has become common in England. Its meaning is "noble." I am sure you have heard or read of the late Princess Alice, who died some years ago. She was much loved, not so much because she was one of Queen Victoria's daughters, and so of royal birth, but because of her thoughtful kindness to others, and the pleasure it gave her to help the sick and suffering.

Owing to want of space letters from Fanny A., Lily S., Edie M., and William J. B., must stand over till our next "Talk."

Our subject for letter will be, "What songs or hymns of praise or thanksgiving to God, recorded in the Bible, were composed or sung by women?"

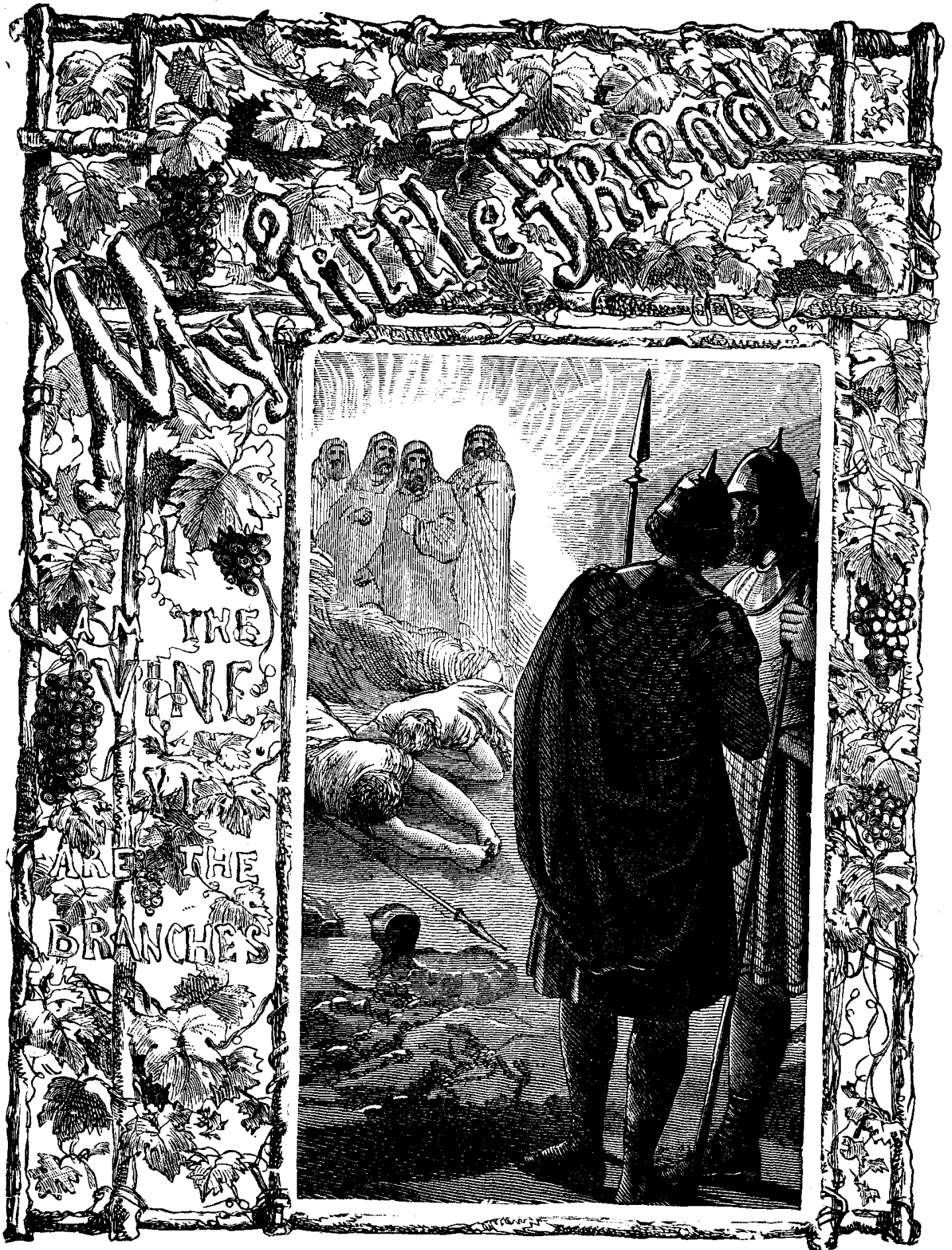
Address your letters to—

C. J. L., care of Editor of *My Little Friend*,
20, Paternoster Square, London, E.C.

Try to get your letters posted not later than the 20th of the month, so that they may be received on the 21st. This rule does not apply to the readers who live in the Colonies, as their books are sometimes delayed in the voyage out.

Your loving friend, C. J. L.

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The Fiery Furnace.

WE read in the book of Daniel how that one day the King of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it, and because the King of Judah had not walked in God's ways, God allowed him to be taken away prisoner to Babylon.

There were also a number of youths taken from Jerusalem, sons of the king and princes. These boys found themselves taken away from their own homes and had to stand before a king in a strange palace.

Now amongst all these there were four found that were more clever than the rest, they were Daniel and his three friends. One day the king, whose name was Nebuchadnezzar, put up an immense image and said that all who heard the music were to fall down and worship it. Daniel seems to have been absent on this occasion, for his name is not mentioned, but his three friends, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, refused to worship the image because they loved God and wanted to please and serve Him.

The king was very angry and said they should be thrown into a furnace of fire, but they did not mind his threat and told the king they were not careful to answer him. They knew God could save them from it, but if He allowed them to suffer, they would rather suffer than do what they knew was wicked.

Were they not very brave lads, choosing to suffer for God rather than do wrong? Oh! if all the boys and girls in the present day were more like these noble Jews, how happy it would be. Well, we all know the rest of the story, how that the furnace was made seven times hotter, so that it should quickly burn up these three youths, who had dared to disobey the command of so powerful a king. The word of this king was law, and all he said had to be carried out to the letter. He killed whom he pleased and kept alive those he chose, but here were three youths or young men who were not afraid of the king's command.

They were bound therefore hand and foot and cast into the fire, while the king sat at a

distance, where he could see all that went on.

The poor soldiers who put them in the fire were slain themselves, because the flames were so fierce.

Suddenly the king rose up in haste and said, Did we not cast three into the fiery furnace? behold, I see four walking in the midst of the fire, and the fourth is like unto the Son of God.

How wonderful! a heavenly One was with them in the fire, and they were not hurt. God had preserved them, and when brought out of the fire their hair was not even singed, and there was no smell of fire about them.

Then the king blessed the God of these Hebrews, and said, There is no other God that can deliver after such a manner. Let us, then, all have faith in God; first, for the salvation of our souls, and then for the details of our daily lives, that we may live to His glory.

The Glad Tidings.

Who was gentle as a lamb?

Jesus Christ, the great "I am."

Who the King of kings is styled?

Jesus, once a little child.

And did Jesus Christ, the Lord,
Come to earth to speak of God?

Just to speak to ones like me,
And to die upon the tree!

Why did He not dwell above,
Always in His Father's love?
O that I could see His face,
Shining in that glorious place,
How could I be brought so high,
There to live and never die?

'Twas for this God did not spare
His own Son, to bring us there:
So that Holy One of God
Took the form of flesh and blood;
Son of God, and Son of man,
He was call'd the spotless Lamb.

Tell me then of Jesus' birth,
Why He came from heaven to earth,
Why He died upon the tree—
What was Jesus' death to me?

God has told you how He came
As a babe to Bethlehem;

How a star appear'd one day,
Guide to where the Saviour lay;
And how wise men from afar
Watch'd and wonder'd at the star,
Till they came to where it stood,
Waiting on the Christ of God.
They rejoic'd, and forth they brought
Offerings to the child they sought;
While they worshipp'd and adored
David's Son and David's Lord.

And was Mary there that day,
With the young child, where He lay?
Did *she* see those men of prayer
Fall before the infant there?
What did Jesus' mother then?

When she saw those holy men
Fall before that child of grace,
Sure, her heart was fill'd with praise;
He was Mary's child, 'tis true,
But He was her Saviour too—
Messenger of love, He came
To reveal the Father's name.
Here He lived the life of faith,
Here He died to conquer death.
He was the obedient One,
God's beloved and only Son.
'Twas to do His Father's will,
And His purpose to fulfil.
With this glorious end in view,
Jesus died for sinners too—
Died for God, and died for man,
Oh, it was a wondrous plan!
Mystery before unknown,
Worthy of the Lord alone.

Birds of the Bible

CHAPTER I.

EAGLES.

DEAR CHILDREN,

Most of you will remember that about this time last year, we had a few brief chats about the "*Animals of the Bible*," and now that we have opportunity I think it would be profitable to look at the *birds*.

Foremost among the feathered tribes alluded to in the scriptures is the eagle.

The eagle is a very large and powerful bird, and builds its nest on the top of very high rocks, from which position it watches for its prey, which chiefly consists of lambs, geese, deer, serpents and (terrible to think of) sometimes little children.

The eagle is very swift of flight, its wings being exceedingly powerful, and Solomon compares the uncertainty of riches to the flight of the eagle, in Proverbs xxiii. 5. "Riches certainly make themselves wings; they fly away as an eagle toward heaven."

How needful to have a share in the riches which endure for ever, which no thief can steal.

When the young eagles are old enough to fly, the parent bird drives them off their resting places, and then flies underneath them, so that should the little ones become exhausted or timid, it catches them on its wings and bears them safely home. You will find reference to this in Exodus xix. 4 and Deuteronomy xxxii. 11, 12, as shewing God's care for His people Israel.

But I want you specially to note a reference to this bird in Isaiah xl. 31. "But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint."

With keen and penetrating eye,
The eagle views his prey;
From off some rocky ledge on high,
Where he has made his stay;
All of a sudden down he swoops
Upon some wandering lamb;
The animal with terror stoops,
Escape,—it never can.

Again into the air doth rise
This mighty feathered king,
And proudly his now helpless prize
Unto his nest doth bring.
But children, is this all that we,
From this fine bird may learn?
Just for a moment list to me,
And to your Bibles turn.

In Isaiah forty, thirty-one,
You this great truth will see,—
Who wait upon the Lord may run,
And yet not weary be;
For as the eagle, even so
Their strength they shall renew;
Though walking, faint they shall not grow,
Their God shall bring them through.

W. M.



A Visit to Mary's Home.

ALADY was one day called to visit a poor woman who was very ill. She lived in a small house in a very narrow street and would let no one go near her to help or comfort her.

But on this day the lady was to gain an entrance to her little sitting room, because she was going to use a key that had never been tried before, and that key was prayer. She asked the Lord to let her in to see poor Mary.

"What's brought you here?" said Mary. "Because I heard you were ill, and I have a message for you from One who loves sick and weary ones."

"Sit down then," she said, as she tried to hush the growl of a large black dog that was in the room, and seemed to dislike the visitor.

Just then a knock came to the door and a voice said "Mother, it's me."

"Shall I open the door," asked the lady.

"Yes, it's Johnnie."

A boy about five years old came in with his clothes all wet and dripping from the storm outside. He crouched beside his mother and cried as she tried to wring out the wet from his pinafore.

"Don't cry, Johnnie lad," said his mother, "your father will soon come."

"But I'm cold and hungry, and I cannot wait any longer, father is so long coming home."

The lady broke in by asking "when did the child have food last?"

"Not since yesterday," said his mother, "as far as I know, and my last penny went for coals."

"Don't lock your door," the lady said, "I'll be back in a few minutes," and at a shop that was near she bought a few articles of food. Soon Johnnie was enjoying a meal such as he had not

had for some time, and then being tired he lay down on the floor and fell fast asleep.

Now was the time to have a quiet chat with Johnnie's mother, and she told her visitor all her troubles and how that she was neglected by her husband, weak and ill, and the doctor had said she would not mend.

Then the lady said, "Mary, the message I bring you to-night is from the Son of God, the One who died to save sinners like you and me; and His message to you is this, 'Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.'"

"I would like to have the rest," said Mary, "but I am not fit to come, and I have no strength left to go to church or to a meeting."

"Well, Mary, you are very weak and sinful, but Christ has made provision for just such as you, for He bids you look unto Him and live."

The lady then turned to Numbers xxi., and read the story of the brazen serpent, and



Losing her Little Ones.

how the bitten people had to look and live.

"I'm just like one of them" whispered Mary, "but there is no serpent of brass for me."

Once more she was pointed to the scripture, John iii. 14. "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Ah! this was what Mary wanted, and she looked to Jesus, trusted in Him, and tasted His rest and His forgiveness. Soon she was called away from this scene, but she died full of joy and peace, because she was going to be with the Lord Jesus.

Losing her Little Ones.

ABOUT a month ago we were walking through some lanes and fields in the country, far away from city life and where the constant hum of active workers could no longer be heard. Yet there were other sounds that fell very pleasantly upon the ear, such as the song of the many birds, the bleating of sheep, and the hum of flies and insects.

All this reminds us that summer is near at hand, reminds us, too, that God has promised that while the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest, summer and winter, shall not cease.

I was particularly interested in seeing the many coops in the meadows with tiny chicks running about near to each, looking such pretty little balls of down of all colours.

But our picture gives us another sight, not chickens running about in the grass looking for grubs and insects, but young ducklings, who see the water for the first time, and without a moment's delay hasten to swim on its surface. The old hen that has hatched the brood of ducks is much alarmed at their thus leaving her side, but in spite of her warning clucks they will not give up the enjoyment of a swim on the pond.

The instinct of a fowl is to avoid water, while that of a duck is to take to it. How wise is this provision which God has put in nature, that all His creatures know the things best suited to them.

The hen cannot understand her little ones going on the water, and thinks they will be drowned; but although she hatched the ducks they have a different nature to hers, and love to get to the water, so no warning note will keep them from it.

Talks with my Girls.

No. VI.

FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE.

NELLIE told me a great secret in her letter last month. She writes: "When I am old enough, I should very much like to go into a hospital and learn how to nurse poor sick people." And as I am sure Nellie is not the only girl I know who would enjoy a talk about nursing and nurses, I am going to keep a promise I made some time ago by telling my readers a little about the early life of a lady whose name I think most of us know quite well.

Seventy-five years ago, in the year 1820, an English gentleman and his wife, who had been spending the winter in Italy, were gladdened during their stay at Florence by the birth of a little daughter. Mr. and Mrs. Nightingale decided to call the baby Florence, in memory of the city of her birth. Returning to their pleasant home in Huntingdonshire, when Florence was only a few months old, she grew up a thoroughly English girl in her tastes and habits.

Like many other girls, Florence was very fond of playing with dolls, though I think if we could have watched her we should have seen that she played, as in after years she worked, on lines of her own. Her dolls were always sick or in hospital with broken arms or legs, and her small fingers rolled and unrolled bandages in a way that gave promise of being what, after years of patient work, she became, a first-rate surgical nurse.

As she grew older, much of her time was of course spent in the schoolroom; but the great wish of her heart—to be of use—made her look around her for opportunities of shewing kindness to God's creatures, and she soon began nursing sick animals, one of her first patients being a large shepherd's dog, that, even when suffering great pain from a broken leg, seemed to understand that she wanted to be kind to it, and allowed her to bandage the broken limb, licking her hands all the time; and when it got quite well, shewed itself really a grateful patient by the way it followed her about.

But nursing, Miss Nightingale knew, was not play-work, so she was always ready to take trouble and learn all she could. She had been trained as a nurse when, about forty years ago, news came from the Crimea—where a great number of French and English soldiers were at that time fighting—of how much many of the poor fellows suffered from want of proper care and nursing, when wounded on the battlefield or taken sick with cold or fever caught in the trenches or from sleeping on the damp ground. Miss Nightingale was one of several ladies who offered to go out and nurse them. I should like to tell you about her work in military hospitals, but I must not forget how many letters from my young friends are waiting to be answered, so will begin at once with

Lily S., Stratford. Your letter, dear Lily, was indeed a welcome one. It is always a real joy to hear from those who have through grace learnt that they belong to Christ. It is very blessed to know that our sins are all forgiven, but we must not forget that if we are Christians we have the Holy Spirit as our Guide and Teacher, given to lead us on to know our Lord and Saviour in the new place where He now is. The hymn you choose is a very beautiful one.

Edie M., Gray Hill. Thank you so much, dear, for your interesting and nicely-written letter. I think you have already taken your first lessons in nursing by the bedside of your dear mother, who, I am thankful to hear, is spared to you, and I hope by this time is quite strong again. What I mean by "nursing lessons" is, that I am sure you know how much quiet, thoughtful ways, and little words and deeds that spring from love, can do for the comfort of any one who is ill. Perhaps part of your work was keeping the little ones quiet and happy, and so saving mother a great deal of worry and some bad headaches. What a comfort it is to know that if we belong to Christ we may do our everyday work, our home and school duties from a desire to please Him. "For ye serve the Lord Christ." (Col. iii. 24.) Write again, Edie.

Fanny A., Meer End. I was quite glad to see your writing again, dear Fanny, and sorry I was unable to answer your letter last month. Your hymn is one I know quite well, we often sing it in Sunday school. Yes, dear, if we know the Lord Jesus as the One who died and rose again for us, ours is indeed a bright and blessed hope—the return of our Lord to take us to be with Himself for ever. May we keep in loving memory His own word, "I will come again, and receive you unto myself." (John xiv. 3.)

William J. B., New Swindon. Your kind note with motto text and hymn leads me to

think that you have believed what God says in His word about the work of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. If so you are one of the disciples of Christ, one to whom the Master says, "Let your light so shine." (Matt. v. 16.) It is often a help to me to remember that we are not told to make it shine. The Lord Himself puts the light of His Holy Spirit into our poor dark hearts; but we are to *let* it shine. Do not hinder it.

Florence P., Stratford, would, she says, quite enjoy having a Bible class on paper, as she thinks it would be a help to those who have begun to trust in Jesus, by leading them to study their Bible more. I quite agree with dear Florence, and feel for my own part that I shall need to pray a great deal about this class that the Holy Spirit may guide my thoughts, so that I may only write words that will be a help and blessing to any young Christians who join—a help, too, to any who are still unsaved in leading them to see that to come to the Lord Jesus is simply to believe on Him. (Acts xiii. 39.)

Nellie H., Romford, is quite willing to join our Bible class. She was much interested in reading of my Palestine lamp, and says "she should like to have something made by the Jews." I wonder if my dear little friend ever thought of herself as the owner of a book written by Jews? Yes, dear Nellie, your Bible is a book written by many of God's servants. Kings, prophets, and apostles all helped in the work. They were inspired or taught what to write by the Holy Ghost. They did not all live at the same time, or even in the same place; but they were all Jews. I hope Nellie will take a very real interest in learning more and more of the wonderful story our own dear English Bible has to tell, of how it was written, translated, preserved, and suffered for.

Mary E. K., Pama, Illinois, U. S. A. Thank you so much, dear Mary, for your very interesting letter. C. J. L. likes the simple, truthful way in which you tell the story of your favourite hymn:

"Nothing but Christ, as on we tread,
The gift unpriced, God's living bread,
With staff in hand, and feet well shod,
Nothing but Christ, the Christ of God."

I almost seemed to see the farm house kitchen in far away Illinois, where one who through grace had found the Lord Jesus precious to her own soul, moved briskly about busy with her household duties, singing in happy tones of Him, whom having not seen she loved, till the words of the sweet hymn seemed to be God's own message to the heart of her little sister. I hope Mary will make her sister's hymn the motto of

her life, so that in her own little corner she may be found

"Shining, to give Him glory."

I shall be glad to hear from Mary again, and should like her to join our Bible Class.

