



FRONTISPIECE.

Youthful Days.

"REMEMBER NOW THY CREATOR
IN THE DAYS OF THY YOUTH."

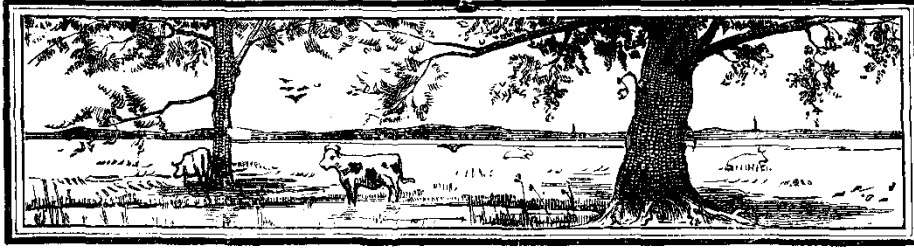
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Vol. X.

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PREFACE.

TEARS ago a school was re-opening after the holidays. They began by singing a hymn which contained the two following lines, something like this:

“Life with its way before us lies,
Christ is the goal, and Christ the prize.”

The scholars finished their hymn, a scripture was read, a few prayers were offered, and afterwards the regular work of the term began.

But the words of the hymn on that particular occasion have not been forgotten.

Truly with each of our young readers life is stretching in front of them, and we wonder what hopes or fears lie in each heart. We earnestly trust that our Lord Jesus Christ may be received by each one of you. For two reasons. First, because those who have received Him will be kept by Him for ever, “they shall never perish.” Secondly, because those who have received

Him must walk like He did, doing the daily acts of life as He did them, in the same careful, thoughtful and loving way. Actions, words, and deeds such as these win hearts in this wicked world far more than anything else.

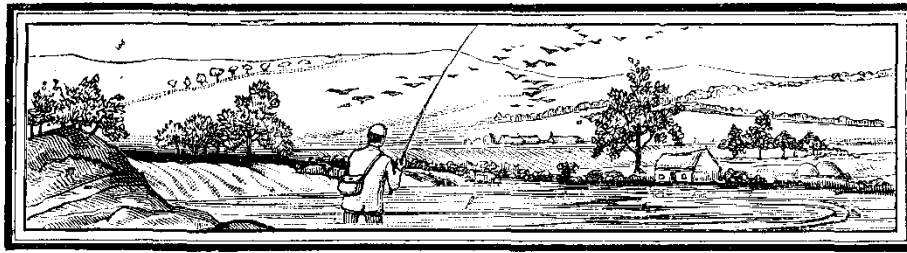
Our little magazine goes forth again as an annual volume with the trust that it may be used by God to bring our young readers under the happy influence of our Lord Jesus, and with thankful acknowledgments to all who have helped in any way in its production and distribution.

THE EDITOR.

FLINT,

December, 1919.





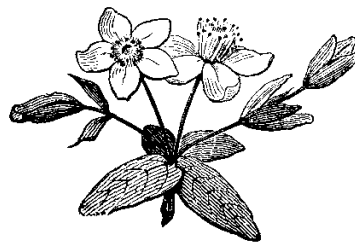
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Youthful Days.



To our Readers.

WE have lately received from one of our contributors the life history of a dear old christian woman who was known to her friends as "Old Charlotte," but is now at rest with her Lord and Master. This perfectly true story, to which nothing imaginary has been added, has been put together as a labour of love in order to shew how God cares for individual souls and leads them on step by step till they trust Him fully and follow our Lord joyfully.

We shall see also how a Christian gave up the prospect of a useful and prosperous career, and chose a life of hard toil for some ungrateful people because of a promise made to a dying woman. Yet in spite of these adverse things she was kept bright and cheerful. And she received a reward even in this life, for the later years of the journey were spent under happier conditions.

But the story is a long one, and will have to be published in portions each month during this year. This is an unusual thing for YOUTHFUL DAYS, for hitherto we have had short pieces. We do trust that our readers will not lose interest in it for this reason. We sincerely hope that they will read each portion as it appears, and we believe that they will be interested as well as helped.

Now a word for our "Searchers." With our Lord's help, suitable questions will be set each month which are answered by finding certain passages in the chapters of the Bible indicated and writing them out. The answers are to be posted to the editor, and the names of those who send in their answers punctually are printed each month on the cover of the magazine. Those who do this each month for the year are called "Diligent Searchers." The editor sends a small card to each of these, and the complete list is printed in the magazine. So that if you want to be a "Diligent Searcher" begin at once with the questions for this

month. Always answer the questions as soon as you can after you receive the magazine, the sooner the better, for it is surprising how quickly Giant Sloth comes along and proposes something else to be done first. Of course, what we really hope for is that in looking out these verses in your Bible you may learn something for yourself about our Lord Jesus, and that He may be graciously pleased to speak to your young hearts as you undertake this simple little task.



Matthew.—No. 24.

CHAPTER IX. 1-8.

DID Jesus go away out of their town, as the people of Gergesa had asked Him to do, when they saw what had happened to their swine?

Yes; He went on board the ship, and passed over the Sea of Galilee to the western shore, and came to "his own city."

What a sorrowful story! Jesus had left Capernaum, the city where He stayed so often that it was called His "own," and had gone across the stormy lake to a place where He had not been before. And now, at the prayer of the people who dwelt there, He was going back again, for there was no welcome or home for Him there. And we are not told that the feet of Jesus, "the beautiful feet" of Him who came as God's Messenger bringing peace and good wherever He came, ever trod that shore again. The people of Gergesa had lost their opportunity.

This is indeed a picture of what has happened, not in that town by the Galilean lake alone, but in this world. Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil, but the people of this world would not have Him, so He went back to heaven, and He cannot be found on earth to-day.

When Jesus returned to Capernaum there were some who were waiting for Him, some who had brought a poor, helpless, paralysed friend of theirs to Jesus. The sick man could not come to Jesus by

himself, for he had no power to walk or even to move about or help himself. So his friends took up the padded rug on which he lay and carried him along as carefully as they could until they reached the place where Jesus had landed with His disciples.

Is not this a beautiful story of faith and love?

Most likely this helpless sufferer could not even speak or ask for anything himself, but those who loved him believed that Jesus could heal him though no one else could, and so they brought him to Jesus. What a work of love it was to bring a helpless person to the only One who could do him good!

Was Jesus pleased with those who brought their friend to Him?

Yes; and He saw something very precious to Him which others could not see. He saw their faith and knew that they believed in His goodness, and He had a heart which could pity the helpless and suffering one.

When Jesus saw their faith He spoke to the sick man, and said, "Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee."

I do not think the friends expected to hear such words from the lips of Jesus, though they might not have been surprised if He had bidden the helpless man rise up and walk. Why did Jesus say, "Thy sins be forgiven thee" the very first thing?

Because it is God's way to give the greatest and best thing first. His friends could see the terrible need of his poor, helpless body, but Jesus knew the far greater need of that man's soul. And when we have received God's greatest gift we are able to enjoy all His other gifts.

Think for a moment. What real good would it have done that poor man to make his body well if his sins were not forgiven? Perhaps he might only have used the new strength given him to go and do more sins! He was too weak and ill even to ask to be forgiven, and his friends could not ask for him for they did not know his greatest need.

But Jesus knew, and He came to him with that cheering, wonderful word, "Thy sins be forgiven thee"! What a flood of comfort must have flowed into that weary heart as Jesus called him "Son," and said to him, "Be of good cheer."

But while Jesus saw faith in the friends of the sick man, He saw something in the hearts of the learned scribes who stood by, looking on and listening to what He said. They did not speak aloud, but He saw their thoughts as He alone could, and knew that they were saying to themselves, "What right has this man to forgive sins?"

So Jesus turned to them next in His beautiful, gentle way, and said, "Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts? For whether it is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and walk?"

There was no answer to the Lord's question. They could not know or understand the power that was in this blessed One who had come from God, to bring God's love and mercy down to sinful men, to forgive all their iniquities as well as to heal all their diseases.

Then as no answer came, Jesus went on to say that in order that they might know that the Son of man had a right on earth to forgive sins, they should see Him also heal the terrible disease which had taken fast hold on the sick man who lay in all his helplessness before them, they should see Him turn to him and say, "Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house."

The man, at the word of Jesus, got up well and strong, and they could all see him carrying his bed—that bed on which he had been carried before when he lay on it a sick and suffering sinner. The power of Christ enabled him to carry what had been the sign of his weakness and to go to his house with a new life, to tell in his own home what a great Person the lowly Jesus was!