Nellie May D., West Ham. Nellie writes to say that she attends one Bible class, which she enjoys so much that she thinks she would very much like to join another, and will try and write every month, she thinks it is so nice to listen to Bible stories. I am so glad Nellie has begun to love her Bible and hope that she has given her heart to the Lord Jesus, the precious Saviour of whose love to sinners she has so often heard. There are many ways at home and in school in which even a very young girl who belongs to Christ may shew her love to her Saviour. Will dear Nellie ask the Lord in prayer to shew her how she can please and follow Him?

Daisy J., Stratford, who writes a nice thoughtful letter, says, "I think a Bible class on paper would be quite a help, as it would be the means of our remembering our scripture lessons better, if we not only looked out, but wrote down our answers." From a child Daisy has loved to listen to Bible stories, and now she is, I believe, really trusting the Lord Jesus as her own precious Saviour. May her love for the Word of God grow with her knowledge of it, then she will be a prayerful, thoughtful reader of the Book which is able to make her wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

Florence Y., Devizes, who is just eleven years old, writes such an interesting letter that I think only one thing hinders it from being printed. It is thoughtful and well expressed, but does not touch the question of the month, "Shall we have a Bible class?" Still I think I know her answer would be, "Oh yes, if you please," so I am going to count her among the girls who have joined us; her home is too far away from a meeting to allow her to attend school very often on Lord's Day afternoons. I am sure she will enjoy looking out answers to Bible questions.

Minnie B., Weybridge, thinks a Bible class on paper will be as helpful as it will be interesting. Minnie used to belong to a Bible class of elder ones, and I know she thinks it will remind her of old times, as well as lead her to study her Bible more. The word of God, dear Minnie, shows us the precious things that are ours in Christ if we belong to Him, but it is to the Lord Himself we must go to make them good to our souls by the power of His holy Spirit, see John xiv. 26, &c.

A short note from Fanny A., Meer End,

expresses pleasure at the thought of having a "MY LITTLE FRIEND" Bible Class and tells me the writer is quite willing to join, and now, dear young friends, we may, I think, consider our Bible Class has really made a beginning, though the number of girls who have joined is not large; it will, we expect, grow every month, and it is really much nicer to begin with a dozen girls who mean steady patient work, than with a much larger number who would get tired and give up in a month or two. I can hardly say yet what form our Bible Talks may take (so much will depend on the letters I get) and I am afraid to make promises I might not be able to keep, but I may tell my girls just one thing I am anxious *not* to do. I do not want to give questions that can be answered by writing out a few lines from a concordance. It can hardly be called Bible study, and besides is not quite fair to others, as many of our girls have not a concordance of their own and might not be able to borrow one.

Shall we take a Bible picture this month?

A stranger in a strange land, living among people who did not understand her, or why she would not join with them in the worship of idols, occupying a lowly and dependent position in a wealthy household, the young girl who is the subject of our picture must often have felt lonely and sorrowful. Still she possessed a treasure of far greater value than gold or precious stones, a treasure which she did not wish selfishly to keep to herself, but longed to share with others. In God's own time and way she was enabled to do so and was made the means of bringing blessing to those whom she served.

QUESTIONS:

I. In which of the books of the Bible do we find the key to our picture?

II. State in your own words, what you think is meant by "she possessed a treasure"?

III. In what way did she share it with others?

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A Mule Ride.

ONE PENNY, with Coloured Picture.

A Mule Ride.

HOW would you like a ride in one of the deep panniers fixed to a mule's back, like the little ones in our picture?

In Portugal the children often ride like this when going to school from one village to another, and very much they enjoy the ride. Although often going on narrow pathways on the mountain side, the mules are so sure-footed and careful there is no danger of falling over the edge.

Little Tommy, the Sailor Boy.

A FEW weeks ago the captain of a vessel was telling me of a little lad who served in his ship many years ago. The captain is an earnest Christian now, but in the days when he knew this little fellow, he was not a follower of the Lord Jesus, but a stern and hardened man of the world. His first ship was a small frigate, with about a dozen men, who composed the crew, and among them was this lad Tommy, who did odd jobs, and made himself generally useful. Poor Tommy had a bitter life of it among this reckless, godless set of men. His mother had taught him to love the Lord Jesus, and a few weeks before he joined his ship, the lad had given his heart to God, promising that he would serve Him faithfully.

Of course when the men discovered this fact Tommy became a capital butt for all their jokes and ill treatment—even the captain himself encouraged their sport—but still he held on, persisting in kneeling down night and morning, to pour out his heart to his Father in heaven, in spite of the cruel blows which were directed at him, while pleading with God for the souls of the godless crew. With a heart sorely tried and well-nigh breaking at times, the boy wandered about the vessel seeking a quiet spot, but seldom or ever finding one.

In the course of one voyage the little vessel encountered a succession of terrific storms, day by day increasing in violence.

The captain and crew were too much occupied now to notice the boy, so amid the

furiously raging elements his happiest, and most peaceful moments were spent.

One awful night, when the sky overhead was dark with clouds, and the sea dashed mercilessly over the decks of the frigate, Tommy stole aft, and clinging with both hands to a rope, kneeled on the wet boards and pleaded for the men who, regardless of him altogether, were hurrying hither and thither carrying out the captain's orders.

"It's all up with us, Bill," he heard the latter say to the chief mate, in a hoarse whisper. "It's no use trying to save her." Then the thundering noise of the waves drowned their voices, but still Tommy went on praying.

Presently he heard, above the rain and wind, the sound of his own name, shouted in different parts of the vessel. Springing to his feet, he made his way (by dint of clinging to every available rope) to the captain's side. "Do you want me, sir?" he asked.

"Look here, boy," said the captain, "we're going to the bottom; it's impossible to do anything now—but" and stern and weather-worn as he was, his voice trembled, "there's a God in heaven, you say—well—I—I thought perhaps you'd pray for us."

Tommy gave one bright, glad look into the captain's face, "Oh yes, sir," he answered, without a moment's hesitation, "I shall like that so much."

The rough sailor turned on his heel and led the way into his cabin below, Tommy and one or two of the crew following. There they knelt down, while the little lad prayed that the storm might abate, and with choking sobs, asked God to save the captain and men.

Very shortly afterwards the fury of the waves and winds lessened, the clouds broke, and the clear winter's moon shone down upon them. This was the result of one boy's faith. Oh! what a mighty power that lad became amongst that crew. Is not this a God worth having, who has said, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee?" Is Tommy's God your God? Is Jesus your Friend?

Dear boys and girls, settle this question with yourselves. Listen to the voice of Jesus calling you to Himself. He has borne

the punishment of guilt and sin on the cross, and now waits to receive you. Accept His pardon, forsake your sins, and you will be able to prove what a Saviour He is. "I will receive you and be gracious unto you," saith the Lord.

Birds of the Bible.

CHAPTER II.

VULTURES.

DEAR CHILDREN,

Having paid a visit to the proud king of feathers last time we met; we will to-day turn our attention to a bird not much less in either size or strength, but which is only mentioned four times in the scripture. The first two allusions to this bird are in Leviticus and Deuteronomy, in which the children of Israel were forbidden to eat thereof; being pronounced unclean by Jehovah.

You will also find the vulture mentioned amongst other birds in Isaiah xxxiv. 15; but the text I was thinking of is in Job xxviii. Look carefully down the chapter and you will find the vulture. "There is a path which no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen." Now the vulture like the eagle has a very quick eye, but there is something that is hidden from it, which God reveals to man.

The following lines will explain it:—

There is a secret path which e'en—
The vulture's eye hath never seen,
Nor the fierce lion passed by:
No fowl that flieth in the air,
Or beast that wanders from its lair,
Can ere this path descry.


What is this wondrous, hidden way,
Of which Job has so much to say,—
In chapter twenty-eight?
The way of wisdom, true, it is,
Which God reveals to those who're His,
And evil ways do hate.

This wisdom is not bought with gold,
Its priceless worth cannot be told;
This treasure, seek to own.
"Whence then comes wisdom?" Hear the word,
"Behold the fear of the Lord"
That wisdom is alone.

W. M.

Gathering Primroses.

(See Coloured Picture.)

HE month of July has come round once more, and as usual we have prepared a pretty coloured picture, which I hope you will all be pleased with.

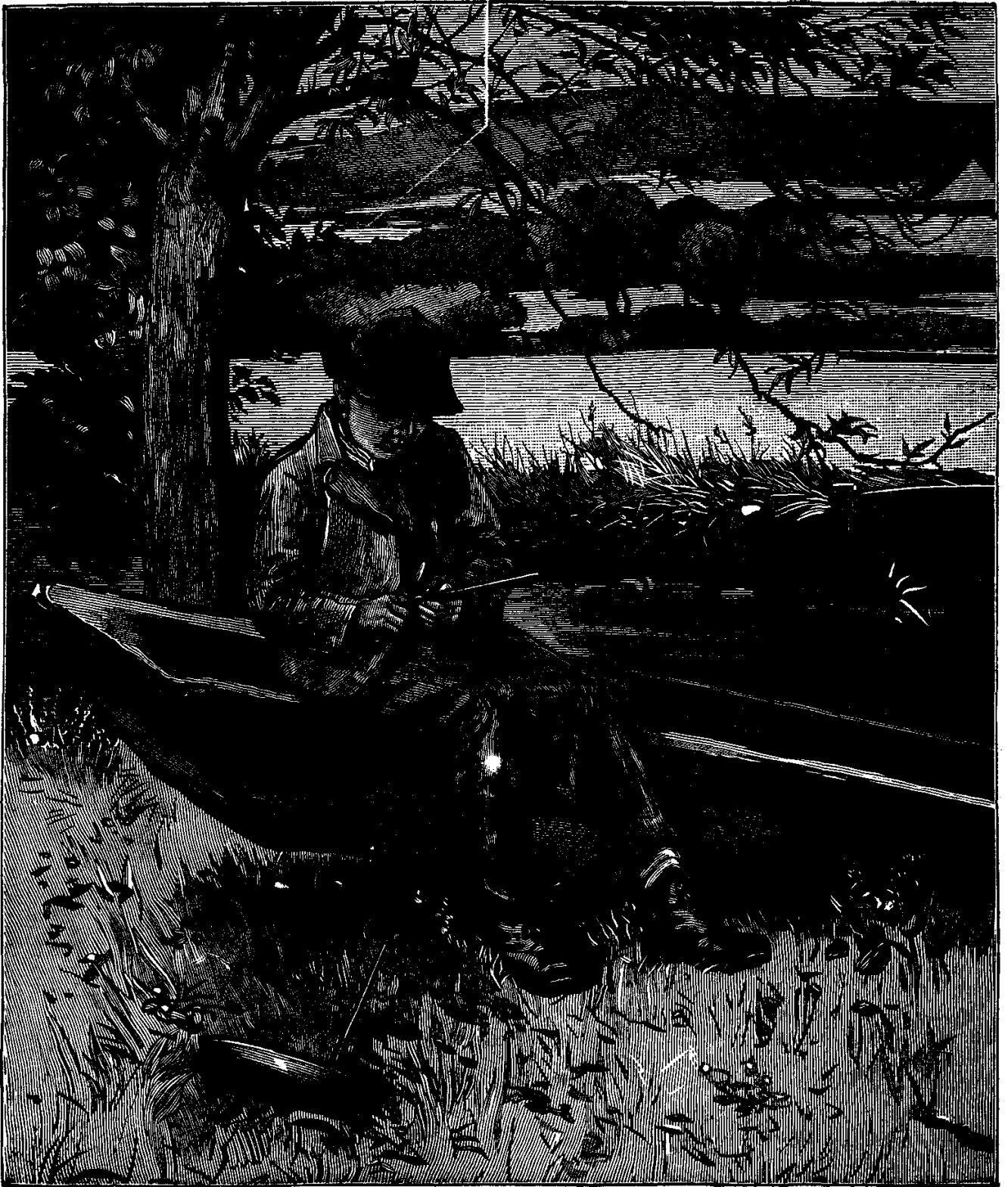
The names of the boy and girl are Harry and Eva, while the dog at their side is Spot. They make a happy trio to spend an afternoon together. I daresay most of our readers are fond of animals, and if you have not a dog you may have doves, pigeons, rabbits, or other kinds of pets, so you will quite understand how glad Harry is to take Spot with him wherever he goes, in fact it is not half the fun to go out alone. I am sure too that Spot enjoys it quite as much, for he is full of life the moment he sees them ready to start out.

Harry and Eva, as you will see in the picture, have been very busy this afternoon. They have been gathering primroses in the woods and now with happy faces are on the way home. Harry's basket is only a small one but is quite full, while Eva has such a large one that she has only half filled it. These primroses are for sale on a stall in the market place.

They are now waiting at the river side and the dog, as well as they, is eagerly looking for the man to take them over.

But why does he not come, what has become of the ferryman and his boat, that he is keeping them waiting so long? Well, dear children, if you look in our other picture you will see that to-day the boat is left in charge of the ferryman's son, and he is quite busy cutting out something with his knife. I think it must be a boat, boys are very fond of making boats, and while he is thus giving all attention to the knife and the wood, our young friends on the opposite bank are waiting and anxious to see his boat pushed off.

If he keeps them much longer they will shout at the top of their voices and wake him up to a sense of his duty, and it will take but a few moments to row them across.



The Ferry-Boy.



Job and his Three Friends.

Job and His Friends.

THE story of the man named Job is one of the most remarkable in the whole Bible. He was what we should call a very good man, for we read that he feared God and avoided evil. God had prospered his way so that he was a wealthy man. He had seven thousand sheep and three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen and five hundred asses.

When God said there was no man in all the earth like Job, Satan said, "Doth Job fear God for nought," as much as to say that Job only served God for the sake of the things God had given him.

Satan then had permission to take away all that Job had. The oxen and asses were stolen by Sabeans, the sheep burnt up and the camels carried away by the Chaldeans, but that was not the worst of the trouble; Job's sons and daughters were eating and drinking in their eldest brother's house, when a great wind smote the house and it fell upon them, and all were killed, save one servant who fled to carry the sad tidings. But in spite of the bad news which four of his servants brought him one after another, Job did not make a single complaint, but said, "blessed be the name of the Lord."

Having failed to make Job complain against God by robbing him of his goods and by the death of his children, Satan next tried by afflicting him with boils to gain his purpose. Oh what a sad plight Job was in now, stripped of everything and covered with boils, but he gave a very sweet answer to his wife when she tempted him to curse God and die, he said, "Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" So you see Satan was disappointed again.

After this God restored Job to health and gave him more goods than he ever had before, other children were born to him in place of those he had lost, so the last state of Job was better than the first. He had known what it was to lose everything, so now he knew how to value his sons, his daughters and his cattle.

What a happy thing to learn by this story

of Job that if we are children of God we are entirely in His hand, Satan cannot come near to harm us in any way unless, as in the case of Job, God gives him permission, and then we know it will be for our good, but God will watch over and keep us in His own hand.

Talks with my Girls.

No. VII.

FLOWER TEXTS.



THE number of letters from "my girls," received during April, has been very encouraging, most of the young friends who joined our "Talks" on paper in January, having written. I quite begin to know the postmark and handwriting of several of my correspondents, and should feel disappointed if I did not find them in the packet; and there are new friends, who will, I hope, soon grow into old ones. But, as about forty letters are waiting to be answered, I think you will all forgive me if I begin work without saying even one of quite half-a-dozen things I wanted to tell you about the flowers of Bible lands.

Florence P., Stratford. Thank you, dear, for your loving little note. I think the hymn you have chosen a very beautiful one. Your verse, "As for man, his days are as grass: as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth" (Ps. ciii. 15), tells us it is true that all we can see with our eyes, or touch with our hands, must change or die. How bright and blessed it is for us to remember that if we belong to Christ, the things He gives us—His peace, His joy, etc.—are our very own, because they are His, and so can never fade or be taken from us; though if we really want to enjoy them, we need to keep very near our Lord and Saviour.

Lillie F., Leytonstone. The loving sympathy of your letter, dear Lillie, was very welcome. I think we are all apt to feel a little discouraged at times, I am sure I am, just when I forget that the secret, not only of joy in the Lord but of strength and courage for daily work and walk, is in "Looking unto Jesus." (Heb. xii. 2.) I am glad to find you know so many of our English wild flowers. You will be interested, as I was, in hearing that daisies are among the most common flowers of Bible lands. Travellers who have visited Nazareth in the early spring, tell us that it is impossible to climb the hills or wander through the fields just outside the town, with-

out crushing thousands of pink and white daisies under foot.

Hettie J., Chelmsford. Your letter, dear Hettie, has interested me greatly. I am sure you love flowers, not only for their beauty and sweet perfume, but because they are among the wonderful works of God. We may, as you suggest, take them now and then as our lesson-book, and learn from them much of His wisdom and goodness. Your choice of texts is very good indeed. Please write as often as you are able.

Edith C., Tunbridge Wells. Your letter, dear Edith, with the flower-painting enclosed, for which accept very real thanks, brought to my mind the words of "the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive." (Acts xx. 35.) How kind it was of you to give me so much real pleasure. You ask me if I can tell you anything about the lilies named in your text. Some time ago I read a very interesting book, all about the trees and flowers of which we read in the Bible. I should quite enjoy telling you all I remember about the lily, but a pile of unanswered letters seems to whisper I must not attempt to give you more than a few lines this month.

Ethel M. O., Weston-super-Mare, who signs herself "Your loving little friend," writes a long interesting letter, and sends lovely flower-texts. One is, "As the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters." (Song of Sol. ii. 2.) We love the lilies, they are so pure and sweet, do we not, Ethel? And it is very blessed to remember that if we belong to the Lord Jesus, we are fair and precious in His sight. I read once that the Hebrew word translated "lily" in our Bibles, means a 'changed' or 'raised' one. So we may look up to Christ, and say with grateful hearts:

"A lily! Saviour, 'twas Thy grace

That changed the thorny thing!

My lifted head to Thee I bow,

And fragrance round Thee fling."

Winifred E. O., who is, I find from her letter, Ethel's sister, sends as her verse, "Consider the lilies how they grow." (Luke xii. 27.) I am sure dear Winnie knows that to consider a thing means to think about it. The more we think about the works of God the more we shall praise His goodness and wisdom when we know the joy of being saved by Christ, then we begin to understand just a little about the wonders of His love. Thank you for the pretty card, dear. I shall hope to hear from Ethel and Winifred again.

Ethel R., Coleford. You do not know, dear Ethel, how pleased C. J. L. was at finding a letter from a little girl only six years of age among those from her young friends, many of

whom are much older. Ethel R.'s text is, "I am the rose of Sharon and the lily of the valleys." I hope my little friend has begun to trust the Lord Jesus as her Saviour, then she will soon begin to know and love His other names, so dear to the hearts of His saved ones.

Irene B. A., Newport. Yes, dear Irene, I do like your letter very much indeed, and thank you for writing. I am so glad you are able to go for country walks, and learn to know and love our English wild flowers seen by you for the first time this season, and so unlike, you say, to any growing in far-off Australia. I hope you will be very happy in England. I often think that our homes are really the places where our loved ones are. The word of God does not tell us very much about heaven, the home where all who belong to Christ will spend eternity with Him; but we know the One who is the light and glory of that place as our Saviour and Friend now, and through His grace we long to see His face in the glory where He now is.

Edith M. G., Thorpe-le-Soken. It is always a pleasure to receive letters from young friends living in out-of-the-way places. Edith does not say if she attends a Bible Class; but I hope she will join the one just forming among the readers of *My Little Friend*, and send her answers every month.

William G., Burford. Thank you so much, not only for sending such a lovely flower-text, but for telling me that you are saved by Christ, and that you want your whole life to be for His glory and His praise. He is just as "able to keep" as He is "mighty to save."

Nellie H., Romford. Dear Nellie, I think I must say of you, that you are a faithful little friend, your letters come so regularly every month. Your text, "Consider the lilies," has been chosen by about twenty of our girls and one or two boys this month. I hope our talks about flowers will help us all to think more of the One who created them. Shall I give you two very short texts—"God is love" and "God is light"?