This story of the paralysed man, forgiven and healed, is a picture of what Jesus does now for every one whose sins are forgiven. How surprised his friends must have been; they never thought of such a

cure as that. Can you not fancy him saying to them, "It is so delightful to feel well in my body, and to have the use of my arms and legs again, to be able to speak to you once more. But, oh! to know that my sins are forgiven—that Jesus Himself said it—how can I do anything but love Him? And now I am able to shew what He has done for me by carrying my bed before you all; you see how I can do without everything now that I could not do without before!"

The crowds of people who saw it all were astonished and glorified God.

"Jesus, our Lord, with what joy Thou did'st
shew
Infinite love amidst sorrow and woe,
When, for the first time, was heard here below,
Come unto Me, to Me!"

"Oh! how the leper, the lame, and the blind,
Weary ones, troubled in body and mind,
Oh! how they gathered a Saviour to find,
Trusting in Thee, in Thee."

"Not even *one* was sent empty away;
How could Thy heart to the needy say 'Nay'?
Sweetly Thy words sounded day after day:
Come unto Me, to Me!"

A. M. S.



Whither Bound?

A TINY boat is drifting down a rapid river towards the open sea. It has no rudder. The solitary occupant has no strength to stay its onward course, no chart to shew the dangers ahead, no wisdom as to how to act.

Carried on with ever increasing speed, as the current grows in strength, what hope of escape is there for that frail craft?

That boat, dear young reader, is you. The river of Time bears you on swiftly to the sea of Eternity. Strong currents—the influences of this present evil world—bear upon your life and you are in danger

of being carried out to that great ocean of eternity friendless and alone.

How greatly you need a Saviour, a Friend, a Captain—One who can save you, bless you, and take control of you, to govern your life and guide you safely into the harbour of Eternal Rest.

All this the Lord Jesus is prepared to be to you. He has died to save you, and He lives for those for whom He died.

How happy your voyage of life will then be! Dangers there are on every hand, but He knows how to keep you in safety if you will only trust Him.

Can you, dear reader, answer the question, "Whither bound?" Where will you go when this short and uncertain life is over? Where will you spend eternity? Are you drifting to ruin or are you under His control?

God would have you face these important questions, so that you might put your trust under the shadow of His wings. May you be brought to know Jesus as your Saviour, Friend, and Guide through life, and to know that you are bound for that bright home to which all who are cleansed in His most precious blood will be brought.

F. S. M.



Which would you choose, Gold or Wisdom?

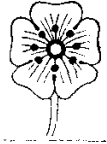
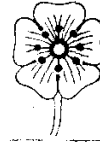
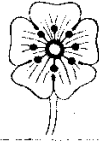
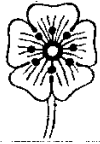
HOW A LITTLE BOY CHANGED HIS MIND.

IT is about eleven o'clock on a fine, bright morning, in a pleasant school-room, and some little boys and girls are gathered together.

What are they doing? you ask. They have just begun a simple course of



**He shall cover thee with His feathers, and under
His wings shalt thou trust.**



SEVENFOLD GREATNESS.

The greatest PERSON that ever was manifested.
Jesus, the Son of God. John i. 1-18.

The greatest WORK that ever was
accomplished.
Eternal redemption. Heb. ix. 12.

The greatest VICTORY that ever was won.
The triumph of Christ. Heb. x. 12.

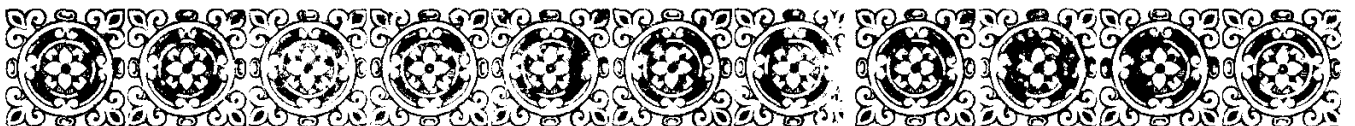
The greatest GIFT that ever was given.
God's only begotten Son. John iii. 16.

The greatest JOY that ever was known.
Let us be merry. Luke xv. 23.

The greatest LOVE that ever was expressed.
The love of God. 1 John iv. 10.

The greatest BLESSING that ever was enjoyed.
Eternal life. John xvii. 3.

F. S. M.



lessons on the metals, the children being from eight to ten years of age. The first of these wonderful subjects is gold; and as the children heard of its preciousness, its brilliancy, colour, usefulness and indestructibility (being a perfect metal) and other qualities, and of how much money was able to do, their lady teacher began to fear that the love of gold might be too much excited, and lest a love of money should be encouraged, she therefore said to them, that there was something better than gold, and that was wisdom. Turning to the verse in Proverbs viii. 19 she read, "My fruit is better than gold, yea, than fine gold." At this one of the boys, named L——, exclaimed, "Oh! I don't think so," and some of the other children called out "Oh!" in quite a shocked voice.

"Well," said the teacher, "just think. Supposing you were offered some gold, or this wisdom, which would you choose?" They hung their heads and said nothing, for perhaps in their hearts they were thinking the same as L——.

Then said the lady, "But if the Bible tells us this about wisdom, it must be so. Shall we look and see?"

"In the Book of James we find out what wisdom is; it is that which comes from above.

"It is first *pure*, that is, not stained by sin.

"*Peaceable*, not as children sometimes are, quarrelsome.

"*Gentle*, not hard or rough.

"*Easy to be intreated*, that is, willing to hear and to forgive.

"*Full of mercy and good fruits*, willing to shew favours to others and doing kindnesses, unselfish.

"*Without partiality*, that is, without wrangling or contending, or shewing favouritism.

"*Without hypocrisy*, that is, without pretending. Do we not often do things for the sake of appearances?"

The lady spoke of the Lord Jesus as the personification of wisdom, and how He manifested this wisdom in all His ways down here, going about doing good,

healing the sick, and even giving His life for us. The word went home, and L—— spoke out, "Oh! Miss J——, I should like *that* wisdom, it's better than gold." And I believe he really did get attracted to the Person of the Lord then, and that is a great thing.

C. E. H.

Old Charlotte:

OR,

A LIFE AND ITS LESSONS.

CHAPTER I.

A PEEP AT OLD CHARLOTTE.

PICTURE to yourselves a gentle-looking little old person in a black dress, apron and white lace cap, sitting by a blazing fire in a bright, comfortably-furnished room, busy with her needle.

"Click, click" it goes against the old brass thimble, and every now and then she bends closer over her work and looks through her large, steel-rimmed spectacles to see if the stitches are small enough.

A happy, peaceful face she has, although the soft hazel eyes are dim and the nose now nearly touches her chin, giving her an aged appearance. Her once bright brown hair is now quite grey and neatly parted under her cap which, as usual, is a little on one side—for it is seldom reflected in a looking-glass.

This is probably how you would have found old Charlotte in the middle of the day at the lodgings into which she had only been settled a few weeks.

There she sits, still "busy as a bee," waiting for the apple to be done which is roasting on the hearth in front of the fire for her dinner—and she waits patiently, for old Charlotte always *did* like a baked apple!

A cloth is laid at one end of the table, and at the other, within her reach, are her work-basket and scissors, old friends which are seldom put away for many hours together.

After a long and busy life Charlotte is enjoying the thought that now, at last, there is a place she can call "Home," where she can work or rest as she pleases—not that she ever wished to be idle; she never *could* be that!

It has all come so unexpectedly to her—this new life in the little corner she can call "home." And as she sits stitching away by the bright warm fire she feels very grateful to her heavenly Father for providing the quiet and rest she so much needed. She served Him well and faith-

fully in her younger days and He has not forsaken her in her old age. She has proved Him to be what she *knew* Him to be :

“THE FAITHFUL GOD.”

Long years ago she had refused the offer of a good position in *this world for Christ's sake* because she knew it would not be right to accept it. Quietly and courteously she had declined the post. She was sorry to appear ungrateful to the one who offered it ; he was vexed but puzzled by her refusal and with an impatient gesture he inquired how she intended to provide for her old age.

“Oh, sir !” she gently replied, “I have a very rich Father !”

And indeed she had ! God is a very rich Father and He did not forget her.

Now we will leave her to watch her roasting apple and to finish her needlework and perhaps you will like to hear how it was that she came to be sitting there as you saw her ; for Charlotte was not always a little bent old woman with only her needle and thimble for companions.

CHAPTER II.

CHARLOTTE'S FIRST HOME.

It is nearly one hundred years ago since that December day, A.D. 1837, when Charlotte was born.

God sent her, a tiny baby girl, to John and Anne Trent, who lived in a comfortable, though humble little home, in the ancient town of Harstead. They were delighted to have a little girl of their own and doubtless there never *was* such a beautiful baby in Mrs. Trent's eyes—and perhaps she was not far wrong. She received the name of Charlotte, and although born in a humble and obscure station of life she was nevertheless descended from and bore the surname of a great and well-known, godly man.