Mary F., Colliston. The way to join our *Little Friend* Bible Class is by trying to answer all the questions, and sending your answers every month.

Minnie B., Weybridge. The text you have chosen, "For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land" (Song of Sol. ii. 11, 12), is one that I often find myself saying now that the spring has really come. It is quite right to enjoy all bright and beautiful things, but you and I need to remember that our best things are stored for us where

Christ now is at the right hand of God, and every one that seeketh, findeth."

Nellie W., Taunton. Thank you, dear, for your loving letter. I feel it is very gracious of the Lord to give me the joy of knowing that our "Talks" are a help and blessing to any of His little ones. The thanks belong to Him, for it is all the glory of His grace.

Alice B., Thorpe-le-Soken. Dear Alice, though you have not told me how old you are, I hardly think I shall be far wrong in thinking of you as one of the younger girls who have joined our "Talks." Will you please tell me if I have made a mistake? Your paper of texts chosen from Old and New Testaments is very good. You will love flowers all the more, I believe, for thinking of the grace and loveliness of the One by whom God created them.

Florence M. Y., Devizes. Thank you, dear, for your very interesting letter. I am glad to find that you not only looked for a verse about flowers, but thought of and asked to have its meaning explained to you. You can join our *Little Friend* Bible Class by trying to answer the questions given every month. I have written your name in my answer book, and shall feel quite disappointed if your letters do not come very often.

Annie L. S., Chadbury. Thank you, dear, for telling me "how you were saved." It was just the old, sweet story, how God loved sinners; how the Lord Jesus loved and gave Himself; and how God the Holy Ghost gave you to see yourself a lost sinner, and then shewed you Christ as your Saviour. May you be

"Kept by His power,
Kept in His love."

Rosalind V. W., York. I am so pleased, dear, that you have joined our "Talks," and hope you will write again, shall I say very soon? You have chosen a verse I love very much, the Master's words about the lilies. (Matt. vi. 28.)

Ethel M. B., Weston-super-Mare, sends a verse about flowers I am going to copy:

"Everywhere about us are they springing,

Some, like stars, to tell us spring is born;

Others, their blue eyes with tears o'erflowing,
Stand, like Ruth, amid the golden corn"

Your quotations, dear Ethel, are thoughtful and well-chosen; I am sure you love reading. A letter from you would be interesting. Will you please write me one some day?

Minnie B. writes such a thoughtful letter that I almost wish I had room to copy part of it. You are quite right in thinking that if we belong to Christ we ought to be more loving and gentle when at play, so that unsaved children may see we really do want to please Him. Yes, and more faithful in our work, too. The

words, "Ye serve the Lord Christ" (Col. iii.), are often a help and a cheer to me when I have to put away my writing to do some other work.

Daisy B. Yes, dear, the keynote of the chapter from which you have copied several verses is the precious name of Christ; it is only when we know Him as our very own Saviour that we begin to care for or understand some of His other names.

Thirza B. Dear Thirza, your little note leads me to think that you are longing for salvation; you write, "I shall be glad when I am as pure as a lily in the sight of God." The soul that simply trusts the precious blood and finished work of the Lord Jesus, is not only forgiven, but washed and made "whiter than snow." I know that only the Holy Spirit of God can really open the eyes of your heart to see how simple God in His love and grace has made it all for us who believe what He says in His own word about sinners and salvation; but I do pray that even as you read this you may take forgiveness as a free gift and thank the Giver.

Well now the space in our Magazine is quite filled up, and I have still to acknowledge letters from Adeline T., Nellie G., Florence T., Marion S., Edith N., Ada F., K., Violet C., Lilian C., Nellie C., Edith O., and May W. To these I must send my very best love, and when they write again, I will try to answer their letters first.

BIBLE PICTURE

We are not told the name of the young girl we hope, if the Lord will, to talk about next month; but it is probable that she was an only daughter, perhaps an only child. Her father who, as we know, was a man of considerable influence, and may have been rich, went to Christ in a time of need just as the shadow of a great sorrow had fallen darkly over his heart and home. The Master returned to his house with him, and sorrow was quickly turned into joy when his loved child heard the voice and felt the touch of Christ.

In which of the gospels are we told of the miracle performed in her case?

Mention any details you notice recorded in one gospel but left out in another.

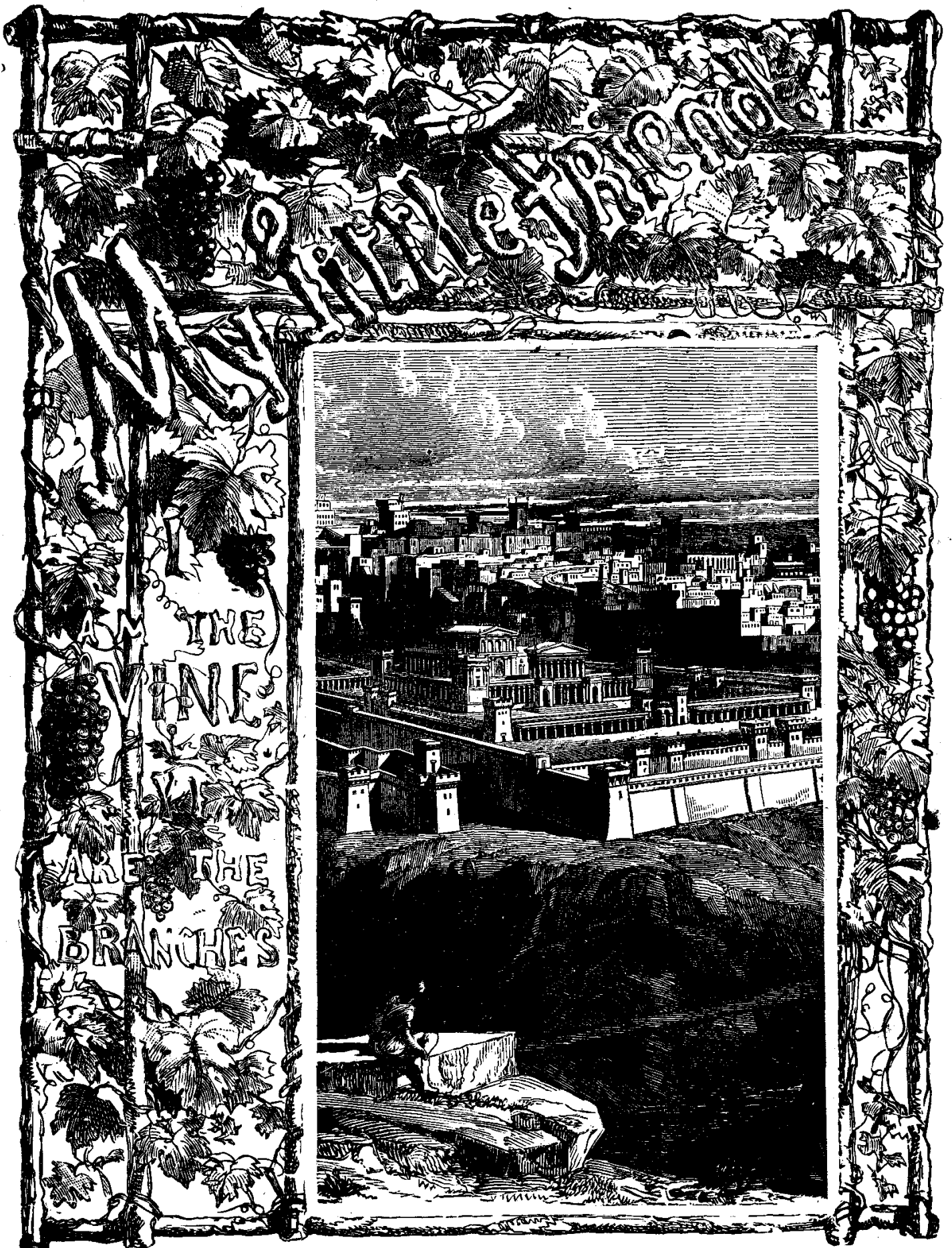
Name any event occurring on the journey taken by the Lord at the request of the father.

Address to C. J. L.,

Care of Editor of *My Little Friend*,
20, Paternoster Square,
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The Temple Destroyed.

ONE evening, a short time before the close of the Lord's life on earth, His disciples spoke to Him of the great beauty of the temple, just as they were passing out of it.

It was indeed a beautiful building, and had taken many years to build. How surprised the disciples must have been to hear the answer that Jesus made! He said, "Verily, I say unto you, there shall not be left here one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down."

All this came true about sixty years later when Jerusalem was destroyed, the beautiful temple was first burned, and then the walls of it were thrown down. Jesus said, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."

Birds of the Bible.

CHAPTER III.

RAVENS.

DEAR CHILDREN,

To-day our visit is to be to the raven, the first bird we read of in the Bible, one being sent out of the ark by Noah when the waters of the flood were abating. (See Gen. viii. 7.) Noah wanted to know the state of the earth, as only the tops of the mountains had as yet been seen. The raven, however, unlike the dove which was next sent out, did not return to the ark, but went to and fro until the waters were dried up from off the face of the earth.

In 1 Kings xvii. 4 we read that during a famine in Israel, ravens were sent by God to feed one of His prophets, and when you bear in mind that ravens are very greedy birds, it seems all the more wonderful that they should bring not only bread, but meat, to the prophet; but God's ways are wonderful, they are past finding out; not only in His care for His earthly people Israel, but in His sparing His Son for those who were His enemies; I mean you and I, dear children. There is one more scripture I want you to turn to, Luke xii. 24. God here shews that He takes care of the ravens, how much more of those who are His own by faith in Christ Jesus.

In Ahab's reign, o'er Israel's land
A dreadful famine came;
The cattle died on every hand,
Three years there was no rain.

But there was one who feared the Lord,
And grieved o'er Israel's sin;
Just let us listen to the word
Jehovah spake to him.

'Twas "Get thee hence, and hide thyself,
By the brook Cherith be:
I have," said God, "commanded there
The ravens feeding thee."

The prophet sought this lone retreat,
And by the brook did hide;
The ravens brought him bread and meat
Both morn and eventide.

And when the waters of the brook
Ran dry and ceased to flow;
Jehovah still care of him took,
And bade him elsewhere go.

So God in never ceasing care
Provides for all His own,
The weak ones He doth gently bear
Throughout their journey home.

W. M.

Longing for Home.

AS I write I see before my mind's eye a row of white-curtained beds, in one of the rooms of a girls' school abroad. The spring sunshine, falling full upon them, discloses what would appear rather a strange sight to any one not in the secret. From every curtain-rod save one dangles a curious paper figure, composed of arms, legs, head (surmounted by a very high chimney-pot hat), and a great round body, much out of proportion to the rest. On each of the limbs, the hat, the head, is written the name of a week-day, while the body bears, in capital letters, followed by three or four notes of exclamation, the expressive word HOME!!! Had you peeped into the school-desks downstairs, you would have discovered various sheets of paper likewise scribbled over with Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and so forth; and evening after evening of that week, before retiring to rest, eager hands scratch pens through the name of the day just ended, whilst voices cry triumphantly: "No more Mondays," "No more Tuesdays," as the case may be.

MY LITTLE FRIEND

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On reaching the bed-rooms hasty fingers tear off leg, or arm, or hat, till at last only the head and body remain suspended in the air.

The explanation? Ah! it only wanted a week to the holidays, and it was the custom thus to count the days before going home.

I said that all the beds but *one* were decorated; that one was *mine*. There was no need for *me* to reckon up the hours; I was not going home. Being an English girl, the journey was considered too long and too expensive to be undertaken more than once a year, during the seven weeks' summer holidays. You can understand, can you not, that the sight of these "Homes!" and the lively talk kept up about them, made me feel rather lonely and forlorn?

Well, at length the joyful day arrived. Overnight the heads were severed from the bodies, leaving the latter to swing gently backwards and forwards over the pillows of the sleepers, happily dreaming of that word—that magic word—"Home."

This morning all is merry bustle and confusion; boxes are being carried through the hall and placed in one carriage after another; some bound for the steamer, some for the railway station, others for country houses many miles away. A few of the pupils are conducted by governesses; several of the elder ones are to travel alone; and the remainder are fetched by relatives or friends.

I envy these the most of all, as I stand disconsolately at the window, watching the different departures. There is something so enchanting about being fetched! What glad meetings take place between child and mother, father, sister, or aunt! To have no trouble or anxiety about the journey, the tickets, the trains! *Fetched* includes everything!

The last vehicle drives off; the bell rings to dress for dinner, and I slowly mount to the now deserted chamber, with its empty beds, unused wash-stands, and—worst of all!—I am confronted by the array of mutilated bodies, mockingly flaunting before my very eyes the word "Home!" "Home!" "Home!"

Lucy gone, Gertrude gone, Mary gone! All gone but me!

But never mind! There is one consoling thought! In a few months it will be summer, and then *my* turn will come too! Meanwhile I hasten from the room as soon as I can, and on re-entering at night, am relieved to find all traces of the "Homes" have been swept away by the ruthless broom of the housemaid.

Now, dear children, can you guess why I have told you all this? Because I think there is a lesson here for each young reader, whether saved or unsaved. If a believer, you are (or ought to be) "Waiting for the Son of God from heaven," expecting, that is, your best Friend to come and *fetch* you home.

But are you longing for it; looking forward to it; reckoning up the days "till He come," as we school-girls did when going to our earthly homes?

True, no one knows exactly *how* many Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, may have to elapse before He really comes; but *one* of the days of the week it will be, most likely very soon. Every night when you go to bed, although you cannot say *positively*, "No more Thursdays, Fridays, or Saturdays," you *can* say, "One Friday less!" "One Friday nearer home!"

Anyway you are that; but blissful though the home-going would be through the portal of death, how much more blissful to be fetched! No suffering then; no weeping friends around your bed; no dying; no grave for you!

Thus, you see, saved ones can and ought to look forward with delight to the prospect of being fetched; but how about *you*, whose sins are not forgiven; who have not taken God at His word, and come to the Lord Jesus Christ to receive the gift of eternal life? *You* cannot rejoice that He is coming. How could you? For *you* would be left behind! All gone but you! How fearful! How solemn!

Think of the hour following that wherein all the Christians in your house, or town, had been taken away. Imagine yourselves wandering through the familiar rooms, beholding all the well-known possessions of the departed saints, as useless to them now as the headless bodies dangling from their beds were to the girls who had gone home.

Mark, too, not only their *souls* gone, but their *bodies* also, never more to return to you.

Our holidays in this world, however happy, soon ended, and those who remained at school had the pleasure of welcoming their companions back once more. But the redeemed ones' joys will never end; they will never leave their home again.

Remember that *your* opportunity of join-

Lord Jesus is yearning for you to get ready to accompany Him when He comes. The girls were all ready to start when their friends came for them; will not you be ready when the Lord comes?

Do not say: "Some day I will think about this; there is really no occasion for so much hurry." Take care, you may put off too long! The Bible words are very plain: "Behold, I come *quickly*." "Yet a



ing them there will be gone—gone for ever! I could look forward to summer when left behind; but you, if left behind on that day, can have no such consolation; nothing but "a fearful looking forward to judgment." How desolate, how forlorn you would feel!

But, thank God, it is not yet too late. Not one of you *need* be left behind. I was obliged to stay; you can *all* go. There is room in the home for every one; the

little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry." "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air," and so shall we even be with the Lord.



Lot's Escape from Judgment.

Lot's escape from Judgment.

WE all know something of the story of Lot, who was Abraham's nephew, and a sad story it is. When God told Abram to leave the land of his birth and go to a fresh land which He would shew him, we find that Lot went with him and lived with him for a time, but God so blessed both Abram and Lot, and increased their flocks and herds that they could not remain long together, for there was not enough food for the cattle.

Then it was that Abram said they must separate, and asked Lot to choose which way he would go. Lot chose the plain of Jordan because it was fertile and well watered, and he pitched his tent towards Sodom. This was a bad place for Lot to go to, for the men of Sodom were very wicked indeed, and after a time, Lot gave up his tent, which he pitched near the city, and dwelt in the city itself.

And then we find Lot sitting in the gate of the city, which was a place of great honour. It was while sitting there that one day he saw two men entering the city who were strangers. They were really angels, messengers from God, but they had the appearance of men.

Lot invited them into his house, and made a feast for them, but before they lay down at night the men of the city came round Lot's house and wanted to see the strangers who were there. Lot came out of his house and reasoned with them, but all to no purpose. The only answer they gave was, "This one fellow came in to sojourn with us, and now he will needs be a judge." They pressed so hard upon Lot that they nearly broke the door, but at last the angels opened the door and pulled Lot inside and shut the door. They also smote the men with blindness, so that they could not find the door.

Then they said to Lot, "Hast thou here any besides? . . . Whatsoever thou hast in the city, bring them out of this place." On account of the wickedness of the city God had sent them to destroy it.

Lot then went out and spoke to his sons

in law and told them that the city would soon be destroyed, but they believed it not. In fact Lot seemed to them as one that mocked.

In the morning the angels hastened Lot to get him out of the city quickly. Lot seemed sorry to go and leave everything behind, but the angels took hold of his hand and the hand of his wife and brought them out of the city. When they were quite outside the city the angels told them to escape for their lives, they were not to look behind nor to stay in all the plain, but to escape to the mountains quickly.

These directions were very plain, and if they had done as the angels said, all would have been sheltered from evil, but the heart of Lot's wife was still in the city; she thought of her home, and all they were leaving behind, and in spite of the angels' words she turned round to look once more at the city. Then the judgment of God fell upon her and she was turned into a pillar of salt.

God deals with us in great grace, but there comes a time when judgment falls upon those who disobey Him. Dear reader, be not disobedient, like Lot's wife, and so come under God's judgment, but obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, and not only will safety be yours, but many blessings which He gives to those who are His own.

Talks with my Girls.

No. VIII.

FLOWER TEXTS—(continued).



SUCH a number of unanswered letters were, owing to want of space, obliged to stand over last month that I could not help feeling sorry to have disappointed so many of "my girls." And yet I must ask them to believe the disappointment was not my fault, for I really did try to answer every letter received during April. With what result do you think? Why I got a note from our kind editor saying "that though he had given us every line of space he possibly could, our 'Talk about Flowers' was too long to be printed in one month's magazine;" so I am going to re-write several answers, and ask his permission to finish it in the August number of *My Little Friend*.

Nellie G., Colchester. Thank you for sending such a beautiful text. Flowers are very lovely, but we know they must fade and die. What a deep joy it is for us if we belong to Christ to know that His love will never change or pass away. "A Friend" loveth at all times, and the Lord Jesus is not only a changeless, but a divine Friend.

Florence T., Collompton. Thank you, dear Florence, for your nice letter. I think I know just a little of how lovely the fields and lanes near your home must be looking, for I am spending a short holiday in Kent, enjoying the sunshine and the spring flowers. "All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord." (Ps. cxlv. 10.)

Marion S., Birkenhead. I think, dear, yours must be quite a busy life. Doing lessons, helping mother, minding baby, taking care of the little ones, and many other things. It has given me real pleasure to receive your letter with its lovely flower text. Thank you for telling me about your own little garden.

Edith N., Newton-le-Willows. Your letter, dear, does not need any apology. I was pleased to receive it, and hope you will write again. The question you ask has been answered already, so I have only room to say that the verse you send refers to Christ, "He is altogether lovely." (Song of Sol. v. 16.)

Ada F. K., Plumstead. I am really glad to find, dear, that you have begun to think of how you can help and comfort others. The pictures we get every month in *My Little Friend* would as you suggest make nice scrap books for sick or poor children, but perhaps a still better way of using back numbers would be to lend or give them to children who are not likely to get them in any other way. They would enjoy reading true stories, and might receive blessing through the simple gospel teaching of our little magazine.