Little Charlotte was soon a merry, fair-haired child, toddling about the cottage and hanging round her mother's skirts ; and like other little children she soon began to shew that she had a sinful nature ; it was the same sinful nature that every child has inherited from our first ancestors, Adam and Eve, who sinned against God. Every one born into this world is descended from Adam and Eve his wife ; for we read in the Bible that “God that made the world and all things therein . . . hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth” (Acts xvii. 24, 26) and “all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.” (Rom. iii. 23.)

When Adam and Eve sinned by disobeying God, they were punished by Him ; He turned them out of the beautiful garden in which He had placed them, and had He not provided a

remedy for their sin, neither they nor any of their descendants would ever have been forgiven.

But God in mercy *provided a remedy*. He gave Adam and Eve a wonderful promise ; He said that some day one of Eve's descendants should overcome the power of the serpent, or Satan and sin. This was Jesus, God's Son and “Son of man.” And God took skins of beasts and clothed Adam and Eve with them as a token that their sins should be covered by the blood of the coming Redeemer.

God closed the garden ; Adam and Eve died ; Jesus, Son of God, and “Son of man,” came into this world and died upon the cross for the *sins* of all who believe in Him ; He rose again and has now gone to prepare another and more beautiful place for all those who are redeemed—and even little infants will be there, for Jesus “the Son of man” came “to seek and to save that which was lost.” (Luke xix. 10.)

The first little child born into this world was Cain ; he as well as all other men had a sinful nature, which he soon proved by slaying his own brother ; he did it in self-will because he was jealous of his brother. Cain loved to have his own way, the choice of his sinful heart. God warns His people against the evil “way of Cain.” (Jude 11.)

And little Charlotte very soon shewed that *she* loved to have *her* own way, to do her own will instead of obeying her father and mother ; but they taught her she must not always have her own way, that she must be obedient to them ; and God says :

“Children, obey your parents.” ‘Col. iii. 20 ; Eph. vi. 1.)

When Charlotte was about two years old, God sent her a little brother ; he was named Charles, and very soon learned to love his merry, gentle little sister, who also loved him dearly.

How pleasant it is to see children together when they love one another ! But how much unhappiness there is in a home when they quarrel and say unkind things to and of one another : How grievous this is to God who made them, for He says, “How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.” (Psa. cxxxiii. 1.)

When only four years old and before she was able to understand much about it, a great sorrow came into little Charlotte's life.

Her father's health failed ; his strength gradually left him ; and almost before it was realised how ill he was, God took him from this world for ever.

Thus his wife, Mrs. Trent, was left a widow with two little children and quite unprovided for.

But God “relieveth the fatherless and widow.” (Psa. cxlvi. 9.) And

A FATHER OF THE FATHERLESS IS GOD." (Psa. lxxviii. 5.)

And He cared for them all in their need; for shortly after her husband's death Mrs. Trent was offered the post of housekeeper at a large shop in the town of Harstead. This she gladly accepted; and it was arranged that she and her children should have the use of a separate part of the house adjoining the shop. Thus God provided her with a home and money and enabled her to remain near her old friends and relatives.

Here the two children lived a quiet and happy life. Their mother, who was often busy with her duties, was obliged as time went on to leave many little things in her own home and the care of Charlie to her willing little daughter.

Charlotte was a gentle yet merry child; her figure was small and she was not very tall; her face, always rather pale, was, though not beautiful, very pleasing to look upon; she had good features, large hazel eyes and soft light brown hair, which, however, never would curl!

Being of a contented disposition and never weary of her labours of love, Charlotte seemed to find as much pleasure in washing cups and saucers or Charlie's grubby face and hands as in most things. Perhaps the reward of a kiss or word of loving praise from her mother was what made the tasks so pleasant and so light. But doubtless she preferred going to school and having fun with the other children or rambling by the riverside with Charlie, and it must not be supposed that Charlotte was never naughty!

Then what happy hours those must have been when, sitting beside her mother, she would learn to sew, while Charlie played about the room or climbed on his mother's knee to watch Charlotte's little fingers busy with her needle.

"Click, click," it would go against the tiny thimble as the child tried hard to make the stitches "like mother's," whilst she chatted merrily at her side.

But, alas! these happy days were soon to be over; her dear mother's health gradually failed as her father's had done; another storm gathered in thick clouds and broke upon the little family, and before Charlotte was nine years old, Mrs. Trent had given her two children a last kiss and left them homeless orphans.

But God had cared for them hitherto and for their widowed mother; He is a faithful God; we shall see whether He continued His care for them now that they were cast upon the world at such a tender age.

It is well for God's creatures to trust Him; to trust Him too for what He is, not merely for what He has DONE or can do. "He is love" and "He is light." He may see fit to allow sorrow and trial, but even then He should be

trusted, for "His way is perfect." (Psa. xviii. 30.)

"We'll praise Him for all that is past,
And trust Him for all that's to come."

(To be continued.)



Bible Searchings.

The "Searchings" are to increase acquaintance with the Holy Scriptures. Answers to be sent TO THE EDITOR, F. Shedden, Bryn Awelon, Flint Mountain, Flint, North Wales, not later than the 15th of this month, **with envelopes marked "Searchings" in top left-hand corner.** Age, and full name and address to be given.

Will all our "Searchers" please answer the questions on one sheet of paper, using both sides if necessary, and always write their name, age and address at the top before beginning the answers.

Searchers 10 years of age and under 14, omit Nos. 7 and 8.

Searchers 14 years of age and over, answer all.

1. "He is Lord of all." (Acts ix. or x.) (a) Of whom is this said? (b) Who is the speaker?
2. "He is thy Lord." (a) Where is this? (b) Quote the sentence that follows. (Psa. xlv-xlvi.)
3. How many times in this psalm is Christ spoken of as "King."
4. Quote half a verse in Acts ii. that tells us who it is that made Him "Lord."
5. Philippians ii. tells us what "He made himself." Quote the sentence
6. "Thou hast made him." (a) How often do these words occur in Psalm xxi.? (b) Quote the words that follow in each case.
7. In Philippians i.-iii. we are told of something that God has "given him." (a) What is it. We are also told here of something that "every tongue" will do. (b) What is this?
8. Quote verses from Psalms xlv. and lxxii. about His "name."

Searchers under 10 years of age.

Complete and write out in full the following passages:—

1. "There is not heard." (Psa. xix.)
2. "Some trust our God." (Psa. xx.)
3. "For thou thy countenance." (Psa. xxi.)
4. "But be help me." (Psa. xxii.)

(Book, chapter and verse to be given in each case.)

Youthful Days.



Sitting beside her Mother Charlotte would learn to sew

An Evil Deed and its Consequences.

MANY a man has done a wrong action and has escaped the consequences, during this life at least. But sometimes God punishes people openly for their sins, just like a schoolmaster punishes a naughty boy before the whole school as a warning to the others.

Ahab, king of Israel, had a palace at Samaria and a summer residence at Jezreel. When he and his wife Jezebel got tired of court life and its ceremonies they went down there for a change.

No doubt, as wealthy people do nowadays, the king used to make improvements in the grounds of his palace at Jezreel in order to make them look more beautiful. One day he noticed that a vineyard was situated just outside the palace grounds, and it occurred to him that if this vineyard were taken in it would make an excellent garden of herbs. He found out that it belonged to a citizen of Jezreel named Naboth. When he asked Naboth to sell it at a very good price he refused, and the king returned home disappointed, so much so that he could not eat. So far no wrong had been done. It was right for the king to make a good offer, and right for Naboth to refuse if he did not want the vineyard to go out of the family.

When Jezebel saw the king in this bad humour she asked what was the reason. On hearing she said, "Dost thou now govern the kingdom of Israel? arise, and eat bread, and let thine heart be merry: I will give thee the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite."

She took the king's seal and wrote letters in his name to the chief men of Jezreel, telling them what to do. They were to proclaim a fast, and have Naboth there amongst all the people. Then some wicked men were to be brought in to accuse him falsely of blasphemy against God and the king. How dreadful that Jezebel, the worshipper of Baal, should be

pretending to speak for the true God, and order that some one should be put to death for breaking God's law, and all for the sake of a vineyard. The chief men of the city carried out Jezebel's instructions to the letter, stoned Naboth till he was dead for his supposed blasphemy, and sent word to the queen.

She at once told the king that Naboth was dead, and sent him down to take possession. But God sent the mighty prophet Elijah to convict the king of his sin. For although Jezebel had planned the affair, the king consented, and was therefore as much to blame as his wife. The prophet met the king with two of his captains, Jehu and Bidkar, in the vineyard of Naboth, and the king said, "Hast thou found me, O mine enemy?"