Violet C., Tunbridge Wells, writes such an interesting letter that she will, I think, forgive me for sharing with "my girls" the pleasure it has given me. She writes: "I love flowers, 'God's messengers.' Shall I tell you how I and some christian girls I know used them last year? We tied up small bunches of flowers, and fastened a text to each. Then we took them to sick and suffering people, and oh! we were more than repaid by seeing the look of delight that often lights up the face of some sufferer at the sight of the flowers. We always try to say a few quiet words about the Lord as we give each bunch. One old man, nearly eighty years of age, was dying. He was unconverted, and we went to see him very often, taking texts and flowers. We believe he died trusting in Christ, and he said, 'the texts shewed him the way to his Saviour.'"

I should enjoy writing quite a long letter to

Violet, but have only room to tell her how really and truly I rejoice with her over a soul won for Christ. But how blessed it would have been if the one of whose conversion she writes had been saved when a boy, then a long life might have been spent in the service of his Lord. Her letter will, I hope, encourage us all to think of ways in which we can use flowers to cheer and comfort sick and lonely ones.

Lilian C. Thank you, dear, for your loving letter and kind wishes. It was thoughtful of you to copy nearly a whole poem about "flowers," because you thought I should enjoy it.

Nellie C. Thank you, dear Nellie, for your letter and verses. I am afraid you and Lilian will say what short answers you are getting this time, but hope you will forgive me, as I wanted very much to find room for part of your sister's letter.

Edith B., Guildford. Thank you, dear Edith, for your neatly written letter. My packet of letters last month was, as you hoped it might be, a large one. The interest shown in our "Talks" by my young friends is encouraging. My desire and prayer for each dear girl or boy who has written to me is that they may know the Lord Jesus first as a Saviour, and then as Shepherd, Friend and Guide.

Mary W., Guildford, chooses a lovely verse. "I am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valley." What a number of our girls have sent the same text. I wonder if we can each say truly that we are beginning to see just a little, even though it may be only a very little, of the beauty and preciousness of Christ.

Lillie F., Leytonstone. Your letter was a very welcome one, and you have used the right key to open our Bible picture. The subject is, as you say, an interesting one, and I am glad to find you have begun to understand something of the hidden meaning of the Bible story you tell, partly in your own and partly in the words of scripture. How God in His grace offers salvation as a free gift to guilty, helpless sinners. Yea, dear, the soul that has begun to know the love of Christ must long to know it better. Paul, who knew his Lord and Master so well, prayed "that I may know him." (Phil. iii. 10.)

A very neatly written paper, without name or address, has just come to hand, but as it can hardly be called a letter, I do not see exactly how it ought to be answered. The postmark was Redhill. Will the sender please write again?

Ruth W., Calne, Wilts. C. J. L. was glad to get your letter, and thinks it very nicely written and composed. I notice one lesson you point out in the story of the little maid who waited on Naaman's wife, "We may serve the Lord even

in a lonely place or a lowly path." Please write again soon.

Ethel B. B., Weston-super-Mare. I should have been a little disappointed, dear Ethel, if you had not joined our "Little Friend" Bible Class. I do hope our "Talks" may prove a blessing to each of us by teaching us not only to study our Bibles more, but to pray more earnestly for the teaching of the Holy Spirit by whom alone we can really understand the written word of God. Your paper is thoughtful and neatly written. I shall quite expect to hear from you very often.

Nellie W., Taunton. Your answer, dear Nellie, is correct, and shews that you quite understood the questions, though perhaps you may find them just a little difficult at times. It is worth taking a little trouble to find the right answer, and much better to try even if we do not succeed at first, than to say, "Oh it was too hard for me, so I gave it up."

Fanny A., Mer End. Accept real thanks, dear Fanny, for your nice letter. It was kind of you to send me one of your dear father's memorial cards, which I shall really value. Your sorrow for his loss is not the sorrow of those who have no hope. "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." (1 Thess. iv. 14.) Your answer is correct, and you will, I think, quite enjoy looking out texts on this month's subject.

Adeline T., Altrincham. Dear little friend, you have not only found the right key to our Bible picture, but used it very nicely by answering all the questions. C. J. L. is always quite pleased to get one of your letters.

Nellie C., George Town, Jersey. Thank you for writing, dear Nellie. I am so glad you are fond of reading, and hope you will, as you grow older, love and only care to read books that are all true, books that will help you to understand your Bible better. Will you please tell me the names of some of your favourite books the next time you write?

George R., Liverpool. I am glad you enjoy reading *My Little Friend*, and quite pleased you have joined our Bible Class. You do not say how old you are, but I think you have begun not only to read but to love your Bible. "From a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim. iii. 15) were words used by Paul when writing one of his letters to Timothy. May God in His grace make them true of all our young Bible searchers.

R. J., near Farnham. Your letter, dear, is an interesting one, and I am sure you love your pleasant home among the fields and hop-gardens

of Surrey. Many of us live in large towns, only getting a peep at the country now and then. But I believe it is just as possible to be useful and happy in one place as in another. If we know the Lord Jesus as our own trusted Saviour and are really seeking to please and honour Him, there is no need to be lonely or unhappy, for He has said, "I will not leave you comfortless." (John xiv. 18) Write again, and please sign your name in full.

Katie S., Fallowfield. C. J. L. is always pleased to get letters from girls who have not written before, but there are two things she would very much like dear Katie to remember. One is to use the right initials in the right order. Her letter was addressed to C. L. J. The other is to copy the address correctly. The questions were answered nicely, but it always seems a pity to spoil good work by being careless about what we call "little things." Habits are quickly formed, and habits help to form and build up our characters. I shall hope to hear from my little friend again. She will do better next time.

And now, dear girls, I am face to face with our old trouble, want of space to answer all the letters received last month, so I must ask about twelve girls whose letters are still waiting to be answered to believe they are not forgotten, and wait as patiently as they can for our next talk.

BIBLE PICTURE.

The joy of harvest filled the land with gladness. On every side might be heard the song of the reapers as the ears of corn, which a moment before had waved in the bright sunshine, fell before their sickles. Groups of women and children were busy in other parts of the field picking up any ears of corn that might have fallen from the loads. Among the gleaners was one of another race. Age had not bowed her form or silvered her hair, yet she had known sorrow. She was treated with kindness and sympathy, and through the blessing of the Lord found a happy home in the land to which she came a stranger.

I. Give the name of the gleaner and that of the city near which she gleaned?

II. Find a Bible verse shewing that God remembered the poor and wished them to share in the plenty of harvest?

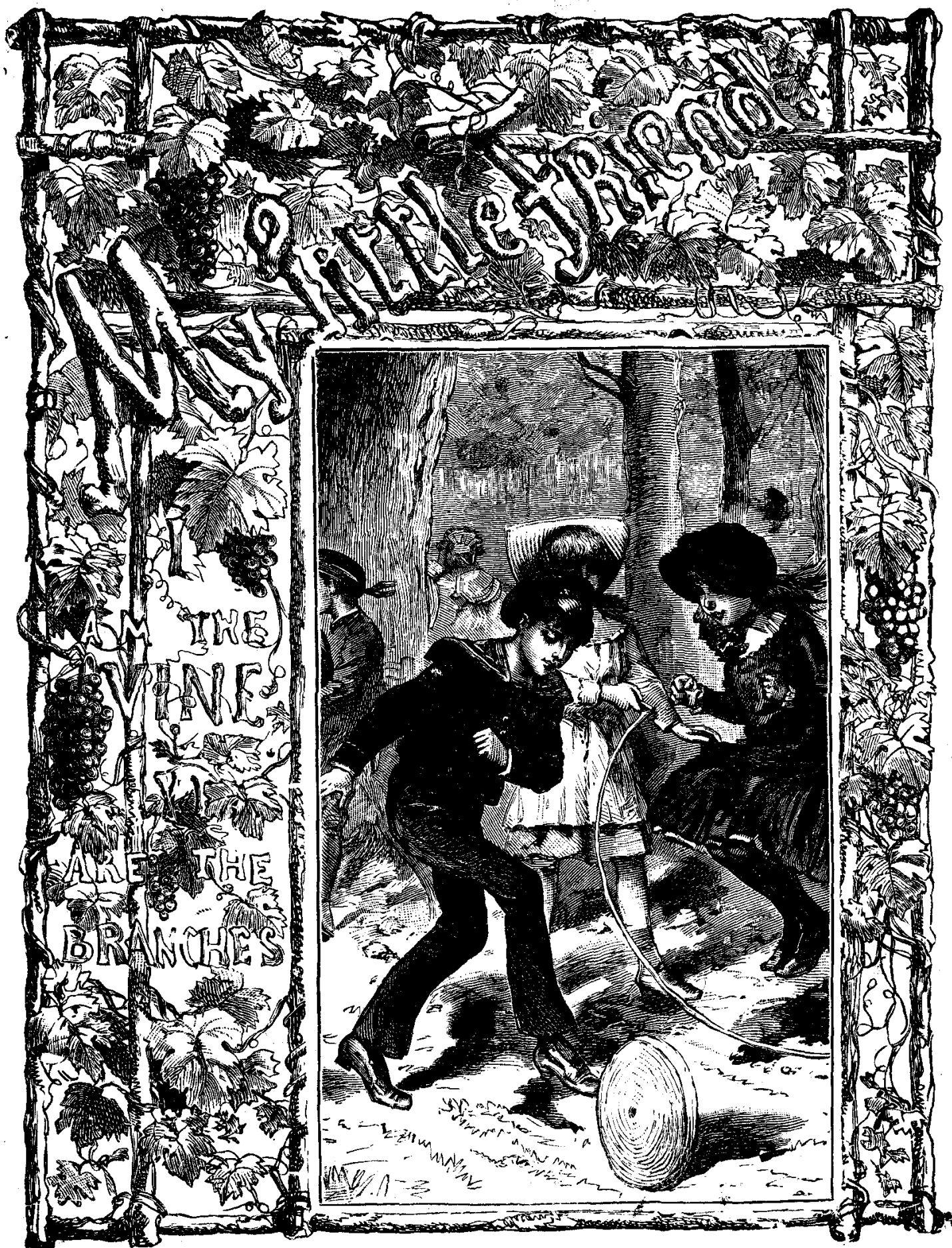
III. Give scripture proofs of His compassion and tender care for the widows, the fatherless, and the stranger?

Get your letters posted by the 21st.

Address to C. J. L.,

Care of Editor of *My Little Friend*,
20, Paternoster Square,
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Little Londoners.



HE sun never seemed so hot before. It made one's feet ache to tread the burning pavements, and in vain one looked right and left for shelter from the scorching rays. London on the first of August does not sound very pleasant, and oh, how one's heart longs then for the sea breezes, and the gentle sound of the waves against a pebbly beach! or what would not one give to be sitting in the long, cool grass of a shady meadow!

On this particular first of August, I found myself not far from the East Ender's park, and thought I would turn my steps thitherward for a few moments and rest under the trees. As I neared the gates, my eye caught sight of a perfect—what shall I call it—swarm of ragged urchins sporting on the green lawn close to the entrance. Seeing my surprised look, the park keeper who stood at the gate, remarked in a half good-natured, half irritated tone, "Oh yes, marm, they're enjoying of themselves, and a nice time we have of it, on a first of August."

I learnt from him that on this summer bank holiday, the authorities opened the park to the poor children of the neighbouring district, and that hundreds of ragged, unkempt children took advantage of this to "picnic" upon the piece of green before-mentioned.

I walked on, and stood by the railings to watch this strange arrangement.

Knots of children, dirty and half-clad, were scattered at different intervals, greedily devouring the food they had brought with them, which consisted for the most part of dry bread and bottles of thin, weak tea! Long and loud were the squabbles that ensued if Betsy or Tommy dared to drink more than their share. Most of the elder children had to "mind baby," and it was these wretched little creatures I pitied, thrown ruthlessly on the grass, or mercilessly slapped when the patience of their nurses was exhausted; others were darting hither and thither playing the ingenious games that only East End children know how to play. The knocks and blows of the park keeper when these unruly urchins

ventured beyond the space allotted to them, fell unheeded and only tended to increase and excite them to more daring deeds of mischief.

"Would you like to hear a story?" I asked, addressing the nearest group. In a moment I was surrounded by half-a-dozen little grimy figures, then half-a-dozen more, until there was quite an assembly of these poor, unkempt, unwashed children!

Ah! and as I told them about Jesus, the children's Friend, the Shepherd of the lambs, who shed His blood for them on the cross, many a hard, impudent face softened, and even tears coursed their way down the poor, wizened cheeks. These children, some of them, were as ignorant as little heathens, but Jesus loves them and longs for them as much as He does for those who have nice homes, nice papas and mammas, and clean faces!

I heard of one of these street Arabs, who when she was asked by a kind christian lady, if she knew about heaven and hell, confessed her ignorance as to where heaven was, but hell she said was something like "where she lived, for all the people were wicked." I suppose the dark and loathsome alley, where she had dragged out an existence amid drunkards and swearers, answered to the description of that awful place where those who refuse to listen to the voice of God everlastingly dwell.

If you have not been washed in the blood of the Lamb, have not come to Jesus and received Him as your Saviour, God puts no difference between you and any one of these little heathen I have been telling you about. The Lord says "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God," and therefore we all need a Saviour.

If I could speak to you now, perhaps you would say, "Ah! but I go to Sunday school, and teacher tells me about Jesus," or "I say my prayers every morning and evening, and I know all about heaven and hell."

That is not enough, dear little reader. God wants to give you a new heart, a heart that shall learn to love and trust Him. He said to Nicodemus, "You must be born again, Nicodemus; you are a very good man,

and even a teacher, but you must have a new heart, Nicodemus!"

And you must know what it is to come to Him as a sinner, and take Him as the One who suffered instead of you, before you will be fit to live for Him down here, and dwell with Him hereafter.

Seasons Change.

SUMMER.

THE queen of seasons now is here,
In lovely robes she doth appear,
Her presence does all nature cheer,
The while she stays.
Perch'd on the white May-cover'd thorn,
The warblers sing from early morn,
No longer now they sit forlorn,
Bleak winter's gone.
The warm sunshine and the rain
Have made the meadows smile again,
Without this, man would sow in vain
And never reap.
How rich the verdure mix'd with flow'rs,
How fair the blossoms on the bow'rs;
The bees spend there the sunny hours,
They waste no time.
The lovely flow'rs refresh our sight,
God made them all for our delight;
Alas! they suffer from sin's blight,
And wither soon.
'Twas sin brought death, this makes us mourn;
The ground is cursed from whence we're born,
It bears the thistle and the thorn
And rankling weeds.
Man's sin did God's fair works despoil,
Sin brought the sorrow and the toil,
Sweat from his face now wets the soil,
Ere he gets bread.
Our cup of sorrow oft runs o'er,
As we our fallen state deplore;
And yet there's better things in store—
There's life in Christ!
Sublime is God's redemption plan,
The Son incarnate died for man,
This was decreed ere time began,
For God is love.
Christ died, His blood atoned for sin;
He lives, man's wayward heart to win;
True joys He gives, and peace within,
Which aye shall last.
The saved on earth, who know His grace,
Are heirs now of a better place;
Its glory, sin will ne'er deface,
There nought shall fade.

The Oldest Book.

HERE was once a very wise man who said that of making of books there was no end, and this is quite true, for since the art of printing was discovered, the number of books issued has gone on increasing year by year.

Some books have a very short life indeed, only being known and read for a year or two and then are lost sight of and forgotten. They quickly find their way to the waste paper mill and are made into pulp again for new sheets of paper. There are, however, other books that are of far more value and last for many years. They change hands many, times and when the leaves are worn and stained, they sometimes cost much more to buy than when they were quite new.

I have myself a book on the shelf that is more than a hundred years old, and in some of the libraries there are books and manuscripts that are very much older than this. Sometimes they are kept and preserved simply because they are old and curious, not because they contain useful information. But those old books which are most prized are such as are not only very old but contain valuable knowledge as well.

Can you tell me of one book that is older and more wonderful than all other books? You will at once say the Bible. Yes, it is the Bible. It lives and remains with us year after year. Men grow old and die who have read it from childhood, but still it is here for others to read.

Last night a dear christian man opened his large Bible to read it with his family before going to rest, but his eyes were so old and dim that he could not tell he had opened it upside down until he had put on his spectacles. He loves to read the Bible, but is getting older and more feeble every day, but the Bible will still be here when he is gone. Gone where, do you ask? Why gone to the presence of that God of love of whom the Bible speaks.

Do you, my reader, love to read the Bible? I hope so, for it says, "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they that testify of me."



The Oldest Book.

Happy Hours.

TWO little girls are busy this fine summer's day in the green fields, where the gay butterflies are darting about enjoying their little day, and insects of every kind are creeping or flying about.

But they have no net to catch either butterfly or insect, and it is not these they are in search of. No, they have nothing but

soon, however, do they fade and die! We pluck them to-day and to-morrow or next day are obliged to throw them away and put others in their place.

It was only yesterday that I heard an address on grass and flowers from the text in Isaiah xl. 6-8, where we read that "the grass withereth and the flower fadeth." This is perfectly true as we are all able to prove, but the text does not stop there, it goes on to tell us of something that shall never fade away. "The word of our God shall stand



Searching for Flowers.

a small basket, which is now partly filled with some of the pretty wild flowers that are growing in such abundance all round them.

We all love flowers as much as these little girls do and have many times helped to gather them, and place them so carefully in water to keep them fresh as long as possible, and now while I am writing there are three small vases of them on the table before me, placed there by loving hands that I may enjoy their freshness and beauty. How

for ever." That is a great comfort, to know of something that shall never pass away.

Now look at the little girls in our picture again, they look very different to the flowers and grass, but the text says "All flesh is grass." That is very solemn, because when it says all flesh, that must mean us too. Yes, we are all like the grass, and like the flowers our lives will quickly pass away and we shall be gone, as far as this world is concerned. Then it is that we want the comfort of the

other part. "The word of our God shall stand for ever."

The world may look very bright and attractive, but it has nothing that will last. Only God and His word will stand for ever, and He wants us to share His home and enjoy His love towards us, for "God is love." If we believe His word we shall spend eternity with Him, but if we despise or neglect His word we shall be cut off like the flowers and pass into unending judgment.

Birds of the Bible.

CHAPTER IV.

DOVES.

DEAR CHILDREN,

You will perhaps have guessed what bird our conversation is to be about to-day, at least such of our young friends as have referred to all the places where the bird we considered last month is mentioned, for in the same chapter that we first read of the raven we also read of the dove.

Noah sent out the dove when he saw that the raven did not return; the dove, however, came back twice and the second time brought an olive leaf in its beak, by which Noah knew that the waters were considerably abated.

Noah sent it out a third time and it never returned, having been able to find a resting place, where not long before those terrible waters had covered.

Doves were used a good deal in various offerings by the Israelites, and there are several allusions to this bird in the Scriptures, which I would like you to look out for yourselves.

Now when we have finished our little chat just turn to your New Testament and find a text which speaks about being "wise as serpents," and "harmless as doves."

I have remembered that many of "My Little Friends" are fond of verses of poetry, the same as I was when their age, so have prepared a few lines for them about the dove which Noah sent out of the ark.

We read that in the days of Noah,
A flood of water did pass o'er
This earth where we abide :

But ere it came, God (who's so good),
Told Noah to build an Ark of wood,
Where he and his might hide.

The Ark was built, the rain did fall,
And that same day were broken all
The fountains of the deep;
The mountain tops were covered o'er,
And death to all those waters bore,
For none their breath could keep.

And after many days had passed,
Whilst the flood abated fast;
Noah ope'd the window high:
And thence did send a raven out,
Which o'er the waters soared about,
Until the earth was dry.


He from the Ark a dove next put,
Which found nowhere to rest her foot,
So Noah his hand put forth;
In seven days he sent again,
Lo! in her beak as home she came,—
An olive leaf, plucked off.

Another week did pass; then Noah
Sent forth the gentle dove once more,
Which ne'er again returned:
He then the covering removed,
From off the Ark (which safe had proved),
And the *dry* ground discerned. W. M.

Talks with my Girls.

No. IX.

OUR TEXT ALBUM.

 HE number of young friends who have looked out and sent in answers to the question, "What songs of praise or thanksgiving to God, recorded in the Bible, were composed by women?" is really very encouraging, for while I quite miss the letters of one or two who have so far written every month, several who did not promise to join our Bible Class have done so, and for each I have a real welcome, though I am afraid it will sound rather far away, as it can only be read, not heard.

Perhaps before I begin answering letters I had better tell you what I mean by "Our Text Album." I have been thinking so much lately of the children who never get out to play, of the sick, suffering ones to whom the summer days that bring us so many bright and beautiful things often seem so long and trying. I know just a few such. One young girl who cannot walk at all has joined our "Talks." Of course she has told me her name and where she lives, but I am going to keep her secret, as perhaps she would not like to let everybody know. Now

instead of giving a Bible question this month I am going to ask your help in a little service of love. Will you each choose a text or hymn that would, you think, be a comfort to a helpless or lonely one, in leading them to think more of a Saviour's love? Print, or if you cannot print, write in a nice large hand, and on one side of the paper only, the verse you have chosen, and send it by the 21st of, shall we say, October, as many of you will perhaps be away from home enjoying your holidays when you read this. The work will be your own, and if done from love to Christ, will, I believe, be precious in His sight, my part being only to collect your papers, arrange them in scrap albums, and send them with your love to those to whom even such a small gift would prove a cheer and blessing.

Edie M., Gray Hill. I am very glad indeed to hear that the health of your dear mother continues to improve. Thank you for telling me about your pets. I could not give you such a long list of mine, though I have a tame linnet that sings nearly all day, and will take seed out of my hand. All God's creatures have a claim on our thought, care, and kindness. Your "Praise Songs" would be very good, but you forget that of Deborah. (Judg. v. 1.)

Irene B. A., Newport. Your second letter, dear little friend, was as welcome as your first. I was much interested in reading of your uncle's visit. How you must all have enjoyed hearing from him of the Lord's work in Sweden, and of those gathered to His name there, many, no doubt, living in lonely, out-of-the-way places, and often having to travel long distances to attend a meeting. Your answer to Bible question is correct, and very neatly written.

Nellie W., Taunton. Thank you, dear, for your kind letter. I am glad you give promise of being a thoughtful reader of the word of God. You are quite right in saying that the song of the women of Israel (1 Sam. xviii. 7) was not really a song of praise to God, as they seem to have been thinking only of David. But what a pity you gave up looking for songs of praise to God sung by women before finding those of Hannah, Deborah, and Mary. You will do better next time.

William D., Liverpool. Thank you for writing again. Your answer to Bible question is right as far as it goes, but if you read 1 Samuel ii. and Luke i., you will find the songs of thanksgiving you name were not the only ones composed or sung by godly women. I shall be glad to hear from you again. Will you help fill a page in one of our text albums?

Adeline T., Altrincham. Dear little friend, you do not know how pleased I am to have you in our Bible class. Many thanks for your

nice letter. Your answer is quite correct, and names, I believe, all the songs in the Bible composed by women. Ask mamma to help you print a text for some sick child. Write your name and age on it, and C. J. L. will try to find a place for it in her album.

Fanny A., Mere End. Your paper, dear Fanny, is thoughtful and painstaking, and I was really pleased with your answer. Your list is a very full one. I quite agree with you in thinking that Leah (Gen. xxix. 35), Elizabeth (Luke i. 42-46), and Anna (Luke ii. 38) really did praise and thank God, though perhaps theirs are hardly counted among the praise songs of the Bible.

Ethel B. B., Weston-super-Mare. Ethel and C. J. L. are beginning to feel almost like old friends. It is pleasant to find we have read so many of the same books, and that we really care for the same things. If our hearts, through grace, are set on following and pleasing Christ, we shall only value what He can approve. The sick girls who join our "Talks," will, I trust, prove to many of us an opportunity of shewing love to Him, our Lord and Master. Your answer to Bible question is quite correct.

Kathleen L., Geneva. My pen, dear Kathleen, has been having a rest for nearly five minutes, for I have been looking at the pretty view of Geneva you so kindly sent, and thinking of many of the Lord's faithful servants, who at different times found quiet resting-places in some of its gaunt old houses, and who, I have no doubt, often read and prayed over their Bibles as they walked by the blue waters of its beautiful lake. I should like to write you quite a long letter, but have only time to tell you how glad I am to know that I have at least one little friend among the children of Geneva, and hope you will write again. Your answer is very good.

Daisy C., Wade's Mill. Thank you, dear, for telling me how interesting you find our "Talks." You have written out the whole of Mary's song of thanksgiving in a very neat hand and so filled your paper, not leaving room to write down even the names of other women whose songs of praise are in the Bible. Did you ever print any texts, or are you willing to try? If not, your writing would do very nicely.

Kate L. S., Chelmsford. I am sorry, dear, that your friend should have been so disappointed at not finding her letter answered in "MY LITTLE FRIEND" for last month. Quite early in the year I tried to explain what is meant by "going to press." It takes much longer to have our "Talks" printed than it does to write a letter. How to wait, is one of the lessons we all have to learn. Shall I give you a lovely verse about waiting? "Wait on the Lord: be of good

courage." (Ps. xxvii. 14.) Write again and ask Hettie to do so too. Your answer is correct.

Frank P., Peterborough. C. J. L. was so glad to find another packet of letters from the boys of Miss A.'s class. Though Frank has not found quite all the songs composed or sung by the women of the Bible, his paper shows that he has taken some pains to answer correctly. I have another letter written from the same address as Frank's but without any name, so I do not see exactly how I can answer it in the usual way. Will Frank please find out who wrote it and explain the seeming neglect?

William C. is another boy who has, I trust, really begun to love his Bible. May it be a lamp to his feet, a light to his path. Do not be content, dear William, with having a Bible of your own, or even with reading it, but study the Book that is alone "able to make you wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus." (2 Tim. iii. 15.) C. J. L. hopes you will write again.

James H. W. Thanks for your note and for telling me of your interest in our "Talks." Your list would have been complete if you had added the songs of Deborah and Mary. I hope my boy friends won't let the girls have the pleasure of filling our album all to themselves. Some of the boys I know not only print but draw nicely.

George P. I quite begin to know your writing and hope to see it very often. Your list is not a full one. On the whole I think the answers sent in by the girls this time are the best, as many of them are proof of thoughtful painstaking Bible study. But do not get discouraged. Try, try again.

Jessie C., Peterborough. I was pleased to get your letter, dear Jessie, and hope you will write again. I do not think you quite understood the Bible question or you would have answered more fully. Still, I am glad you made the attempt, and the paper sent shows you have taken some pains. Write again soon, please; I quite hope you will join our "Bible Class."

Eveline B., Framlingham. Accept very real thanks, dear Eveline, for the pleasure your thoughtful letter and loving deed gave. I am afraid you were very disappointed at not getting an answer last month, but so many letters came in that I found I could not give you more than a line or two, so decided to let it stand over, but I have thought of you many times, and hope you and I are going to be real friends—friends in Jesus, each loving and seeking to please Him, our own precious Saviour.

Grace D., Horsham. Yes, dear, I know the time must often seem to pass very slowly to a girl who is always ill. But how very good the Lord has been in giving you the joy and com-

fort of knowing that you are His own, that you have been redeemed by the precious blood of Christ. All Christ's sheep and lambs are safe, for He has said "they shall never perish." (John x. 28.) But the only way to be really happy is in keeping very near our Shepherd. His sheep follow him, for they know his voice.

Minnie B., Weybridge. Shall I tell you, dear, why I am really glad you have joined our Bible class? Because I know you have not much time for quiet reading, and I think looking out answers to the questions will be an encouragement to Bible study. Still we must take care we do not read our Bibles only to gain knowledge. Our souls need food and it is only as we feed that we grow. "Christ is all." May you and I be found learning of Him who said, "I am meek and lowly in heart."

Lily S., Stratford. The spring flowers that made the garden so lovely when you wrote will have faded before you read this, as owing to want of space your welcome letter was not answered last month. I quite enjoyed the texts you sent. Do you begin to know just a little of what it means to have sunshine in the soul? To walk in the light of a risen Saviour's love? I think you do. We are "children of light" (Eph. v. 8), and our high calling is to walk as such.

Mary W., Guildford. Thank you, dear, for writing. I think you did not quite understand the question. Did you read it carefully and try to find out its meaning? You write neatly and will, I hope, join our class, and try to send answers every month. C. J. L. is so glad you love your Bible.

Edith A. B., Guildford. Yours is a nicely written letter and you have taken pains with the answer. I am quite glad to have three letters this month from the girls of Miss W.'s class. Thank you, dear, for telling me that you know the Lord Jesus as the One who suffered and died for you; that now you can say "My Saviour." We want to please the One who died and rose again for us, don't we, Edith?

Thirza B., Guildford. A letter received from you some time ago, dear Thirza, led me to think of you as an anxious soul, this month's encourages me to hope you are simply trusting, not your own feelings, nor your own joy, but a living, loving Saviour, the One who said, "Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out." (John vi. 37.) Has He put a new song into your mouth? Do not be afraid to sing it. Please write again to your loving friend.

Address to C. J. L.,

Care of Editor of *My Little Friend*,
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The Captive Maid.

I DO not wish to write on this interesting subject, but thought it would be nice to give an illustration, and refer the reader to "Talks with my Girls," as the little Maid is the subject of the letters for this month. Though so well known to us, this story never seems to lose its interest, and any time that we turn to 2 Kings v. it reads as fresh as ever.

On the way to the Judge.

A CROWD of people are moving along a busy street in London, and from the midst of it we hear a cry of distress. Let us go nearer and see what it means.

Ah, it is a young man being taken to prison. He has robbed his master, and is now on his way to a magistrate. But his master is near at hand, and many are the efforts that young man makes to reach his heart and get him to relent and forgive him.

He tells him how he had fallen into bad company, and so had been drawn aside. He speaks of his dear mother, and begs for her sake to be forgiven, that his family may not be disgraced. He also promises to pay back every farthing he has stolen, and will never do such a thing again.

But his master is angry with him and will not forgive him, and soon they arrive at the police station; the young man is taken inside, and we see him no more.

Now why have I told you this? Because I feel that every one who is unsaved, whether boys and girls or grown-up people, are all on their way to the Judge, and they should seek to be forgiven before it is too late.

That young man of whom I have told you tried to get reconciled to his master, tried to get forgiven, but in vain, because the one he had sinned against was a hard master; but with us it is different, we have sinned against a God of love. He will not refuse to hear us, for He says: I will in no wise cast out him that cometh unto me.

Doing no Harm.

I ONCE heard a story of a soldier, who was not at his post of duty at a very important time. A battle was being fought, and this man was missed. No one knew what had become of him, but they knew he was not in the ranks when he should have been.

As soon as a chance came, an officer went in search of him, and to his great surprise found that during the battle this man, instead of being in his place, was amusing himself in a flower garden. When he was asked what he was doing there, he replied, "I am doing no harm, sir."

This was a very poor excuse, and he found it would not shield him from punishment, for when tried by court martial he was found guilty of desertion from duty, and had to answer with his life.

I think there are many in the present day who talk of doing no harm, and yet are wasting many precious hours, days, and perhaps weeks, that might be used to good purpose, either in learning the way of salvation for themselves, or if they are already Christians in serving that blessed One who has called them out of darkness into His marvellous light. Time is short, and we should be found redeeming the time.

Mary's Question.

SOME years ago I was a teacher in a Sunday School, although at that time I was not myself a Christian; but God used the question of one of my scholars as the means of giving me to know Christ as my Saviour.

I had one dear little girl, Mary by name, about nine years of age, who sometimes asked me very strange questions. One Sunday afternoon I had been telling the children the way of salvation, from the text: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." As soon as I had done, Mary said:

"Is this sure to be, teacher?"

"Yes, Mary," I said, "every one who really trusts the Lord Jesus will surely be saved. His words are, 'Shall be saved.'"

"Oh, must not that be nice?" said Mary, "to go where you may, whether ill or well, and know that you are saved;" and then turning to me, said very simply: "Then are you saved, teacher?"

"I hope so, dear," I replied.

"Hope so," said Mary. "You said just now that those who believe in Jesus were sure to be saved. Do not you really believe then, teacher?"

I could not answer the child, I did not feel sure of being saved, though I looked upon myself as a believer; yet if a believer, why was I not sure of salvation? Just then the school-bell rang, and I was very glad of it, for I wanted to be alone and think over this question and the text we had been reading.

I now felt that if I was not a believer I had no ground to *hope* for salvation; and if I did believe God's word I ought to have the full benefit of His promise—"Thou shalt be saved."

In my trouble about these things I went home, and then got alone with God, I fell on my knees and just told Him all the trouble that had come into my heart by the simple question of little Mary, and by His grace I found forgiveness and peace. I was able to say, "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief." Now I could say to dear Mary, "Yes, through God's mercy I am saved."

I doubt not some are in the very same position that I was, trying to shew others the way of salvation, and yet not saved themselves; and boys and girls, too, who go to Sunday school regularly, behave well, and learn their verses, may get into the way of thinking they are saved, and that they are much nearer heaven than the rough children in the streets who never go to school, and yet all the while they are still unsaved and in their sins, if they have never been to the Lord Jesus and owned what sinners they are, and that nothing but His precious blood can wash them clean and make them fit for the presence of God.

Dear reader, will you not ask yourself the question—am I saved? Do I know the Lord Jesus as my Saviour?

Fortune Telling.

WE were sitting around the table at supper time one evening when the conversation turned to fortune telling.

I hope that every boy and girl who reads this paper knows that this wicked practice is not of God but is of the devil. John viii. 44 says that he is a liar and the father of it. See also, 1 Samuel xxviii. A person who has a familiar spirit is one who has intercourse with a wicked spirit.

One was at the table who thought to herself, "My fortune is told in the word of God and *it is true.*" 1 John i. 7; John xiv. 2, 3; 1 John iii. 1-3; Rev. i. 5, 6; xx. 4.

M. L.

The Italian Boy.

TWAS on a fair Italian morning,
Terésa watch'd the radiant lea;
The sun its brightest beams was pouring,
And lighting up each hill and tree.

"And thus," said she, "a Sun of glory
Has shone into my darken'd heart;
I've learnt how Jesus suffer'd for me,
And He has bid my fears depart.

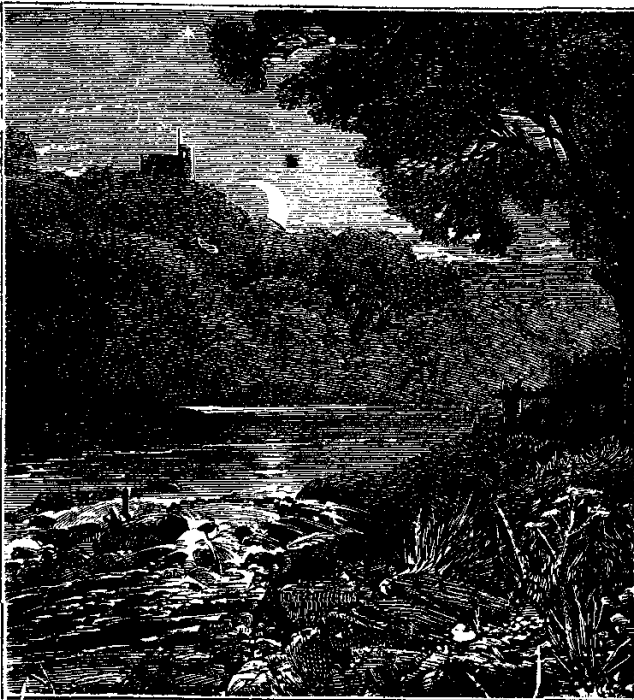
"And now, how gladly would I labour
That others too may know my Lord;
I'll watch—perhaps some passing neighbour
Would stop and hear His blessed word.

"Who can that poor boy be, I wonder,
Limping each day so sadly by?
He seems on something sad to ponder,
And often heaves a mournful sigh.

"And in his hand he always carries
A few poor flow'rs together tied;
See, now with weariness he tarries,
Leaning against the old wall side.

"Come here, my boy, come here and tell me,
Where do you live, and what's your name?
Where do you take that little nosegay,
And how did you become so lame?"

"My name, kind ma'am, is poor Guiseppe,
I live behind that sloping hill;
When I was small my mother dropp'd me,
Going to work at yonder mill.



"And now she's ill, and none can cure her,
And ev'ry day she's worse, I see ;
It grieves me sore to see her suffer,
A mother good she's been to me.

"They tell me of the Virgin's powers,
And that she is so kind and sweet,
And so I take these humble flow'rs,
And lay them at her picture's feet.

"Perhaps she'll help"—"O child, you grieve me,
For all your trouble is in vain ;
It is the Lord alone, believe me,
From whom relief you can obtain.

"Once I, like you, was all mistaken,
And put my trust in Mary too ;
But I to hear God's word was taken,
And learnt that she can nothing do.

"Go home, my child, and in your chamber,
Tell out your wants to God alone ;
Don't fear, 'twas He who sent the Saviour,
Who surely did for sin atone.

"What! did you never hear of Jesus ?
Both Mary's Son, and Mary's Lord ;
Oh! He is very kind and gracious,
To all who rest upon His word."

"But I'm afraid—for He is Holy,
And I'm so bad—He will not hear."
"What, He, who when a man so lowly,
Dried many a time the mourner's tear ?

"I have a Book, it tells the story
Of all His love to sinful man—
And how He left His own bright glory—
I'll lend it you—if read you can."

"Alas I can't, but oh how gladly
I'd hear about this loving friend !"
"Well, my dear child, don't sigh so sadly,
I'll read it you, if you'll attend.

"And if you like, I'll come some evening
And sit beside your mother's bed ;
And then while you and she are listening
I'll read the words that Jesus said.

"And how He died that He might save us
From all our sins, and endless pain."
"And do you think this kind Lord Jesus
Will make my mother well again ?"

"Yes! if He please, but oh, far better,—
If she believes His dying love,
He'll wash away her sins, and take her,
If she should die, to dwell above."

And thus Terésa found her mission,
Speaking of Him she loved so well ;
And will not you, too, little Christian,
The same sweet story try to tell ?

H.



"The Lost Spectacles."

A DEAR Christian, many years on the path of faith, whilst visiting some friends in a pretty part of the country, made one of a little party who took their dinner with them into the woods.

The day passed very happily, only marred by one unfortunate incident.

Our friend all of a sudden made the unwelcome discovery that she had lost what she called her "second eyes," her reading glasses. Now these were very necessary to her comfort, for although she possessed others, none suited her sight so well; besides she had quite recently been at some expense with regard to them and could not at that time well afford further outlay.

She and her friends searched diligently in all the most likely and unlikely spots, but were obliged to give up the spectacles for lost and go home without them.

Now I believe this dear Christian had been much impressed by an address she had heard a day or two before; when the teacher pointed out that *nothing* is too insignificant for our Father's loving care and laid great stress upon our taking *every* burden to Him and leaving it there; for, continued he, "that is where we so sadly fail; having laid our



load down, we take it up again and go away as heavily weighted as ever."

"Yes, that is quite true, said our friend to herself, but with His help it shall not be my case again."