The prophet told the king without any fear what his punishment for the murder of Naboth should be. For you can see for yourself that in order to get Naboth out of the way he was accused in public and stoned without a proper trial. The people were deceived by this trick and no doubt thought the king had done quite right. It is always the way when a sin is committed, lies and excuses have to be brought to cover it up.

God said He would punish Ahab on that very plot of ground, and his two captains remembered it. Also that in the very place where the dogs licked the blood of Naboth, there they would lick Ahab's. The king's sons were to be cut off, his house and his children were to be destroyed, and, most dreadful of all, the dogs would eat Jezebel's body in the city of Jezreel.

Ahab put on sackcloth when he heard this, and God in grace postponed the greater part of this terrible and awful punishment during Ahab's lifetime.

This is a dreadful story, but I want you to remember it because it shews how God must punish sin.

Three years afterwards Ahab and Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, went to war against the Syrians. Ahab disguised himself in order that he might not be attacked. It was no use, for a man shot

an arrow which found its way through the joints of his breastplate and mortally wounded him. They held him up in his chariot till the evening, when he died, and they took him back to Samaria. A man washed the chariot in a pool close by the place where Naboth had been stoned, and the dogs, perhaps the same dogs, came and licked the blood of Ahab. "God is not mocked; whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

Ahaziah, the son of Ahab, followed on the throne, and after a short reign died because he inquired of the false gods instead of the true God of Israel. Joram, another son of Ahab, took to the throne, for Ahaziah had no son. It was during his reign that God fulfilled His judgments against Ahab's descendants.

Elisha the prophet sent one of his men to anoint Jehu king over Israel at Ramoth-Gilead, where the army was assembled for the time being. The prophet burst into the officers' room, and said, "I have an errand to thee, O captain." Jehu said, "Unto which of all us?" and the man said, "To thee, O captain."

They went aside into a room by themselves and Jehu was anointed. The man then opened the door and fled. Jehu returned to the company as if nothing had happened, but his brother officers wanted to know what the "mad fellow," meaning the prophet's messenger, had come for. At first Jehu tried to put them off, but the truth had to be told. The officers then rushed to the top of the stairs, blew the trumpets, and shouted, "Jehu is king!"

It happened that Joram the king was then at Jezreel recovering from his wounds, and Ahaziah, king of Judah, was paying him a visit.

Jehu set off at full speed in his chariot with Bidkar his captain for this place, in order to get there before the news reached the king. He drove so furiously that the city watchman recognised him a long way off and told Joram. The two kings went out each in their chariots and met Jehu by Naboth's vineyard. When the king of Israel saw Jehu's intentions, he turned round and fled, saying, "There is treachery,

O Ahaziah." But he was too late, for Jehu shot him down with an arrow. In fulfilment of the prophecy of Elijah he ordered Bidkar to throw the dead body into Naboth's vineyard.

As he rode into Jezreel, Jezebel was thrown down from a window and slain, and her body left in the street. Shortly after he ordered his men to bury her, for she was a king's daughter. His men went out, but to their horror they found very little left, for the words of the prophet Elijah had come literally true. Jehu went on with this work, and did not stop till all Ahab's descendants had been destroyed.

Let this true story of King Ahab and his punishment be a warning. God speaks to each one in grace, but if grace and love are despised, then a day will come when God must judge and spare not.



Matthew.—No. 25.

CHAPTER IX. 9-13.

IT was at Capernaum, the place where so many of His mighty works were done, that we were reading last time of the crowds praising God when they saw the paralysed man, whose sins Jesus had forgiven, rise up from his bed and walk.

To-day we shall read that as Jesus passed on He saw another kind of sinner. This was not a sick man carried by his friends, but a rich man, well and strong at his business, sitting at the tax office receiving money.

His name was Matthew, and he was the very man whom the Spirit of God afterwards used to write this gospel which we are now reading. You see he tells his own story of how he was employed when the Lord came by, and spoke to him words which changed his whole life.

Matthew was sitting at the road-side to get the taxes which the people had to pay to the great Emperor of Rome.

Jesus said to him, "Follow me," and Matthew rose up at once and followed Him.

Was it wrong for Matthew to receive the taxes?

It was considered a disgrace by the pious Jews, because they would gladly have forgotten that they were captives in their own land which God had so long ago promised to Abraham. It was because of their sins, and it was a sign of their captivity that if they were to live in that land they must pay taxes to their Gentile rulers. Israel ought to have no king but Jehovah, but the Romans were now lords over them, and their paying taxes shewed that it was so. The lowly Jesus was Jehovah; He was Emmanuel—God with us—and He had a right to say to whom He would, "Follow me," and to be obeyed. Matthew acknowledged His blessed claim on him as a son of Israel when he at once left his money-table and followed that heavenly Stranger who had not where to lay His head. In a world where even the wild jackal could find a home, He who was Lord of all had none!

You have heard of Napoleon Buonaparte, who fought so many battles. When he read how the Lord had but to speak the word, and the man to whom He spoke became His follower, he said: "My soldiers would follow me, but I promised them victory; this Man had nothing to give His disciples, and yet they followed Him!" For Napoleon did not know what a great Person Jesus was. It was Himself they followed, greater than all He gives. Matthew invited Jesus to his house, and the Pharisees, who despised such a man as he was, when they saw Jesus go with him said to His disciples: "Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners?"

Jesus heard the question and He answered it Himself. He gave those proud Pharisees a very wonderful answer—He said, "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." That was like saying, "good people like you do not want a Saviour, but sinners do." And He added, "But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners."

Perhaps this is not quite easy to understand. It means that Jesus did not come to ask people to bring Him a sacrifice or to do something for Him; He was come to bring them mercy—to be Himself God's blessed mercy-seat to whom all might come, for the message He brought from God was mercy for all.

He came to save His people from their sins, to bring forgiveness—that is what He wanted them to learn—and if the people were His people, He was their Jehovah, who had made a covenant with them when He brought them out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage, of whom King David had said in one of his psalms, "His mercy endureth for ever."

If those proud Pharisees had believed in Him they would have been like the paralysed man whose sins were forgiven at the word of Jesus. I wonder whether that man thanked the One who had forgiven his sins and healed his terrible disease?

We are not told that he shewed any gratitude to the Lord. It is remarkable, as we read of so many who were healed and blessed, that there is no record of their giving thanks to Jesus for His mercy towards them. It seems as if the one who tells the story was so full of what Jesus did that he had no thought for any one else. What Jesus said and did is the important thing, and it is happy for us to learn who He is.

The answer that people gave to all His gracious words and His works of love and power is not worth writing about, for little did they know of the great One who was going about doing good among them.

Matthew, who wrote this gospel, does not even tell of his own delight in following the Lord. By another we are told that he "left all" to follow Him, and that when he brought Jesus home to his house he "made a great feast" for Him, and invited his friends to meet Him.

And who were those with whom Jesus sat at table in the house of Matthew the publican? Not the Pharisees, who thought themselves so good and religious;

DILIGENT SEARCHERS.

The following list contains the names of all Searchers from whom twelve Sets of Answers were received during 1918. In the case of Searchers living abroad the names of all from whom not less than eight Sets of Answers were received, are included.

Searchers 14 years of age and over (maximum 352 marks).

Edith Seville	348	Isabella C. Davidson	333	Edith C. Buttrum	322
Winnie Seville	348	Marion Thomson	333	Alex. Allibone	321
Leslie Bicker	346	Mabel K. Buttrum	332	Marjory Plommer	321
Dorothy Moorhouse	344	Dorothy Plommer	332	Nora McMorran	317
Jessie Moorhouse	344	Eveline Powell	332	Mabel F. Nason	307
Ethel Ryder	340	Dora Gardner	329	Norman Childs	306
Mary Brown	339	Malcolm C. Marsh	329	Pattie Hopwood	303
Natalia Scarborough	339	Violet Barrows	326	Edith Moore	303
Gracie Robertson	338	Cyril Gardner	325	Violet Tozer	295
Margaret Cotton	337	Reginald H. Wilmot	325	Leonard Roberts	283
Alfred Caws	333	Edith M. Batt	323	Mary Mackie	281

Searchers 10 years of age and under 14 (maximum 234 marks).