Now a testing time had come, so she told the Lord all about the loss of her spectacles, then cheerfully went on her way, doing the best she could under the trying circumstances.

Remembering that she had an old pair laid by, she looked them out and although she could not read with them, they were better than nothing and were some help, until even they failed her through one of the lenses falling out.

For a short space she *was* greatly troubled, but quickly taking this fresh disaster to the Lord, she was again cheered by the assurance that He could over-rule even this for good. Hope revived, and she felt confident that somehow or other He would make it all right for her.

Meanwhile, it was suggested that her loss should be published abroad by the town crier, but she shrank from allowing this; at the same time, she mentioned it to every one with whom she came in contact, for we are not to be supine, the Lord owns efforts when we can look to Him for blessing on them.

Evidently the next thing to be done was to get the old spectacles repaired.

Happily, although the country town she was staying in was not large, there was one optician in it, so our friend was directed there.

"Do you ever have spectacles that have been lost, brought to you for sale?" asked she, whilst the optician was examining her glasses.

"No ma'am, I can't say that I ever have. Have you any that you want to get rid of?"

"Oh no, on the contrary I am in want of a pair; for last Saturday I had the misfortune to lose mine, some that suited me well."

"Indeed, may I ask where?"

"Certainly, I am only too glad to tell you. It was in the woods at the back of the town."

"Well now, I do call that singular! A young man whom I know was telling me

that he had found some spectacles in those very woods. He said he just saw them in time to prevent putting his foot on them; picking them up and trying them on, he soon discovered that they were of no use to him, and meeting me soon after he mentioned the fact. He is at work close by, so you can see about them for yourself. How strange it will be, should they prove to be yours!"

Our friend at once felt certain that they were hers, and having found the young man, her confidence was rewarded, and she soon joyfully returned home wearing her precious "second eyes," her faith strengthened, realising more than ever—

"How good is the God I adore,
My faithful, unchangeable friend,
Whose love is as great as His power,
And knows neither measure nor end.

"Tis Jesus, the First and the Last,
Whose Spirit shall guide me safe home,
I'll praise Him for all that is past,
And trust Him for all that's to come."

A. W.

Talks with my Girls.

No. X.

THE CAPTIVE MAID.

MY dear girls and boys, please accept very real thanks for your kind and encouraging letters. Quite a nice large packet has been sent on to me by our Editor, and this time I read them through before beginning to write answers, and was much pleased to find that in every case the right key to our Bible picture had been found. All the answers are correctly given, though of course you did not all use the same words. What is Elsie saying? She thinks both the picture and questions were a trifle too easy. Perhaps they were, but we must not forget that some who have joined "*My Little Friend* Bible Class" are very young (there is no rule about age), so I cannot say I am sorry for taking a Bible story we all know quite well. One reason why I chose it was, that not very long ago I talked it over with the girls of my Sunday Afternoon Bible Class, and we found

MY LITTLE FRIEND.

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our lesson such an interesting one that we were sorry when it was time to close our Bibles.

Frances said she thought "the treasure" the little maid, who served in the household of Naaman, might have taken with her from the land of Israel was the Bible. This was a mistake, but I think in one way it was a help to us by leading us to talk about the far-away times in which she lived; before the Bible, as we know it, was printed or even written, though the Jews had the writings of Moses and a few other parts of the Old Testament, we have no reason to think that the little maid had ever been the owner of, or even seen, a whole Bible. Indeed, we may be quite sure she had not, though she may have listened to the reading of the law, and looked with wonder at the Hebrew books, so unlike our Bibles, that were kept with so much care in the synagogue. Still we are sure that she had learnt to know and serve the true God, and we may learn from her story that even what we sometimes call "such little things" are not too small for His eye to see, His heart of love to notice. But I have had quite my share of our "Talk" this month, so will begin at once to answer letters.

A. V. S., North Queensland, Australia, is thanked for his very kind and encouraging letter. It is really a thoughtful and suggestive paper on "Flowers," though it came too late for insertion in the July or August numbers of *My Little Friend*. May the prayer of the writer be answered, that our daily lives may reflect more of the beauty and fragrance of Christ, that we may more really and truly be for His glory and His praise, here and now.

Grace D., Horsham. Yes, dear, I think I can understand just a little of the pleasure it has given you to join our Bible Class, as you are never able to get out. Yours is, as you say, "only a tiny corner," but not too small to shine for Jesus there. He must put all the light into these poor dark hearts of ours, and His word to those who love Him is, "Let your light so shine." (Matt. v. 16.) We are not told to make the light shine, that is not our work. "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost," but we are to let it shine—Christ seen in the daily walk and ways of those who love Him.

Eddie M., Grey Hill, is thanked for two nice little letters. Her writing and composition improve almost every month, and C. J. L. hopes the thoughtful way in which dear Eddie answers our Bible questions is a proof that she loves and values her Bible. "Even a child is known by his doings." (Prov. xx. 11.)

Lily O., who, I think, quite forgot to send her address, answered two out of three questions

correctly, but her answer to the third shews she did not quite understand it. It is quite true, dear Lily, that the Lord Jesus is the One "in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Col. ii. 3); but the little maid did not, could not, know this in the same way in which the very youngest believer may know it now. You are welcome to join our Bible Class.

Two letters from Annie J., Peterborough, are interesting, for they tell of another who through grace has begun to trust the Lord Jesus as her own precious Saviour. I am glad Annie "loves finding out things in the Bible" (I am using her own words), but there is no need to copy the heading of each chapter when answering questions. I shall be pleased to hear from her very often. Her papers shew she is a thoughtful, painstaking girl.

Emily A., South Croydon. Thank you, dear, for your long and interesting letter. I am glad to hear that you have not only been converted, but that you are longing to know more of the glory and beauty of the One who has saved you. I think you will like four lines sent to me by one of my blind friends:

"Lord Jesus, I am resting
In the joy of what Thou art,
I am finding out the greatness
Of Thy ever-loving heart."

Very kind letters from Lilian M. E., Victoria, and Daisy B., Guildford, have been received, and though owing to want of space I cannot (this time) give each an answer all to herself, I want my young friends to know how pleased I am they should join our Bible Class. Lilian says she was saved about two years ago. May she grow in grace, and may the four dear girls be truly and really sisters by a closer, holier bond than that of relationship—sisters in Christ, "children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." (Gal. iii. 26.)

Lily and W. W. M. H., Sleaford, write nice, thoughtful letters. Their answers shew that they took pains with their Bible searching, though it was, I feel sure, a labour of love and hardly seemed like work at all. The more we study our Bibles the more delighted we shall be with the wonderful things about Christ we shall find in them, revealed by the Holy Spirit to those who love Him.

Two very tiny letters from Frank A. P., Cambridge, are acknowledged with thanks. Please write again, dear little friend, and would you mind telling C. J. L. how old you are?

Mary W., Guildford. I quite begin to know and look for your letters, dear Mary. You have answered the questions nicely. Our Shepherd, the One of whom you and I can say, "He loved me, and gave himself for me" never forgets,

never fails. He carries the lambs in His bosom.

Kate H., Peterborough, has sent answers to Bible questions, so has Jessie C., who writes from the same place, though her address is different. Both girls are thanked for their papers. C. J. L. hopes they will write very often.

Amy R., Waltham, near Canterbury. Your letter, dear, has been a real cheer. I have, I trust, a deepening sense of how very gracious the Lord is in giving me almost every month the joy of knowing that our "Talks" are an encouragement to any of "His own." All the blessing when there is any must come from Himself. I shall be very pleased to have you join our Bible Class.

Edgar B., Rowdon, Leeds. It has given C. J. L. real pleasure to receive your thoughtful and nicely written letter. The way in which you point out the details in which the three gospels from which you quote differ, though they never disagree, shows you really understood the question. In answering question three you call our attention to one point of great interest. It is Luke, who was, we know, a physician and so would understand all about the woman on whom the Lord performed the miracle of healing, who tells us that she could not "be healed of any." Will you join our Bible Class and write as often as you have time?

Ethel B. B., Weston-super-Mare. Your paper, dear Ethel, is as usual thoughtful and well arranged. It is quite a pleasure to get your letters so regularly. We are told in two of the gospels the age of the ruler's young daughter (twelve years). (Mark v. 42; Luke viii. 42.) We can hardly linger over her story as recorded by the Evangelists without being touched by the way in which the tenderness and grace of the Lord shone out in His every word and act.

Adeline T., Altrincham. Yes, dear little friend, you have found the right key again, and C. J. L. is very pleased to find you are not tired of answering questions and writing letters. May you early know and love the precious Saviour of whose love to little children you so often read and hear. I expect you have a Bible of your very own. Have you, dear?

Olive W., Forest Gate. C. J. L. is glad Olive has joined our Bible Class. Always send your paper, dear, even if you cannot answer quite all the questions.

Grace Kate A., Worcester. "*My Little Friend Bible Class*" is quite *free* and open to *all* who wish to join it. Some of our girls and boys live in lonely, out of the way places, too far from a school for them to go very often. Others belong to Bible Classes, but we all, I think, enjoy our monthly talk on paper. Our Bible lessons will

be a blessing and a help to us if, by the teaching of the Holy Spirit, they lead us to know more of Christ as a living loving Saviour.

Nellie B., Peckham. C. J. L. thinks Nellie is or ought to be a very happy little girl. Would she like to know why? Because she is the child of parents who love and honour the Lord Jesus. She has not only answered the questions for last month, but given in her own words, the way in which her father kindly explained the lesson. Yes, dear, the picture is really one of how Jesus saves guilty helpless sinners. I shall hope to get another letter from Nellie soon.

David P. J., Farnham. Your letter has interested me greatly. Thank you for telling me about your pleasant home among the hills. I am sure you know and love all the animals on the farm. I expect you have read how the shepherds in Bible lands do not drive but lead their flocks, calling every sheep by its name. So, only in a greater, better way, our Saviour Shepherd the Lord Jesus knows and cares for all His bloodbought sheep and lambs. He says, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me." (John x. 27.)

Ruth J., Farnham. Your answers to the questions are correct and your loving letter has given me real pleasure. Your own little garden will, I expect, be bright with autumn flowers when you read this. I notice what you say about your younger brothers: "I think they will write to you, for they generally like to do what I do." The power we have over others is called influence. It is a talent put into our hands by God, to be used for the glory of Christ our own precious Saviour.

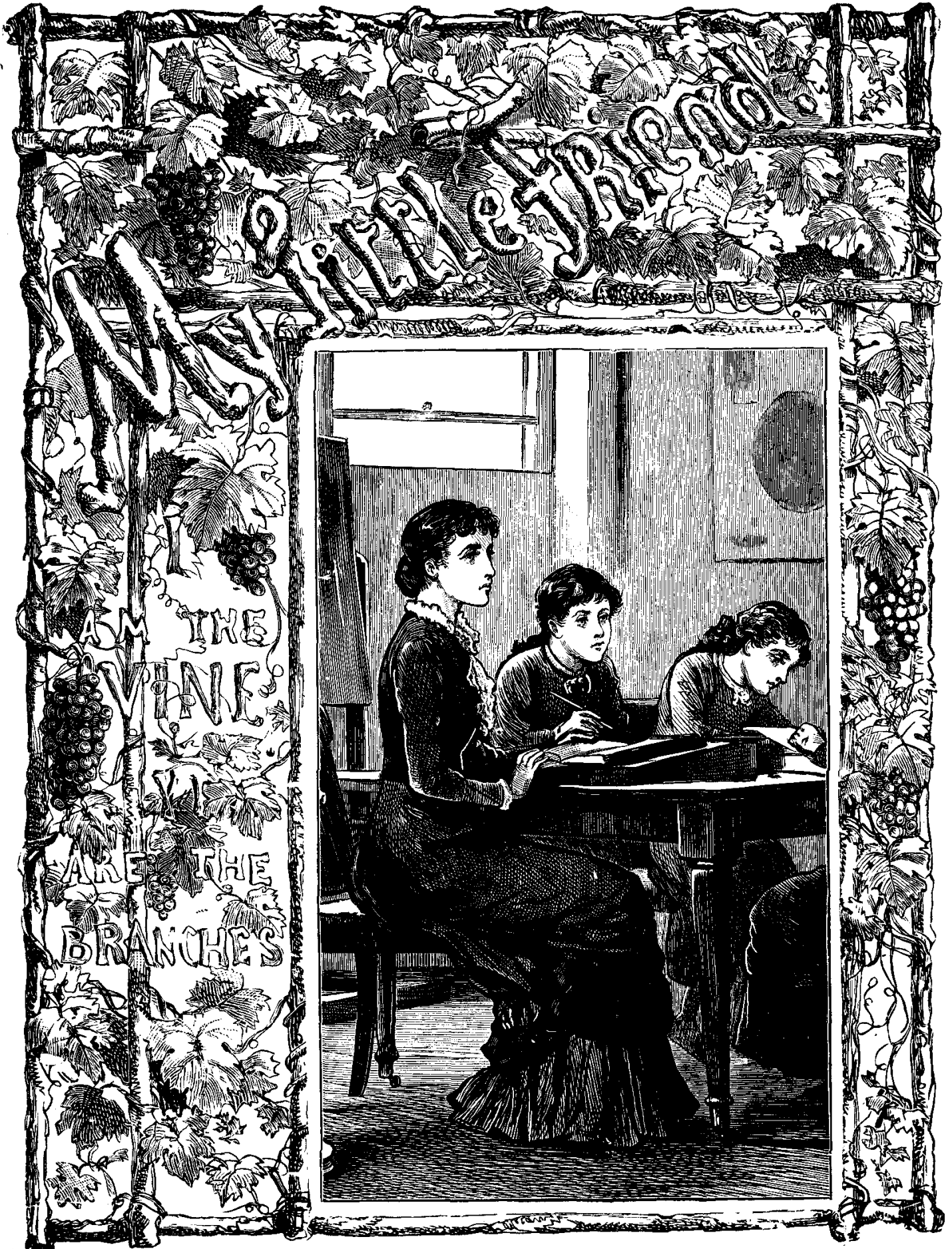
There will not be any Bible questions this month, for I know you all want to help with our Text Album and will be glad of a little longer time; for many of you did not get your September number of *My Little Friend* till quite late in the month, and those who were enjoying their own holiday by the sea or in the country, found paint boxes and rulers had been left at home, and will be glad to know that the neatly printed texts, etc., for the sick and suffering girls who have joined our Talks can be sent in up to November 21st. We shall, I am sure, all like to know that we are doing something, however small, to cheer and comfort another. May we each so work from love to Christ that our service may be accepted of Him.

Please take care your letters are not overweight.

Address to C. J. L.,

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Rachel and her Pupils.

I OFTEN think what a great blessing it is for those boys and girls who have christian parents to train them in the things of God. They do not think much of it at the time, but no doubt in after years they can generally thank God for His care of them in childhood.

Rachel was a young lady who had lost her parents and most of her other friends, and now, to earn a living, she was going to be a governess in a private family.

There were three girls in the family where Rachel was engaged, and she soon found that though they had plenty of this world's means to meet earthly needs, yet they had no knowledge of a Saviour's love. Now Rachel was a true Christian, and here was good ground to work upon. She quickly saw how matters stood, and looked to God to give her grace and wisdom to train them for Him.

Our picture shews us Rachel as she took her place in the school room the first morning after her arrival.

She first examined her pupils to see how far advanced they were in their studies, and to her surprise found them very backward. Much time had been spent in pleasure and amusement instead of steady work at their books.

Rachel had thus two objects before her, one to educate these girls to fit them for their path in this life, and the other to teach them of that One whom she herself had learned to love.

She first tried to gain the love of her pupils, and was not long in doing this, so that they seldom found pleasure away from her company.

After a time they got to quite like their studies, and loved to please their teacher, so this helped Rachel very much in training them.

The fruits of all Rachel's labour in this family were shewn in after years; when the girls were grown up they were fitted to train and teach other children. I trust, too, that their hearts had been touched by all that Rachel had from time to time put before them. She often asked God to guide her

words in what she might say to them of a Saviour's love, and from that time they could not be ignorant of the way of salvation.

But we know it is one thing to know about the Saviour, and quite another to be able to say, He is my Saviour, and that is what we want you all to be able to say: He is my own dear Saviour.

Forty Years Seeking Peace.



A RESPECTABLE young man—a Hindu—stood for a few moments listening to a preacher in the city of Calcutta. The preacher had seen but little fruit of his labours, but the following case of blessing came to light many years afterwards.

That young man heard the question of *sin* discussed, and he left with the sense of sin on his conscience, which he could not shake off. He heard not or heeded not God's way of salvation.

He grew up to manhood, and was prosperous in business, and for a time his convictions seemed to sleep; but adversity came, and then again the sense of sin bore heavily on his conscience.

He gave up everything, to seek to bring relief to his conscience by a religious life, and for several years he wandered over many parts of India, seeking peace at various shrines; but without finding rest or peace.

At length he joined a society, composed of persons dissatisfied with Hinduism, but who did not receive the religion of Jesus Christ—a kind of Unitarianism. Their maxim was: "Do what is just and right, and all will be well." But while this sounded right, it brought him no peace; for, to use his own words, "The remembrance of *past sins* kept rushing in my mind: something seemed to say, 'Without an atonement for *past sins* you perish.'"

This new society knew of no atonement, while Hinduism did of some sort; so he returned to his old religion, and again wandered from holy spot to holy spot, seeking peace. At Benares, with its two thousand shrines, he fairly gave way to despair, exclaiming: "What more can I do than I have done? yet there is *no peace!*"

He returned to Calcutta, and visited a bed-ridden nephew. His nephew had a Bible, portions of which he read to his uncle, who was induced to go to the preaching of the missionary. There he heard the way of salvation, and said to the preacher, "Glory to God! this is what I have been longing to hear for forty years."

He obtained a Bengali Bible, and was not seen again for two months. He was studying God's word, and on his return was found to have gathered up much truth from the word itself, and could quote passage after passage as to what he had learnt.

He was asked if he was now ready to confess Christ, and be baptised. "I know," he said, "what it will involve. I am now respected by a large circle of friends: once baptised I shall be abhorred and denounced by all—yea, my very children will forsake me. Give me two days to reflect and pray."

He went away, but could not sleep. On the third morning, in his agony, he cried to God to shew him what he ought to do. On opening his Bible his eye fell upon—"Who-soever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple." (Luke xiv. 33.) It was enough: that day he confessed Christ.

Then his trials came. Friends, servants, children forsook him; curses were poured upon him, and the finger of scorn pointed at him; but it shook him not. He returned blessing for cursing. He now enjoyed that peace that none could deprive him of. "O Sahib," said he, "the love of Jesus has ravished my heart."

"I am Ready! Are You?"

IN a pretty country village, not far from the sea, lived little Agnes, the story of whom I wish to tell you. One Sunday afternoon, amongst the new faces at our Sunday school were Agnes and her sister Emily, and that is how we came to know them. Agnes was seven years old, Emily three. Their sister Maggie, aged fourteen, took care of them and a baby sister, whom their mother had left an infant when she was taken very ill and died.

Children at Sunday school are often not very attentive, and teaching them is a work

of patience. Well, Agnes was about the same as the rest in this respect, but as she sat near her teacher, perhaps she heard better than most in the class.

A few weeks passed away, when one Tuesday a sad accident happened. Maggie had gone out on an errand, and left the three little ones at home. Agnes stood on the fender to reach something off the chimney-piece, when her clothes caught alight from the fire.

The door was standing open, and as the wind blew in it quickly fanned it into a flame. Agnes was terrified and ran out of the house across the road to the nearest cottage, screaming for help. But before help could come it was too late. The little frock, pinafore, and petticoat were so burnt they dropped off the poor little scarred body.

The neighbours put Agnes to bed as soon as they could, and sent for a doctor; but she had some hours of great pain before the remedies used began to tell on her, and then she fell into a restless sleep.