Frances Broddle	230	Ruth Osborne	221	Hilda Allibone	213
John Balmforth	229	Elsie J. Wood	221	Maggie Rogerson	213
Nancy Brown	229	Bessie Freeman	220	Charles Brown	212
Winnie Bicker	228	Leslie Hall	220	Eric Lodge	212
David Coutie	228	Ian R. Millar	220	Muriel Lodge	212
Kathleen Phillips	228	John Barrows	219	Richard H. Tozer	212
Margaret H. Smith	228	Dorothea Clarkson	219	Edith T. Cann	211
Frank W. Tydeman	228	Philip T. Drew	219	Joan Caws	211
Annie Balmforth	227	Reggie Gardner	219	Freda Tebbett	211
John Davidson	227	Margery Osborne	219	Mabel Pontin	210
Bessie B. Noakes	226	Kathleen McMorran	218	Nellie R. Railton	210
Olive Swindell	226	Arthur J. Pridham	218	George Wheatcroft	209
Frank Burtenshaw	225	Charlie Millar	217	Frank M. Knappett	207
Ronald Lawrence	225	Arthur Hopwood	216	C. William Morton	207
May Paul	225	Dorothy M. Pridham	216	Ethel Roberts	207
Gertrude E. Smith	225	Eric A. E. Robertson	216	Ethel Hopwood	205
Gertrude Taylor	225	Bernard H. Sigrist	216	John Barratt	204
Kathleen Tipler	224	Ernest Smith	216	Jack K. Hill	204
George M. Brodie	223	Dorothy S. Wilmot	216	Claud Cracknell	202
A. Mary Morton	223	Ada Dalton	215	Nora Butler	199
Kathleen Parkes	223	Grace E. Kendrick	215	Lily E. Armstrong	197
Charis M. Bazlinton	222	Jessie Brown	214	Leonard Broom	196
Leslie J. Coward	222	Arthur C. Cann	214	James Mackie	196
Robert W. Ireland	222	Cyril F. P. Haughton	214	Peggie Richardson	196
Margaret E. Smart	222	Walter Kaye	214	Winifred M. Armstrong	195
Albert Tipler	222	Nora Partidge	214	Mary McCormack	195
Ivy A. Gardner	221	Kathleen M. Relf	214	Mary C. Sage	190
Leslie Moffatt	221	Tom Smart	214	Leslie Jessup	182

Searchers under 10 years of age (maximum 156 marks).

Lena Butler	156	Daniel Sargent	154	Stephen J. Knappett	150
Elsie Holmes	156	Joseph Shedden	154	Theo Morton	150
John Bryson	155	Mary M. Cann	153	Irene G. Relf	150
Tom B. Lewis	155	Leonard J. Moore	153	Joe Smart	150
Mary Simmons	155	Laura Coldrick	152	Grace Tebbett	148
Ruth Taylor	155	Raymond Coldrick	152	David A. S. Brodie	147
Maggie Coutie	154	Dorothy Jenkinson	152	Cecil Paul	145
Frank L. Dixon	154	Lancelot Railton	152	Marion Brown	144
John S. Pugh	154	Charles E. M. Ware	152	Helen Richardson	143
Essie A. Reid	154	Marion Ireland	151	Harry Hopwood	138
Tom Reid	154	David A. Smith	151	Catherine Pontin	137

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Esther M. Holt (U.S.A.)	(10 sets) 192		

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Emily G. L. Goddin (N.Z.)	(12 sets) 232	Alan E. Lambert (Jamaica)	(10 sets) 186
Winifred Bradley (N.Z.)	(12 sets) 230	Salvador Basi (Spain)	(10 sets) 180
Alice M. Goddin (N.Z.)	(12 sets) 225	Teresa Sabate (Spain)	(9 sets) 144
Filip Johanson-Asfalt (U.S.A.)	(10 sets) 194	Angela Jové (Spain)	(10 sets) 139
Hannah Fracy (Canada)	(10 sets) 186		

Searchers under 10 years of age (maximum 156 marks for 12 Sets of Answers).

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Winnie McPeake (N.Z.)	(12 sets) 142	John Lambert (Jamaica)	(9 sets) 115
Ruth Holt (U.S.A.)	(10 sets) 129	Jose Basi (Spain)	(8 sets) 105

Matthew did not ask them, and if he had they would have despised the invitation. He asked those who, like himself, were sinners and wanted a Saviour.

What a day it was for them when they accepted the invitation and sat down to table with Jesus! Light and salvation were there for them in the Person of this blessed Son of man, who came "to seek and to save that which was lost."

A. M. S.



Was he the Lord's?

SUDDENLY, without warning, he had been taken. He was young and strong, and no one thought he would die so quickly. He had been brought up in a christian home; he had heard the gospel many times; but he had never confessed the Lord, and no one knew whether he was ready. Now he has gone, and his christian friends are asking, "Was he the Lord's?" His precious soul has passed into eternity, and the one thing that matters is, was he the Lord's? Were his sins forgiven? Was he cleansed by the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son? Had he bowed to the Lord and thus belonged to Him as one of the redeemed?

He has gone, but you, dear young reader, are still here. Had it been you instead, would your dear ones have known how it fared with your soul? Have you ever confessed the Lord? Are you trusting in the Lord Jesus and resting on His finished work for salvation? If so, tell your friends what great things the Lord hath done for you and glorify His name by confessing Him as your Lord.

ANON.



A WORD FOR TO-DAY.

"When they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober." (1 Thess. v. 3, 6.)

Old Charlotte:

OR,

A LIFE AND ITS LESSONS.

CHAPTER III.

THE NEW HOME.

ABOUT eight miles from Harstead, in a pretty wooded part of the country, lies the little village of Branstone, where Charlotte's aunt and uncle lived.

Upon hearing the news of Mrs. Trent's death, they at once began to consider what it was best to arrange for the children; and after consulting other relatives it was at last decided that Charlotte and Charlie should live with their aunt and uncle at Branstone and that another aunt, a nurse in a family at Felhurst, should help towards the expense of keeping and educating them.

So it came about that before they had time to miss their dear mother's presence in the old home, Charlotte and Charlie were both taken from it.

As there were no railways in that part of the country in those days we can picture the two little orphans being driven away in a country cart down the familiar street and over the bridge and river; then up the steep hill out of the town and along the pretty country road lined with tall over-hanging trees; jog, jog, jog, further away from the old home; jog, jog, jog, nearer and nearer the new strange home; passing over the wild Pedley Marsh into the quaint little town of Oldhurst; then down the shady lanes for four miles, through Hazelford village, and after a few more turns the old horse stops before their uncle's cottage in the old-fashioned village of Branstone.

How strange and lonely these little ones must have felt that first night in their new home after their long drive! and how they must have longed for their mother's goodnight kiss when at last, worn out with the excitement of the day, they lay down to rest! Possibly hot tears were shed as they fell asleep—tears to be dried before the morning light, when with childish forgetfulness they would both have risen full of their usual prankish ways, surprising their aunt and uncle with their high spirits.

It was not to be all sunshine in their little lives; they were sorely to miss their mother's love—for who can take the place of a good mother? A child has the right to its parents' love and home, and sad indeed it is when a child loses both.

But there is a home in heaven and there is a heart—the heart of Jesus—where every child may find a place.

This Friend and this home belong to every

one whose sins are washed away through faith in the precious blood of Jesus. Jesus is the Friend of little children. He is God's Son.

How wonderful to have a right to the heavenly home and to such a Father as God, who says, "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you." (Isa. lxvi. 13.)

He is a very rich Father, and when little Charlotte was older she learned how rich He is, and how pitiful He is, for "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him." (Psa. ciii. 13.)

Charlotte had many hard lessons to learn as the years went by; she did not always please her aunt; her naturally frolicsome ways tried the poor woman, who doubtless looked back with regret to the quiet days before the children arrived and besieged her propriety. Nor do we doubt that little Charlotte often wished her mother were still alive who understood her childish ways; for although she seemed sometimes to be very naughty, there was generally a good deal of mischief underlying her actions.

For instance, one day her aunt sent Charlotte to the baker's to buy some bread; she gave her some money, telling her to be careful with the change. So to be literally obedient, after buying the bread, the mischievous child carefully swallowed the sixpence change!

And if her aunt punished her for this, she surely needed the correction. Much sorrow is often brought about by a small thing done in "fun"; a little step taken in the wrong direction—"just for fun." But perhaps the "fun" caused pain or loss to others. There is plenty of happiness to be enjoyed without anything wrong being done even "for fun." "Be thou in the fear of the Lord all the day long." (Prov. xxiii. 17.)

Charlotte was older than Charlie and therefore it was her duty to set him a good example. Poor Charlie! he was constantly in trouble with his aunt through his tiresome ways. But what boy does not throw stones, chase the cat, walk in puddles, tear his clothes by climbing trees, and above all, "forget" that he is forbidden to do them all? And what aunt is not aggravated by all these ways? But, after all, boys will be boys; Charlie tried his aunt's patience greatly, and yet she was perhaps rather hard upon him and a little too strict.

Charlie found his comfort in Charlotte. She loved and understood him more than any one else did; he knew it and clung to her.

At last one day, being more tiresome than usual, his aunt was extremely angry with him, and the poor little boy was so very miserable and unhappy in consequence, that, in his fear and misery, he ran away altogether!

Imagine then the hue and cry at the cottage and all over the village when the news spread that Charlie Trent was lost!