The next day Agnes lay for a long while in a kind of stupor and we could not speak to her, but while in this state it seemed as if God spoke to her; for, after a time, from her poor dry lips came the words of the little hymn she had so often sung in school:—

"There is a happy land,
Far, far away."

Then she became occupied with the One who makes heaven a happy place. She, like Stephen, saw Jesus; and her oft repeated words were, though she had certainly never said such things before, "Heavenly Jesus! Oh, Jesus! You are *my* Jesus! Are you ready? I am." Then she used the words, "Christ in glory," and so the day passed away. Thursday came and it was evident Agnes would not get better, but was passing away. I went to look at her again. She lay as before and had not spoken for some time, but while I was there her lips parted and faintly the words came, "I am ready; are you?" A few minutes more and she had gone to be with Jesus.

Oh! that all who read these lines were able to use Agnes's words and say to others, "I am ready, are you?"



Saved from Death.

SCENES like that shewn in our picture are often witnessed at the sea-side. Boys climb partly up the face of the cliffs, and then are unable to get either up or down.

I remember seeing a boy in this position on the Devonshire coast. He, like many others, thought he could climb from the shore to the top of the cliff, but when half-way up he could make no further progress, and now he found he could not get down either.

A rope from above was of no avail, he could only hold fast to the rocks and shout for help. If he let go to grasp the rope he might fall to the bottom and be greatly injured, even if he did not lose his life.

Just then the boy's father came along, and seeing his son's plight, began himself to go up to help him if possible. We watched him as he stepped from rock to rock, but he could not get very far, and soon gave it up. He could not save the boy.

By this time the lad was quite tired of clinging to the cliffs, and feeling that his feet might slip at any moment, he began to shout, "Save me! Save me!"

Oh, how thankful we then were to see a

boat row up to the spot, and two or three sailors jump out of it. They were used to climbing, and soon reached the boy, who was almost ready to drop to the ground with fatigue, but they were just in time, and little by little they brought him down the face of the cliff, till at last we saw him standing safely on the beach.

Now you can easily see that in order to save the boy from falling and to help him down, two things were necessary. The will to do it, and the power to do it. The father wished to help his boy, and he did what he could, but he had not really the power, and if no other help had come his son must have perished.

But oh, how different it was with the sailors. They had both the heart and the power.

They were not only able to go to his rescue, but they were willing also, and so the boy was saved.

Now I have told you this story to once

more illustrate what every boy and girl wants in order to save them from falling under the judgment due to their sins. We all need One who is both able and willing to save us.

Do you remember a man who came to the Lord Jesus, and said to Him, "If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean"? How quickly



Jesus said to him, "I will; be thou clean."

He is the One, dear children, I wish to direct you to who is "able to save to the uttermost all who come unto God by him." (Heb. vii. 25.)

Will you go to Him and tell Him your great, great need of a Saviour, and you will find He is not only able but willing to save you.



"If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us." (1 John i. 10.)



Birds of the Bible.

CHAPTER V.

SWALLOWS.

DEAR CHILDREN,

You will perhaps wonder how it was that we missed our little chat about the birds last month, but when I tell you that a good part of my spare time was occupied in helping to get little children to some special meetings in a gospel tent, I think you will excuse me for not writing to you when expected.

To-day we will look at the "*swallows*." You will find only four references to this bird in scripture. I will tell you the books, you can then search them out for yourselves, Psalms, Proverbs, Isaiah, and Jeremiah. In the last of these we read, "The turtle and the crane and the *swallow* observe the time of their coming."

No doubt most of you have noticed that the swallow always comes to this country in the spring, and leaves again in the autumn, before the cold, bleak winter sets in.

There are two nests under the roof near my bedroom window, and it seems as though the same birds come year after year; it is quite interesting to hear the gentle twitter of the young birds in the early morning when they begin to feel hungry.

But has not the swallow a lesson to teach us? Most certainly. Were the swallows to

remain here for the winter they would surely die, for the little flies upon which they live would be all gone, and the cold would be too much for them, so away they fly altogether to a warmer climate.

There is a terrible winter of judgment coming over this world, but before this takes place all true believers in the Lord Jesus Christ will have *left altogether* (like the swallows) for another land. They will have been taken to glory.

I always feel there is something rather sad about the approach of winter, it makes me think of a text I once heard preached from in a little village in the Cotswold Hills one evening late in the autumn; it was this, "The harvest is *past*, the summer is *ended*, and we are *not saved*."

Dear children, let me urge you all to let Jesus save you before it is too late; think of His love, *He died for you*. Come to Him just as you are.

The bright days shorten, nights are getting long,
Some of our wild birds now have ceased their song,
The swallow to another land has gone, . . .
Are you yet saved?

Drear winter comes, none can its course impede,
How much it's dreaded by poor folks in need,
But you will have to face what's worse indeed,
If you're *unsaved*.

Be like the swallow, and prepare for flight,
Jesus might come this very day or night,
And then you'll rise to meet Him with delight,
If you are *saved*.

Talks with my Girls.

No. XI.

BURDENS.



HAT a long time it seems since one of my girls, Winnie D., sent as her motto text for the New Year, "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ." (Gal. vi. 2.) But the lovely verse I have just quoted was not quite all Winnie's letter. She wrote, "Please may we have a talk all about burden-bearing some

MY LITTLE FRIEND.

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day?" I have often thought of her request, and to-day, though quite a number of unanswered letters are on my writing table, they shall wait till we have had a very short chat about burdens and burden bearers.

We all know a burden is something that has to be carried. Mary, who is not strong, owns that sometimes she feels so tired, and her arms ache badly when she has been nursing her baby brother, though she loves the little fellow dearly, and is always pleased when she can be of use to mother by minding him.

But there are burdens that if they do not make our bodies tired, make our hearts sad and sorrowful. Katie asks, "Is sin the burden I mean?" Yes. Once that load seemed greater than I could bear. I think I understood just a little, though only a very little, of how David felt when he said, "For mine iniquities are gone over mine head. As an heavy burden they are too heavy for me." (Psa. xxxviii. 4.) What a joy it was to hear the sweet gospel story of how all my sins had been borne by Another. To hear that the Lord Jesus, God's spotless holy Lamb, had taken that burden on the cross, made sin that sinners might be saved, and not only saved, but set free—free to bear His own light burden of loving service to Him who had first loved me.

Ah, I know many for whom I am writing could tell just the same story. And it is only when our own burden has been lifted that we really begin to help others to bear their burdens of pain or sorrow, for though of course unconverted people may and often do very kind things they lose all the joy and sweetness of doing them from love to Christ. But we must stop talking now, or I shall not have room to answer all your letters.

Minnie B., Weybridge. "When he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice." (John x. 4.) Yes, dear, I am reminding you of His own precious words just because I know you are needing a little cheer. When our good, great Shepherd, the Lord Jesus, puts one of His own forth, all is well, and there need be no fear in going to a new home or entering on an untried path, but on the other hand, they should make us careful to be sure that we have His leading, and are not taking ourselves out of a path we think too rough or hard, quite forgetting He has said, "My grace is sufficient for thee." (2 Cor. xii. 9.)

Daisy C., Wades Mill, near Ware. C. J. L. was pleased to get a note from her little friend, and thinks Daisy has taken pains with her work. The Bible questions are correctly answered. We all, I think, love to read of the raising of Jairus' daughter; but we must not

forget that the One who raised her is the same Jesus still, a loving-seeking Saviour.

Florence Y., Easterton, Devizes. Thank you, dear Florence, for your interesting letter. I hope you will not get discouraged and give up trying to answer the questions, because, as you say, you sometimes cannot get *My Little Friend* till after the 21st of the month. I shall always be glad to hear from you, and will take into account the difficulty you have in getting your letter posted in good time. The loving little notes that often come with the answers are very encouraging, but I do hope we shall all remember that if there is any real blessing it must come from the Lord Himself, and should draw out our hearts in thankful love to Him.

Grace D., Horsham. Your letters, dear, are always welcome, and I shall be pleased for you to write as often as you can. It must be a new and very real pleasure for you, unable as you are to get out, to belong to a Bible Class, but do not forget, dear, that the One who has saved you is just as "able to keep" as He is "mighty to save." His love can make even a lonely and suffering life bright and happy, but if we want really to enjoy the precious things Christ has for us we must be near Himself. I cannot write more now, but would "Commend you to God, and to the word of his grace."

Katie S., Fallowfield, sends a nicely written letter, and has answered all the questions correctly. Thank you, dear, for telling me how it was you had to address your last letter from memory, and so made a mistake. "It is more blessed to give than to receive." (Acts xx. 35.) No gift of love, however poor and small, is too tiny for the notice of Christ, and we all have something we can give, though it may be only a few kind helpful words. Write again.

Ada F. R., Plumstead. Your letters, dear, begin to come quite regularly, and the thoughtful way in which you answer the questions shows that you understand what you are asked to do. I often wonder if my girls enjoy our monthly "Talks" as much as I do, though I think one thing they are teaching me is my own weakness, and the need of constant looking up to the Lord to give me the right message for each one.

Thirza B., Guildford. Dear Thirza, I hardly know how or why it is, but your letters always seem like those of an old friend. I shall be pleased to have you join our Bible Class. Will you, the next time you write, not only send answers, but tell me if you are trusting the Lord Jesus as your own precious Saviour? I want so much to know if you are an anxious, or a happy little girl.

Fanny A., Meer End. Your paper, dear, is really a Bible study, and I am glad you have

noticed so many of the details given in the three gospels to which you refer. We must never forget that all scripture is given by inspiration of God (2 Tim. iii. 16), so that the very words to be used by each writer were put into his heart and mind by the Holy Ghost. It is only as we see more of the grace and beauty of Christ in the word of God that our Bible searching will really be a blessing and help to us.

Edith N., Newton-le-Willows. C. J. L. was glad to get your letter, dear Edith, but please do not write to her in lead pencil next time, as it was rather difficult to read. All our girls seem to think Bible Pictures and Questions a very interesting way in which to study their Bibles. Edith seems to have been just a little afraid of not giving the right answer. But she has answered all the questions correctly, and her letters will, we hope, come very often.

Florence S., Leominster. You are not too young, dear Florrie, to join our Bible Class, and I shall be pleased for you to do so. Several of the girls who write every month are about your own age. Shall I give you one of my favourite verses? "He shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom."

Ruth W., Calne, Wilts. Yours is a thoughtful letter, and your answer correctly given. The more we study the pathway of the Lord Jesus with the Holy Spirit for our teacher and guide, the more we shall see of His wondrous beauty. "We love him, because he first loved us." (1 John iv. 19.) I shall be glad to hear from you often.

Edith B., Guildford. Thank you, dear, for your nice little note, and for telling me that you can thank the Lord because you know He died for you. I trust you will be led on to know Him as a living Saviour. A poor woman I went to see one day in a workhouse, asked if I could tell her where Jesus is now? I was so glad that I could open my Bible and read to her about his grave being empty, and the angel saying, "He is not here, for he is risen." (Matt. xxviii. 6.) He is in heaven now, and He wants us to know Him in the new place, where He has gone. He is coming again, too, so we should be looking for His return.

Mary W., Guildford. Thank you for telling me you did not quite understand one of last month's questions, and yet I am sure you could have answered it, for you know that as the Lord was on His way to the house of Jairus, a poor woman who had been ill for a very long time, and who after spending all her money in paying doctors, had in some way heard about the Lord, and believed if she could only touch His garment she would be well, came behind Him in the crowd, and wanted to slip quietly away, without even owning who it was that had

cured her. But the Lord loved her, and so could not allow her to do that. It gives joy to His heart when we confess Him as Saviour and Lord.

Kate S., Croydon. Your letter, dear Kate, gave me real pleasure. Our Bible Class is open to all who wish to join it, but I do hope those who do so will know, each dear boy or girl for him or herself, not only a great deal about the Bible, the written word of God, but love and trust the Saviour, who is Himself the living Word. (John i. 1.) I shall be pleased to hear from Kate again.

Nellie W., Cullompton. I was glad to hear, dear Nellie, that you have been spending a happy holiday by the sea. "The sea is his, and he made it." (Psa. xcv. 5.) We can hardly, I think, look at it without feeling how great the One by whom it was created must be, but when we remember His love, our hearts are touched, and we long to

"In some small degree
Return His love again."

I expect you had a good time building castles on the sands, or looking for shells and seaweed, but am pleased you did not forget our Bible Class.

BIBLE PICTURE.

The kingdom was in a state of confusion and disorder. The king, attended only by a small company of faithful friends and loyal servants, was about to seek safety in flight, when a stranger sought and obtained an interview.

His errand was not to obtain royal favour to be used as a stepping stone to riches or worldly honours. All he asked was permission to share exile, rejection, danger, with one he loved and valued. The permission he sought was given in few words, but brief as they were they must have filled with joy the devoted heart of the one to whom they were addressed.

QUESTIONS.

Give the name of the king, also of the man who so proved his loyalty?

Of whom did the Lord Jesus say, she "hath cast in more than they all"?

Of whom, "she hath done what she could"?

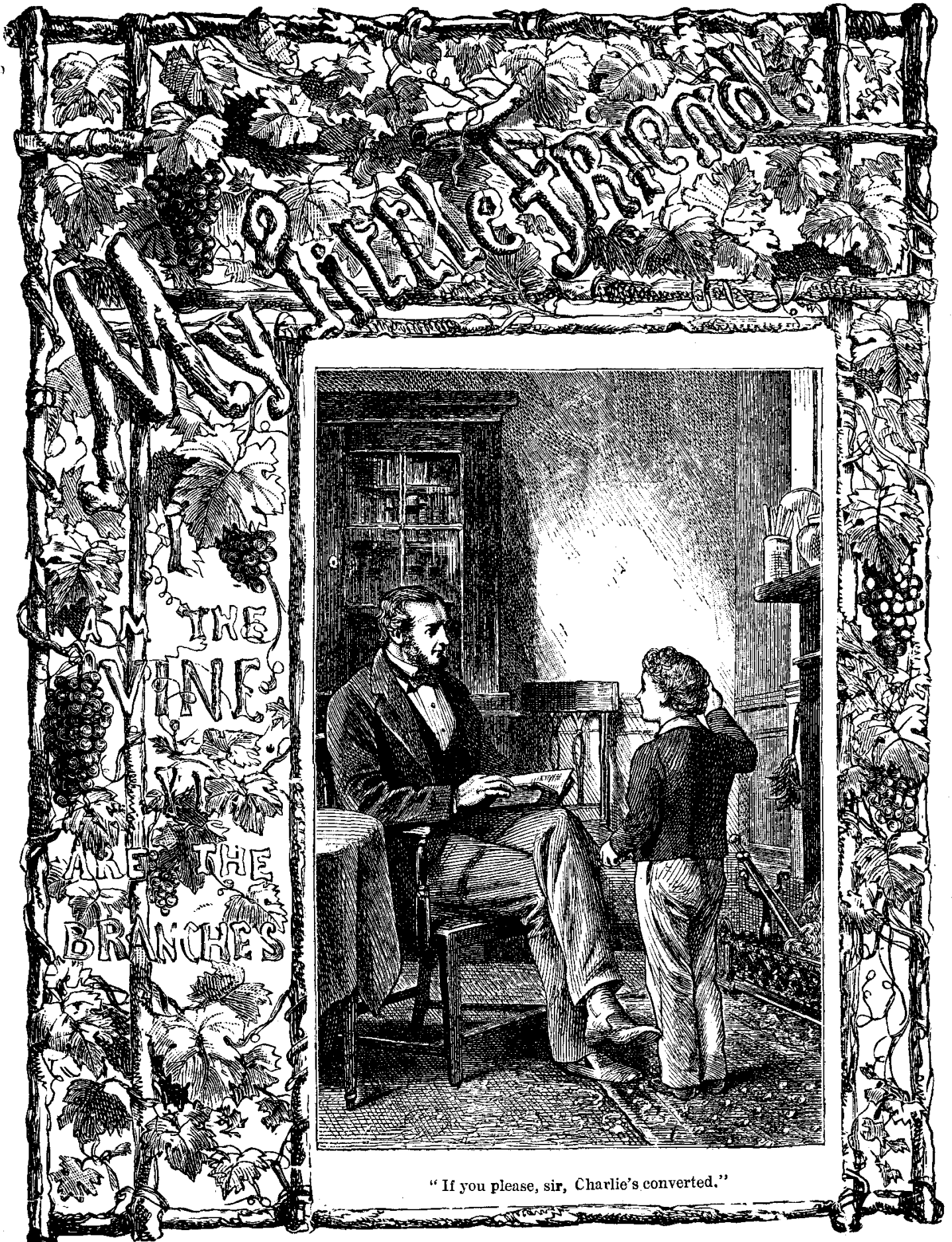
And of whom, "she hath chosen that good part"?

Please get your letters posted by the 21st.

Address to C. J. L.,

Care of Editor of *My Little Friend*,
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London, E.C.

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"If you please, sir, Charlie's converted."

"A LITTLE CHILD SHALL LEAD THEM."



GENTLEMAN was once preaching to a large congregation of Christians, and urging upon them to work for the Master. At the close of his address, a little boy from the furthest end of the hall made his way through the crowded seats to the platform, and touching the preacher's arm, said, "If you please, sir, what can I do for the Lord? I am willing to work for Him." The gentleman hardly knew how to answer, so he quietly lifted up his heart to God.

"Well," said he, "are you converted?"

"Oh! yes, sir," was the quick answer.

"Have you a mother and father?"

"I have a mother, sir."

"Well, and is *she* saved?"

"Yes, sir."

"And your brothers and sisters?"

"I havn't any, please, sir."

"Then have you a companion?"

"Oh, yes, there's Charlie," was the reply.

"Well, my boy, is *Charlie* converted?"

"No, he ain't sir."

"Then go and try and get *him* saved, and that will be working for the Lord."

With a glad heart the little fellow ran off. As soon as he got home he rushed up to his little room, and knelt down.

"Please, dear Lord, save Charlie. Please, Lord, convert Charlie;" was his cry.

Presently Charlie himself came bounding up the stairs in search of his companion. He paused outside the door, quite awed at hearing his own name repeated so many times, because he understood that Johnnie was praying for him. "Come here, Charlie, and kneel down," said his friend. Charlie came, and soon he was sobbing as though his heart would break.

"Give you heart to God, Charlie give your heart to God," urged the little fellow; and then he continued his prayer, "Please, Lord, convert Charlie."

"Oh! but I'm so wicked," sobbed Charlie.

"Never mind that, Jesus'll take all your sins away if you'll only trust Him. And Charlie *did* trust, and there and then the Lord gave him the assurance of forgiveness.

The next morning Johnnie went in search of the preacher and found him at home.

"Well! my lad," he said, recognising the little fellow.

"If you please, sir, Charlie's converted," burst from Johnnie's lips, and then he went on to say how it had come about, "And now what *else* shall I do?"

"Go and get the neighbours converted," said the gentleman, "tell them of Jesus."

Away went Johnnie, his heart quite full at the thought of doing this.

One by one, he told the people who lived near his mother's cottage about the love of Jesus, until he won fifty precious souls for his Master, and to-day they can praise God for the "little child who led them."

THE LIFE BOAT.



FEW days since, I was sailing on the Frith of Clyde, when I witnessed a scene which I shall never forget. It brought so many precious truths of the gospel before my mind, that I feel led to write a brief account of it for the benefit of others.