His sister was full of grief and his aunt's heart

beat fast with dread as hour after hour the search for her little nephew continued in vain.

Nothing could be seen or heard of him; no trace could be found anywhere in barns, houses, gardens, hedges, woods, nor along the high-road—for the poor little fellow had taken refuge in a wheat field, trusting to the tall golden stalks to hide him from his foes.

Not till day was over and all were weary with watching and searching did some one light upon the wheat field and spy the little figure in its hiding place.

And Charlotte's tears were dried when Charlie came home, and how glad she must have been that the wheat stalks were not a safe refuge for him in his trouble!

There is a safer refuge from trouble for little children than the sheltering stalks in a wheat field: it is one where no foes can follow. If you walk through the standing corn you will leave a track behind you, so that a passer-by can trace your footsteps. Charlie doubtless did not think of this when he took refuge beneath those tall friendly stalks.

The safest refuge and a secret one from all foes and troubles is in God Himself. How often, instead of going to Him for safety or help, we take means to find ways of escape by which we only find ourselves in worse troubles. We should go to God in our trouble; He is a sure Refuge and "a very present help in trouble" (Psa. xli.), and here we shall find the "path which no fowl knoweth." (Job xxviii. 7.)

Perhaps if Charlotte and Charlie had known more about the sure Refuge in Jesus and His love the little boy would not have run away from his aunt, and had he tried to please the Lord Jesus in all his ways there would have been less reason for him to fear her.

But the days were not always cloudy ones, for when they succeeded in pleasing their aunt everything went quite smoothly and they were then happy as most of the children in the village; we can readily believe that Charlotte was a great favourite among the others, for she was always so unselfish and willing and bright.

There was nothing, perhaps, that she liked better than to go to the Great House, which she occasionally did on some errand. There she saw the beautiful garden with its pretty flower-beds and smooth lawns; and inside were the spotless kitchens and smart servants and maids busy at their work or chatting at their leisure; and possibly Charlotte looked forward to the time when she, too, would wear a pretty white apron and cap and be earning some wages.

And the time came only too quickly when it had to be decided how she and Charlie were to support themselves. First one thing, then another was suggested—but finally, by the time Charlotte was fourteen, it was arranged that she should go as a nursery-maid to her aunt serving in a family at Felhurst; she was the

same aunt who had helped to support her and Charlie since their mother's death.

And Charlie was apprenticed at a workshop in Harstead.

So their childhood was over, with all its joys and sorrows; and leaving them all behind Charlotte drove away from her uncle's cottage, carrying with her bright hopes for the unknown life before her.

CHAPTER IV

IN SERVICE.

DOUBTLESS Charlotte felt a very important little person the first time that she walked into the nursery in her coveted cap, apron and new print dress.

A neat, pleasing little figure she looked and no child was likely to turn away from her sweet face. Her gentle, merry ways won all the children's hearts and they loved her at once. She was soon the life of her aunt's nursery, entering into the children's games or joys and sorrows as *only Charlotte* could—for she had been well trained through having had the care of her motherless little brother.

She was "*only the nursery maid!*" in that large and busy household—but, whether nursery maid or not, she had a heart and a soul and was not unconscious of being a lonely stranger in the house; for although she was with her aunt, she did not know her well and, beside the work, had very little in common with her.

But there was One watching over her who is the "Father of the fatherless." (Psa. lxxviii. 5.) He now, in her loneliness, away from Charlie, began to speak to her heart, that she might know and find comfort in Him and His love—His eternal love. God has many ways by which He makes Himself known. Charlotte had learned something of His love at Branstone and knew, too, that she had not always pleased Him in her ways. As she grew older she had begun to realise how holy God is, and how sinful she must be in His sight; so it now came about that every now and then, though very happy in her work and with her little charges, she would be found weeping. And when asked what made her cry, she said it was because of her sins which made her unhappy; she was not sure that they were forgiven. But she found no sympathy in the large and busy household; they laughed at her and thought her a "foolish girl."

That was a great mistake, because "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of *wisdom*." (Prov. ix. 10.) However, she would soon dry her tears and forget her trouble for a time, enjoying games at "Hide and Seek" in the woods with the children and taking a keen interest in all their pursuits as well as her own duties.

(To be continued.)

Bible Searchings.

The "Searchings" are to increase acquaintance with the Holy Scriptures. Answers to be sent to THE EDITOR, F. Shedden, Bryn Awelon, Flint Mountain, Flint, North Wales, not later than the 15th of this month, **with envelopes marked "Searchings" in top left-hand corner.** Age, and full name and address to be given.

Searchers 10 years of age and under 14, omit Nos. 5 and 7.

Searchers 14 years of age and over, answer all the eight.

1. In Luke v. we read of a sick man let down through a roof in a bed before Jesus. What was he suffering from?

2. (a) Had he any soul trouble—was he a sinner? (b) What was the first thing Jesus said to him?

3. In Luke vii. we read of a woman going into a house where Jesus was. (a) Did she want to get near Him? (b) She "was a sinner"; "she is a sinner"; "her sins . . . are many" Where are these words found?

4. The Lord said many things *about* her, but only three things *to* her. What were the three things?

5. (a) What two things did the Lord say should be preached in His name among all nations? (Luke xxiv.) (b) Beginning where? (c) Quote two or three sentences from Acts iii. describing the guilt of Jerusalem.

6. (a) What did God do with the One they had killed? (Acts v.) (b) What did he exalt Him for? (Acts v.)

7. (a) What do we read in Acts x. about "remission of sins"? (b) Who is speaking here? (c) Whom is he addressing?

8. "A Saviour, Jesus." (a) Where do these words occur? (Acts xii. or xiii.) (b) Who is the speaker? (c) What does he say is preached "through this man"?

Searchers under 10 years of age.

Complete and write out in full the following passages:—

1. "I, even..... Saviour." (Isa. xliii.)

2. "I am..... me." (Isa. xlv., part of a verse.)

3. "For I..... like me." (Isa. xlv., part of a verse.)

4. "I am he..... last." (Isa. xlviii., part of a verse.)

(Book, chapter and verse to be given in each case.)



Youthful Days.



Some Good Deeds and the Blessing that followed.

THERE are recorded in the Bible certain good deeds which brought great blessing to the doers, as well as to others connected with them. They were all done by people of their own accord; there was no compulsion. Nobody said, "You must do that." Those who did them were quite ordinary persons, and the deeds were very simple and quickly accomplished. But, above all, the deeds were *good*, and for that reason they are well worth thinking about, if only for a short time.

John the Baptist saw our Lord walking, and said, "Behold the Lamb of God." Two of his disciples heard this, and left their master to follow our Lord. But one of them, named Andrew, went first of all to his brother Peter, and said, "We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ." (John i. 41.) This act of Andrew's was a *good deed*. The Jews for many a long year had been expecting a Deliverer or Saviour to come from God to bless and help them, and they spoke to one another of this Person by the name of the Messias, or anointed One. Andrew had at last found Him, and had been invited to spend the day with Him; but he did not want to keep our Lord all to himself, and felt he must let his brother Simon know the good news. This did not prevent Andrew getting a blessing, for no sincere person could possibly be in our Lord's company without receiving one. But Simon also got a blessing, for our Lord gave him, to begin with, a new name—Peter. Andrew loved his brother and told him the good news. Our Lord loved Peter, and then Peter began to love Him, which is the greatest blessing that can be given to any one. Afterwards Peter saw many

wonderful and great sights, and had several hard lessons to learn and bitter tears to shed. But he was "kept" through all, and wrote two letters about some of these things to his fellow Christians. These letters are in the Bible, and multitudes of people—who can say how many!—have been blessed by reading them. The happy results of Andrew's good deed have spread far and wide.

Ruth, the Moabitess, loved Naomi, her mother-in-law. She persisted in returning with her to Bethlehem, in spite of persuasion to go back to her own relations. Her only reason for going to Bethlehem was that she loved Naomi and chose her God. This was Ruth's good deed, an action done in simple love without any thought of the future. At Bethlehem she found a husband, Boaz; and God blessed Ruth and her husband and Naomi by giving her a son. But more than this, her son was the grandfather of David, the man chosen by God to be king over Israel. When David came to the throne the country was poor and oppressed, but before he died it was happy and prosperous. But more even than this. Our Lord was born into the family of Joseph (Matt. i. 16), and if you look through the list of his ancestors, Ruth is expressly mentioned by name. What an honour for her to be mentioned in the genealogy of our Lord and Saviour.

In answer to earnest prayer God gave Hannah a son. (1 Sam. i.) When the child was but two or three years old, the mother gave him back to God by taking him to the tabernacle and leaving him there. Every year the family came up to worship, and each time Hannah brought a little coat for Samuel, who served Eli, the aged high priest. God blessed Hannah by giving her five more children. When Samuel grew up he became a judge in Israel, and God helped him to turn the Israelites away from their idols; and



Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord: peace in heaven, and glory in the highest.

when he prayed for the people God heard his prayer, and delivered them from the Philistines. (1 Sam. vii. 9, 10.) The happy consequences of Hannah's good deed of love to God were very great.

A Pharisee invited our Lord to dinner, but not thinking very much of Him gave Him a half-hearted welcome. A poor sinful woman came into the room apparently with others who were not guests. She thought very much more of our Lord than the Pharisee. She had with her a box, or pot, of precious ointment. She stood behind our Lord, washed his feet with her tears, wiped them with her hair, kissed them, and anointed them with the ointment. The Pharisee could not understand why our Lord allowed this; but these wonderful words were spoken which explain everything, "Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much." There was no hiding of her guilt, but love prompted her to this great and good deed, and she was sent away in peace by our Lord. We do not know her name, or even the name of the city where this took place; nor do we know what became of the woman afterwards. She received a blessing from our Lord Himself, that is certain; and we are equally certain that her example has led multitudes of sinners like herself, men and women, to the same Saviour; and each one has heard Him say, "Thy sins are forgiven." When our Lord comes to open his "jewel case" (Mal. iii. 17) we shall know the number of this multitude, but not till then.

Each one of these beautiful and good deeds were done by persons who loved God or our Lord Jesus, and that is why the results were so great and so blessed.



Matthew.—No. 26.

CHAPTER IX. 14.

WE were speaking last time of the kind of people that Jesus drew to Himself when He was in this world.

They were not the self-righteous Phari-

sees nor the learned scribes. If such people had wished to follow Jesus they would have been as kindly received by Him as any others, but they thought they did not need a Saviour.

Those whom Jesus called to follow Him were people who felt that a Saviour was just the kind of Friend they did want, for they were sick, and poor, and helpless folk; or publicans and sinners like Matthew, who when they heard that God had sent Jesus all the way from heaven to save His people from their sins, said, "This is good news for us, for we are sinners, without any hope of ever seeing God or His beautiful home of peace and love." So the poor, and sick, and helpless, and the publicans and sinners, came to Jesus that they might be saved by Him.

That was the wonderful way in which "God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself." He was making friends with this poor world by sending Jesus into it.

Jesus never said to any one who came to Him, "You wicked man, go and get good before you come to Me." Oh, no; that was not His way of telling God's good news.

What was His way?

He held out His hands to all, and when any came to Him they found nothing but mercy and forgiveness.

Jesus stretched out His hands to the vilest, to those whom men would not like to look at or to speak to, and said, "Be thou clean," "Be thou well," "Thy sins be forgiven thee"—for He freely forgave all.

God was making friends with sinners because Jesus was going to save them from their sins, but all men did not believe in His goodness, and so instead of coming to Him they hid their faces from Him, they despised Him, and esteemed Him not, so they could not see the beauty that was in all His ways of love.

The disciples of John came to ask Jesus why His disciples did not fast as they did. Jesus gave them a remarkable answer. He said people who were invited

to a wedding feast did not fast or look sad; no more could His disciples as long as He was with them; but when He should be taken away from them, then they would fast, because they had no longer the Bridegroom with them.

Why did Jesus call Himself the Bridegroom?

Because He was going to have a bride.

You remember how God gave a bride to the first man; Eve was made for Adam.

Now Jesus was here on earth as God's second man, the last Adam, and He was going to have a bride.

These same publicans and sinners upon whom He had mercy were to be among those who should be His bride. He was drawing them to Himself by all the ways of love, attaching their hearts to Himself as He went about among them, so that their feeling towards Him was like that of a bride, who could only love and trust and cling to the great One who had done everything for her.

Jesus had come to be Israel's King, and as Son of David to sit on David's throne—but He was rejected even from the moment when His star was seen in the east, giving token of His coming. Then this blessed heavenly Stranger said He would still be Son of man, and would bless every child of man that came to Him, and He would make those whom He thus received related to Him, in the nearest and dearest way. A man loves his wife as himself, so Jesus called Himself the Bridegroom of those who followed Him, when His own people to whom He came did not receive Him.

The lesson the Lord was teaching was that it was not God's way to mend what was old, but to give something quite new in its place. He also said it would not do to put new wine into old wine-skins, lest both wine and skins should be spoiled. In eastern countries when a bottle is wanted for holding water or wine the skin of a goat is used, but when these leather bottles are old and dry they will not stretch to make room for the wine, which, when it has just been made, expands and will burst the skin and run

out. It was a parable to make John's disciples understand that God would put the "new wine" of His grace into bottles made new to receive it. He would have vessels suited for the new blessing which came when Jesus came. "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."

People often try to put a little patch of grace on to the old coat of law, but it only makes the old coat worse, for man cannot keep the good law that God gave by Moses. The more earnestly we try to keep it, the more we find that we are not able to do so. When God told Moses what His people were to do, the first commandment which He gave them was to love Him with all their hearts. Have you ever tried to do that?

There never was any one in the world who kept this first commandment until the Lord Jesus Christ came. He alone loved God with all His heart. You have never kept the first commandment written in God's holy law; and if you cannot keep the first, what about all the rest?

But what is the "new wine" of which the Lord spoke? It is the new power that fills the new vessel.

What is the difference between the "old" wine and the "new"—that is, between the law given to Moses and the grace and truth that Jesus brought?

The law said: "*You must love God.*"

Grace and truth say; "*God loves you.*"

Love was not known in the world until Jesus brought it here from heaven. It was a new thing, and men did not understand it, and as its sweetness dropped from Him upon all He touched down here, the crowds wondered, and said, "What is it?"

They were like the Israelites in the desert, they gathered the crumbs of sweet manna that God scattered round their tents, but they did not know the God who sent it. Yet it was food for them, and we may find food for our hearts and minds in thinking of the lovely ways of Jesus. Every thought about Him will make us love Him more and more, for we love Him because He first loved us.

A. M. S.

The Christian's Desire.

"That CHRIST shall be magnified in MY BODY."

FIXED HEART—

My heart is fixed, O God. (Psa. lvii. 7.)

CONTROLLED THOUGHTS—

Bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. (2 Cor. x. 5.)

SINGLE EYE—

When thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light. (Luke xi. 34.)

ATTENTIVE EARS—

He that hath ears to hear, let him hear. (Matt. xi. 15.)

PRAISING LIPS—

My lips shall utter praise. (Psa. cxix. 171.)

CLEAN HANDS—

Who shall stand in His holy place? He that hath clean hands. (Psa. xxiv. 3, 4.)

SHOD FEET—

Your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. (Eph. vi. 15.)

Old Charlotte:

OR,
A LIFE AND ITS LESSONS.

CHAPTER IV.

IN SERVICE (*continued*).

BUT the news which reached her of Charlie often made her anxious; he had not taken to his work at Harstead, and after a while he threw it up altogether, and to poor Charlotte's sorrow, went off to sea as a sailor lad. She would often think of her brother far away on the ocean, and doubtless this drew her thoughts to God in heaven, and when kneeling by her bedside at night she would pray that he might return safely home again.

The holidays spent at Branstone were spoiled if Charlie was absent: but she found it very delightful to see all the old friends again and to have "nothing to do," even if Charlie was not there.

Then changes came. The *children* grew, and the *little girls* were soon *young ladies*. Then it was arranged that Charlotte should be their maid; and when one of them was married she took Charlotte away with her.

But Charlotte was not with her long; a baby arrived, and a nurse was wanted instead of a maid. So Charlotte returned to Felhurst and took a situation as under-housemaid in the house of two maiden ladies.

It was a comfortable, happy and suitable situation for Charlotte. Her mistress liked her and gave her plenty of liberty, and fortunately Charlotte *tried* to use her privileges wisely by devoting some of her time to religious things (so-called). For about this time she had decided to try to please God by *outward observances*, especially with regard to keeping Sunday and attending "religious services." And in this way she hoped to obtain peace and pardon for her sins. With this object in view she "strove hard to be perfect" as she would say.

But, alas! she found it a very hard strife, and she found, too, that she constantly forgot her resolutions. Like the Apostle Paul, of whom we read in Romans vii., she could say, "What I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I . . . the good that I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do."

She had yet to find that only through the Lord Jesus could she win the fight and be an overcomer.

Her mistress and her sister being very attached to their "little Charlotte," as they called her, decidedly spoilt her; consequently she sometimes stepped out of her place, forgot that she was a servant in the house and took liberties.

Being very happy, Charlotte was often carried away by her high spirits, and although outwardly religious, her ways were not always such as to please God.