Our steamer came into collision with a small fishing-boat, and knocked in the side of it, so that it began to fill rapidly. There were two fishermen on board the small boat. One of these was an old man, whose hat was thrown into the water by the shock. His grey locks floated in the wind, he stretched out his hands towards the steamer, and cried in piteous accents for help; while the other man tried with all his might to bale out the water which was fast sinking their little boat. Not a moment was to be lost. Quick as thought, the sailors on board the steamer lowered the life boat, and rowed rapidly towards the drowning men, while all on deck looked on with great interest. Never have I beheld aught so solemn and so interesting. Each second seemed like an hour, while the sailors were making their way to the sinking boat. Through mercy, they reached it as it was about to go down and took the two poor fishermen on board.

Oh, what a figure of Christ is that life boat! that life boat is Jesus, who, in the energy

MY LITTLE FRIEND.

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of divine love, made His way down from the bosom of God into the very midst of man's ruin—took the sinner's place on the cross—bore the sinner's curse—died the sinner's death—paid the sinner's ransom—secured the sinner's salvation, so that all who believe in His name might be eternally saved.

Birds of the Bible.

CHAPTER VI.

SPARROWS.

DEAR CHILDREN,

We shall not have to go far to-day to find our bird, as, unlike the swallow, the little sparrow stays with us all the winter through, and gets very tame as the days get colder, and keeps a sharp look out for little friends to throw him some crumbs.

Now as most of you are well acquainted with our homely little visitor, I shall not say much about him, except to refer to one or two verses of scripture in which he is mentioned.

Psalms lxxxiv. 3; cii. 7; Matthew x. 29-31; Luke xii. 6, 7.

In the last two the Lord Jesus speaks of the sparrow to assure us of God's love and care for His own.

Just read each of the verses for yourselves.

And now for the present we have finished our little chats about birds, and I must wish you all (if the Lord tarry) a Happy Christmas and Bright New Year. May each of you know what true happiness is through believing in Jesus.

Just for a moment we will backward turn,

And one by one our feathered friends recall;
That we our lessons from these birds may learn;
We'll take the large one's first, and then the small.

First comes the *eagle*, bird of rapid flight,

May each, from him, their strength learn to renew,

Then there's the *vulture* with quick piercing sight,
Yet there's a path that's hidden from his view.

The *raven*, that did bring the prophet food,

Shewed out God's care for those who His name own;

The gentle *dove*, which Noah after the flood
Sent forth, and she an olive leaf brought home.

The *swallow* next, who, leaving winter's dearth,
Departs, and to a warmer climate flies;
And last the *sparrow*, though of little worth,
Not one without our Father's knowledge dies.

W. M.

DAVID'S SLING.

WHO does not love the story of David, and read it over and over again? There are many scenes of interest in his eventful life, but the one shewn in our picture was what took place when David was still a youth.

Truly and faithfully had he acted, as a shepherd, for he had slain the lion and the bear. Now he was about to face an enemy of another kind, the giant of Gath, who had come up day after day to defy the armies of Israel. This man bore in his hand an enormous spear, and a man went before him with a shield. The Israelites were all afraid of Goliath, and trembled when they heard his boastful words. But David thought of the lion and the bear, which he slew in the field. He thought, too, how this giant was defying God as well as His people. He therefore offered to go and fight against him, feeling sure God would help and sustain him.

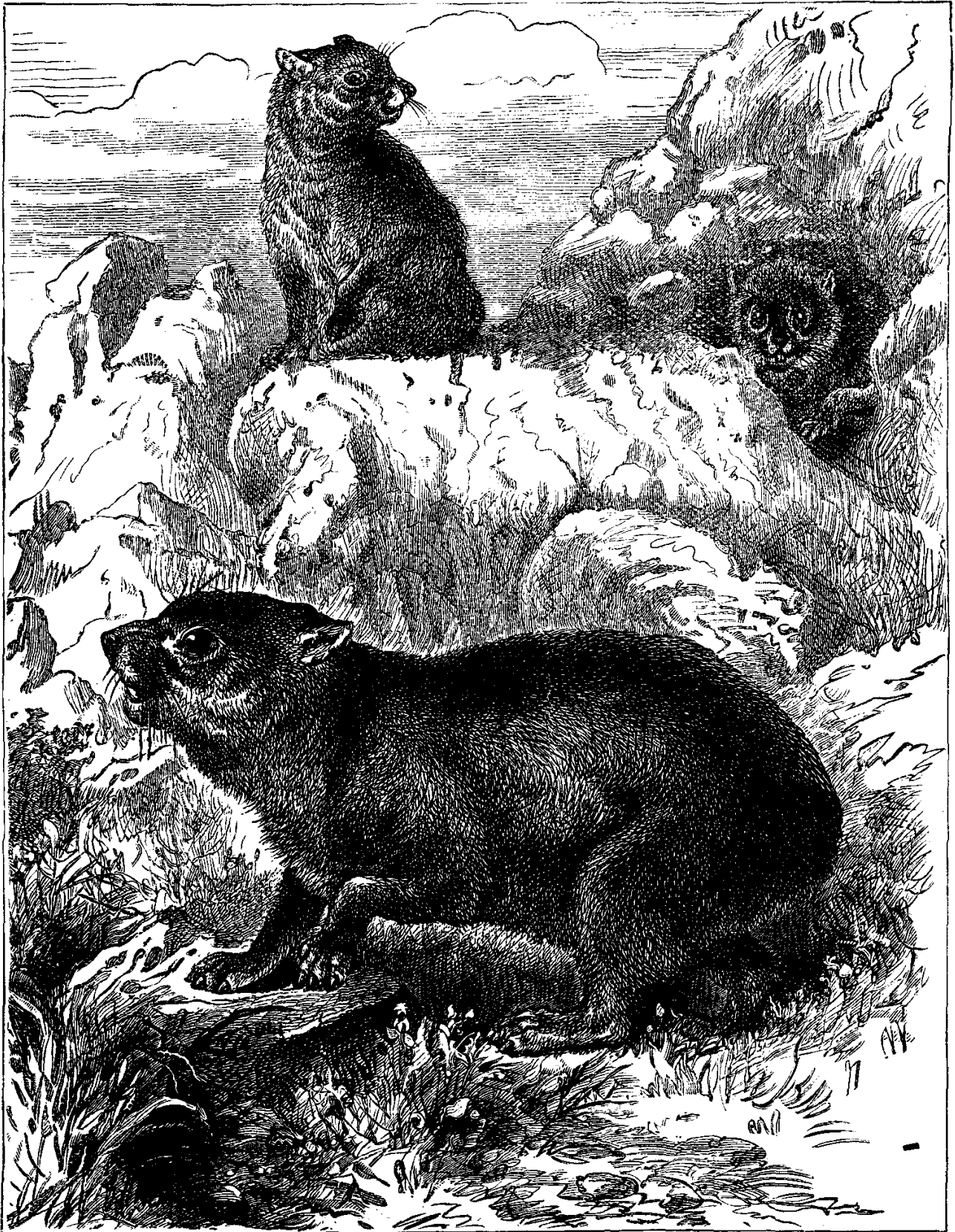
How strange that David should choose five smooth stones from a brook, instead of using a sword or spear; but no doubt he was guided by God as to the means to be used, for as to actual strength David could have been no match for Goliath. This giant could scorn the ruddy youth who had courage thus to face him; but he little knew who was David's strength.

The very first stone that David threw from his sling did its deadly work, for it struck the giant on his forehead, and he fell to the ground. I do not think it was David's skill in guiding the stone, but his perfect faith in God that He would use him to slay this enemy.

When once Goliath lay on the ground, it was an easy matter to seize his sword and cut off his head. Oh, what disappointment to his followers who had trusted so much in their champion! They fled in dismay.



David choosing Stones.



The feeble Conies.

Well now, dear children, we have an enemy who is more subtle and powerful than even this giant; but how blessed to know that as David went into the valley of Elah to slay Israel's enemy, we have a Saviour who has gone into the valley of death for us. Christ is the One who has broken the power of Satan. He is our David, and He gives salvation to all who trust in Him.

THE ROCKS A REFUGE.

THE high hills are a refuge for the wild goats; and the rocks for the conies." This we read in Psalm civ. 18. The coney was one of the unclean animals, and so not allowed to be eaten by the Israelites. The two marks given to tell the clean animals from the unclean were, that they must part the hoof and also chew the cud; only those animals that had these two marks were to be considered clean and fit for food. Now the coney does part the hoof, as you will see in our picture, but it does not chew the cud, so it could never be used for food.

There are only two verses in the Bible that refer to the coney, and in both we are told that they dwell in the rocks. Very weak as they are by nature, yet are they *wise in choosing a strong place to live in*, where their many enemies cannot harm them. They are very wary, too, and at the least sign of danger will run into their holes.

It is a happy thing to feel safe and secure, as we do in our own dear peaceful country; but better still if we are safe for the life which is to come, the long eternity. Those who have Jesus as their Saviour are as safe for eternity, and far more so than any one can be in this life. The Lord Jesus has many names, and in one place He is called the Rock of Ages, and He is the One for us to run to and trust in for eternity, and then we may feel perfectly safe, not only for this life but also for the eternity which is to come.

I hope many of our readers may learn to know and love the Lord Jesus as their Saviour. He is the One who has loved us and died for us, and is able to forgive all our sins, and make us fit for His bright presence in glory.

TO THE READER.

TWENTY years have now passed away since we first spoke about bringing out a Magazine for the young which led to the publication of "My Little Friend," and during all these years the Lord has graciously enabled us to issue the regular monthly number, which is looked forward to by so many boys and girls.

Seeing then that we have now twenty volumes on the shelf, it has been thought well to commence a new series, and as a gentleman has offered to become Editor for the future it will be like an entirely new Magazine.

Well in order to make a fresh start, he has chosen a new title, and as we hope to retain all our old subscribers as well as getting a good many fresh ones, will you all please order the magazine for January under the title of:—

"GOSPEL STORIES FOR THE YOUNG."

We should also be glad if all our readers would try to get other boys and girls to take the Magazine.

Those who send short stories and articles for insertion will please address their letters to

W. J. N., 20, Paternoster Square,
London, E.C.

Talks with my Girls.

No. XII.

OUR GLEANERS.

MY monthly packet of letters has just come in, and is, I think, larger than usual. All my young friends will be glad to know that our Bible Class is growing, not only in numbers, but in interest and blessing, though I am just a little afraid that one or two of my girls, who, like many of their elders, found it much easier to work than to wait, got rather discouraged by not getting answers to their letters quite so soon as they expected, and gave up writing altogether.

I shall quite hope to hear from them again, and trust if we are allowed to begin the new year together, we shall really be a band of gleaners in Bible fields. Now we all know that gleaning is not quite play-work. We must gather something to carry away with us, and what I mean is, that I very much want us

all to search our Bibles, not merely to answer questions, or even to gain knowledge, but that we may learn more of Christ, that precious Saviour, of whom through grace many of us can say, "We love him, because he first loved us." (1 John iv. 19.)

Now I must answer letters, and as two of those lying near me have travelled thousands of miles over sea and land, I think you would all agree in saying, "Please answer the colonial letters first, we are quite willing to wait."

Mary G. W., Wellington, New Zealand, writes such an interesting letter that I am almost sorry I have not room to copy even a few lines. Mary was having her winter holidays in July, when we were wearing our summer dresses and saying how hot we were; and I expect, too, that she is in bed and asleep while I am writing this, for we know that when it is day in England it is night in New Zealand, and yet light from above—the same divine light—has shined into both our hearts, shewing that we have a risen, living Saviour in the glory of God, One who died and rose again for us—One, too, who is coming for us. May we each be found seeking to please and honour Him. Another letter from you would be very welcome.

Ethel C. G., Nelson, New Zealand. Thank you so much, dear little friend, for the pleasure you have given by writing. Your answers to Bible questions are very good, and I was quite pleased to hear of your dear mother and you having such a nice Bible study together. I was really glad to get letters from New Zealand, and to read of souls having been won for Christ through the blessing of the Lord on the visit of His honoured servant, R. E., to the place where you live. I hope you will write again some day.

Edith C., Tunbridge Wells. I was quite glad to see your writing again, dear, and to find you still take an interest in our "Talks." Your answers were painstaking and thoughtful. How very brightly the tenderness and compassion of God for the lonely and sorrowful shine out in the scripture verses you send. What deep joy and peace it brings to know the living Lord we have learned to trust is a changeless Friend, "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever." (Heb. xiii. 8.)

Since writing the above, a second packet of letters has been sent on by our Editor, and it only needs one look at the stamps and post-marks to tell me that "Children of many Lands" are among my correspondents. Will each accept warm thanks for the pleasure their letters have given.

Queenie H., Dagshai Hills, India. Your letter, dear little friend, is very nicely written and composed for your age (nearly eight), and

your key is the right one to open our Bible picture. I feel it is very gracious of the Lord to give me the cheer of knowing that our little magazine is read and loved by children whose homes are such a very long way from England, as Queenie's is; and this will, I hope, encourage me to pray more earnestly that the blessing of the Lord may rest on every reader of *My Little Friend*. Thank you, dear, for telling me about your little sister, now gone to be with the Saviour she trusted.

Nellie M., Port Elizabeth, South Africa. Your letter, dear Nellie, is the first I ever received from Africa, and you do not know how pleased I am with it. It would be nice to have you for one of my girls, for I am sure you love your Bible, and have begun to read it in a thoughtful, earnest spirit. Do you know, dear, what precious things are given by God to all who really believe on the Lord Jesus Christ? The forgiveness of sins, and the gift of the Holy Spirit. I hope you will write again soon.

Annie J. C., Bundaberg, Queensland. Thank you, dear, for your kind letter. I think we are friends already, for we can each say of the same precious Saviour—"We love him because he first loved us." (1 John iv. 19.) Your favourite hymn is one I am very fond of:

"It passeth praises! that dear love of Thine."
And indeed it does, but what a joy it is to know that perhaps very soon we shall see the face of that One, whom having not seen we love—and then we shall praise Him as we would.

Andrew J. C., who wrote from the same address, and is, I find, Annie's brother, sends such a nice letter, telling much that is interesting about his home and school life. I was glad to hear you had such a pleasant time at the Sunday school picnic; and trust from the motto text Andrew sends that he has tasted the joy of being sought and found by the good Shepherd, the Lord Jesus, who gave His life for the sheep.

Ruth W., Walsall. I shall be very pleased, dear, to have you join the Bible Class, and hope you will write often. The scripture verses you have sent are lovely, telling as they do of the compassion of our God, and reminding us that the Lord is good to all, and His tender mercies are over all His works.

Grace D., Horsham. C. J. L. was glad to get your letter, but sorry to hear of your increased suffering. May you be led on to know more and more of the sympathy and tender love of Christ. "He carries the lambs in his bosom," and we may be sure, quite sure, that He never loses sight of or forgets even for a moment any weak or helpless one. It is an encouragement to read of the interest you take in our Bible Class.

Maud Mary S., Rotherham. Thank you, dear little friend, for your nicely written letter. The verse you have chosen from Psalm cxlvi. is a lovely one, "The Lord preserveth the strangers; he relieveth the fatherless and widow: but the way of the wicked he turneth upside down." I shall hope to hear from you again soon.

David P. J., near Farnham. Your letters are always interesting. I am sure the harvest-time must be a very busy one to all at your home, but I value your paper all the more because I know you had to give up some of your play-time to write it. You will not find it hard to understand how in natural things seed sowing must come before reaping time. The word of God says, "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." (Gal. vi. 7.)

Annie S., Canning Town. You write very neatly, dear Annie, and your answers to all the questions are correct. How could we even read such beautiful verses as you send without feeling, even if it is only a very little, how wonderful the grace and love of God are? Please write to me again.

Kate H., Peterborough. Your paper, dear Kate, is one of the best I have received this month, and I cannot help thinking you really enjoyed your work of looking out texts on the subject given. May you prove a true gleaner in Bible fields.

Annie L. J., Peterborough. I am glad to find, dear, that you have begun to ask, "How can you show love to Him who first loved you"? Two things are needed if we are to be good servants. We must depend and obey. We must keep close to the word of God, and owning our own weakness, be content to be led and guided. It is encouraging to hear of so many young believers who are interested in our "Talks."

Jessie C., Peterborough. Your writing, dear Jessie, gives promise of being very clear and easy to read; but if you will let me have a real letter next time I will try to answer it.

Mary E. McL., Edinburgh. Your answers, dear Mary, are correctly given, and I shall be glad to have you join our Talks. Will you please write again and tell me a little about yourself?

Edith B., Stratford, is one of our younger girls, and I think the letter she sends is almost the first she has written, but she answers nearly all the Bible questions and will, I hope, write again.

Kate L. and Nellie S., Chelmsford, are thanked for their interesting letters, which from want of space I am compelled to answer together. Yes, dear ones, you are right in saying that though we cannot go out and preach the gospel, we can all pray for those who have been called to serve the Lord in this way. And we, too, may serve

in very many quiet ways, even young girls who love the Lord Jesus may be found "holding forth the word of life." (Phil. ii. 16.)

Nellie B., Peckham. Yes, Nellie, I know you were a little disappointed at having to wait so long before getting an answer to your letter; but so many young friends have joined our Talks, that some letters have to stand over every month, and though I am sorry, I do not see exactly how it can be helped. Yours is a nice paper of texts.

Ruth W., Calne, Wilts. Your letters, dear, are always welcome, and your selection of texts is very good indeed this month. Please send your full name and address, and I will answer the question you ask by post.

Edith B., South Croydon, sends a neatly written paper of texts. I am sure she knows and loves the story of Ruth, and I hope she has begun to know something of the love and grace of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Christopher T., Twickenham. I think the number of boys who have joined our Bible Class is quite encouraging, for they all attend day school and have a great many lessons to do, so it is nice to get their papers, as they shew the writers are willing to give up a little play-time to study their Bibles, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." C. J. L. would like to hear from Christopher again.

Fanny A., Meer End. Your paper, dear, is one that gives proof of real Bible study. I often think of you and pray that you may know much of the tender care and love of the One in whom the fatherless findeth mercy.

Florence T., Cullompton. Your writing improves, and you have found quite a number of texts. I shall be pleased to hear from you very often.

Adeline T., Altrincham. Thank you, dear little friend, for your nice letter. I was pleased to hear that you not only looked for, but found the right key to our Bible picture.

And now, dear young friends, I think we should enjoy having a talk about birds, so will give you a subject instead of a picture this time. Give a list of the birds mentioned in the Bible (Old and New Testaments), arranging them as far as you can in alphabetical order.

Send your papers in by the 21st of December, but if you live abroad or cannot get your copy of *My Little Friend* till late in the month, your letters will be welcome when they arrive.

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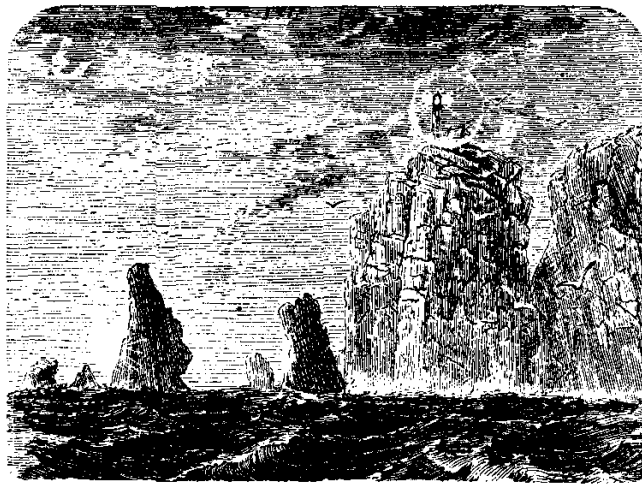
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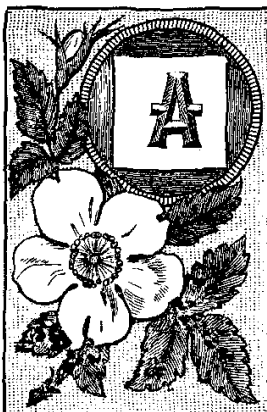
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