On one occasion she was naughty enough to peep into her mistress' private diary. Her eyes fell upon her own name, and she read a description of "little Charlotte," her neat clothes and pleasing ways. The kindly tone of the words shamed the stealthy thief, who wished, too late, that she had not stolen the knowledge of her mistress' good opinion, which she now knew she did not deserve.

There are more ways than one of stealing. We can steal with our eyes, ears, hands and by other means. Charlotte had stolen knowledge with her eyes, and this gave her a bad conscience.

In the grounds around the house there grew some beautiful filbert trees, and when the nuts were ripe, Dickson, the gardener, gathered and stored them away for the winter.

Now Charlotte was very fond of nuts, and it was not very long before she discovered Dickson's tempting store; probably it was when sent by cook to the potting-shed to ask for some parsley or onions; and one day, seeing how proud he was of them, she mischievously began helping herself, and this she did whenever she had the chance.

But Dickson objected to having his filberts eaten. They were disappearing far too quickly and he guessed the cause.

So one day, with a broad smile on his face, he went to a heap of capsicums and taking up some handfuis he very cautiously mixed them with the filberts.

"There! we'll see how she likes *them*!"

Dickson knew the potting-shed was too dark for Charlotte to see the difference between the filberts and the capsicums.

It was not long after that he spied Charlotte tripping down the garden; coming to the shed she went to his store of filberts, and putting in her hand drew out a capsicum!

Dickson was watching, but said nothing; he hoped she would cry out when her mouth began to burn; but seeing the trick, Charlotte quietly put the capsicum in her mouth, and stood before him eating it as though she vastly preferred capsicums to filberts.

Then off she ran back to the house, as *though* she cared for nothing—but in reality *she had learned*, by Dickson's reproof, *a lesson for life*.

For Dickson was right and Charlotte was wrong, and she knew it.

The nuts were entrusted to Dickson's care by his mistress, and he knew they were neither for him nor for Charlotte to eat. Neither would Charlotte have taken them had her mistress been standing by.

Sometimes we forget, or perhaps do not know, that in the Bible we are told not to *furlain*. "Exhort servants to be obedient unto their

own masters, and to please them well in all things; not answering again; *not purloining, but shewing all good fidelity*; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things." (Titus ii. 9, 10.)

¶ To purloin is to take what is not strictly ours, but what is not absolutely or literally forbidden us to have. Purloining is often a snare to people, and to refuse it shews a great sense of honour; and Charlotte afterwards became an example in fidelity to those about her. In her youthful fun and frolics she sometimes forgot to do right or neglected to do it; she failed in her duty, not only to man but also towards God.

Thus her conscience was not at rest, and in her quiet moments, serious thoughts *would* arise, making her feel that all was not right between her soul and God.

And God, in His love, was drawing her heart to Himself, and shewing her how unable she was to please Him without His help.

Again the years went quickly by, bringing new work for Charlotte and news, too, of Charlie's safe return from sea.

Charlotte's new work was to be a lady's maid again, and the change in her life came about by her wilfully leaving the two good ladies, who were very sorry to lose her.

Charlotte regretted the step for the rest of her life, saying, when she referred to it:—

"There! I always think I made a mistake in my life when I left *that* situation!"

However, although this may have been true, our heavenly Father was overruling all, that she might, by the difficulties which came through her mistake, learn more of Himself.

As lady's maid Charlotte shone. She thoroughly enjoyed the life, especially when travelling in the rumbles of the stage coaches, putting up on the road at the inns and hotels, and arriving at different country and town houses with all the flutter of fresh and welcomed arrivals. Although some railways had by this time been built in the country, there were very few of them and Charlotte's people generally travelled by coach.

On one occasion she went to Italy with a lady and gentleman on their wedding tour. By the time Rome was reached, Charlotte was feeling very far from well. This was in consequence of her continual fasting; for as a fresh means of pleasing God, she had taken to going without her necessary food. After struggling to keep on with her duties for a time, she was obliged to take to her bed, being in much pain. A doctor was sent for, who pronounced her seriously ill, and ordered her every possible care.

It distressed Charlotte that her young mistress should have no one to wait upon her; but her mind was soon relieved when, as soon as she was out of danger, it was arranged that, as the

time of their visit to Rome was over, Captain and Mrs. M— should return home and leave Charlotte in charge of the good doctor until she was well enough to follow them.

Consequently, while still on her bed and very ill, poor Charlotte was left alone in that strange country with no loving friends near to soothe or nurse her during the long weary days of suffering.

¶ However, there was One who knew all about it—all about her suffering and all about the cause of her illness; and in the solitude of that room in a large foreign hotel, God spoke to her heart and drew her nearer to Himself.

As she lay there alone, in that great religious city He made her think more continuously of Him, the lowly Jesus, who, as such, is so much forgotten. And like many others when in trouble, she made many good resolutions for the future, should she recover. She also decided to give up fasting. But she did not trouble to become perfectly sure that her sins were forgiven and to know that she had "peace with God." So she still remained in doubt and without rest for her soul.

She had not yet laid her weary head upon Jesus' breast. She had not come to *Him*. She did not search the scriptures, which *He tells us to do*, "for," said He, "they are they which testify of me." (John v. 39.) "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."

In a few weeks Charlotte was quite well and strong again, and with all her old spirits returning she journeyed back to England full of fresh life and ready for work once more.

On returning to her mistress she was soon busy with her duties, sewing, packing and preparing for long journeys to town and country.

Charlotte was well known and a great favourite in the servants' halls at the different houses which her mistress visited all over the country. She entered into all the amusements with great spirit, and little by little her thoughts of God became fewer again and, alas! at times He was almost forgotten.

The pleasures of this world were still choking the good seed and it was not yet fruitful. (Mark iv. 7.)

But she was not always spending her time in country houses and travelling about with her mistresses.

For some time she had been maid to a lady in very delicate health—the wife of Mr. James. She gradually became weaker and Charlotte remained to help with the nursing; and Charlotte's nursing made illness almost a pleasure. Many bright hours were spent in the sick room, where all that love and money could give was lavished upon the beautiful sufferer. But the last sad day came, when, with a loving farewell to her two pretty little girls and their father,

Mrs. James passed away from this world—from time into eternity.

Shortly after his wife's death, Mr. James thought it advisable to make alterations in his household arrangements; he needed a capable woman to undertake the housekeeping entirely. He did not wish to part with Charlotte, to whom his wife had been so attached; so, after due consideration, he suggested that Charlotte should be the housekeeper and superintend the cooking, and thus relieve her master of all domestic worries.

But, alas! Charlotte knew nothing about cooking. "But I will learn to cook!" she said, and at once bought a cookery book, and with that and the help of the French manservant in the house, she soon mastered the art to perfection; for love makes no difficulties—but quickly overcomes them. She loved her master and his family; nothing seemed too much to do for them.

Many happy years passed by; but the earthly happiness which she enjoyed was choking "the good seed," so that it was not yet fruitful. She was becoming more worldly again and more forgetful of God. A great favourite with the family and among her fellow-servants and others in the neighbourhood, she was gradually settling on her lees in the waters of this world, and Satan was not displeased.

She was now earning good wages and able to save money; good news came from time to time from Charlie, who had given up seafaring and had settled at Branston. And with a fair sky above and a calm sea around she fell asleep—asleep as to eternal realities.

Our enemy, Satan, knows only too well how to turn our hearts from God and to hush our souls to sleep.

But God is stronger than any enemy and His love is changeless and eternal. In His love to Charlotte He now sent dark clouds across her sky and a strong wind which presently awoke her from sleep; the waves soon arose and drove her to safety before she had time to sink in the sea.

For changes came. When his two young daughters had completed their education, Mr. James decided to give up housekeeping in order that he and his daughters might be free to travel abroad.

It was a sad day for Charlotte when she heard the news that her services would no longer be needed in that happy home. It was the first appearing of clouds in her sky and the wind blew fiercely on the day when at last the sad partings came. She had to learn that however much we may love those with whom we live we cannot count upon remaining with them for ever. The partings and good-byes have to come sooner or later, in one way or another. There is only one Friend from whom there is no parting and that is Jesus—God—

He is always near, and His love cannot die. (Heb. xiii. 8.)

Charlotte knew about Him and of His love, but she had not yet found Him and did not know Him as her own Saviour. She could not yet say, "He is my Saviour 'who loved me, and gave himself for me.'" (Gal. ii. 20.)

(To be continued.)

Bible Searchings.

The "Searchings" are to increase acquaintance with the Holy Scriptures. Answers to be sent to THE EDITOR, F. Shedden, Bryn Awelon, Flint Mountain, Flint, North Wales, not later than the 15th of this month, **with envelopes marked "Searchings" in top left-hand corner.** Age, and full name and address to be given.

Searchers 10 years of age and under 14, omit Nos. 7 and 8.

Searchers 14 years of age and over, answer all the eight.

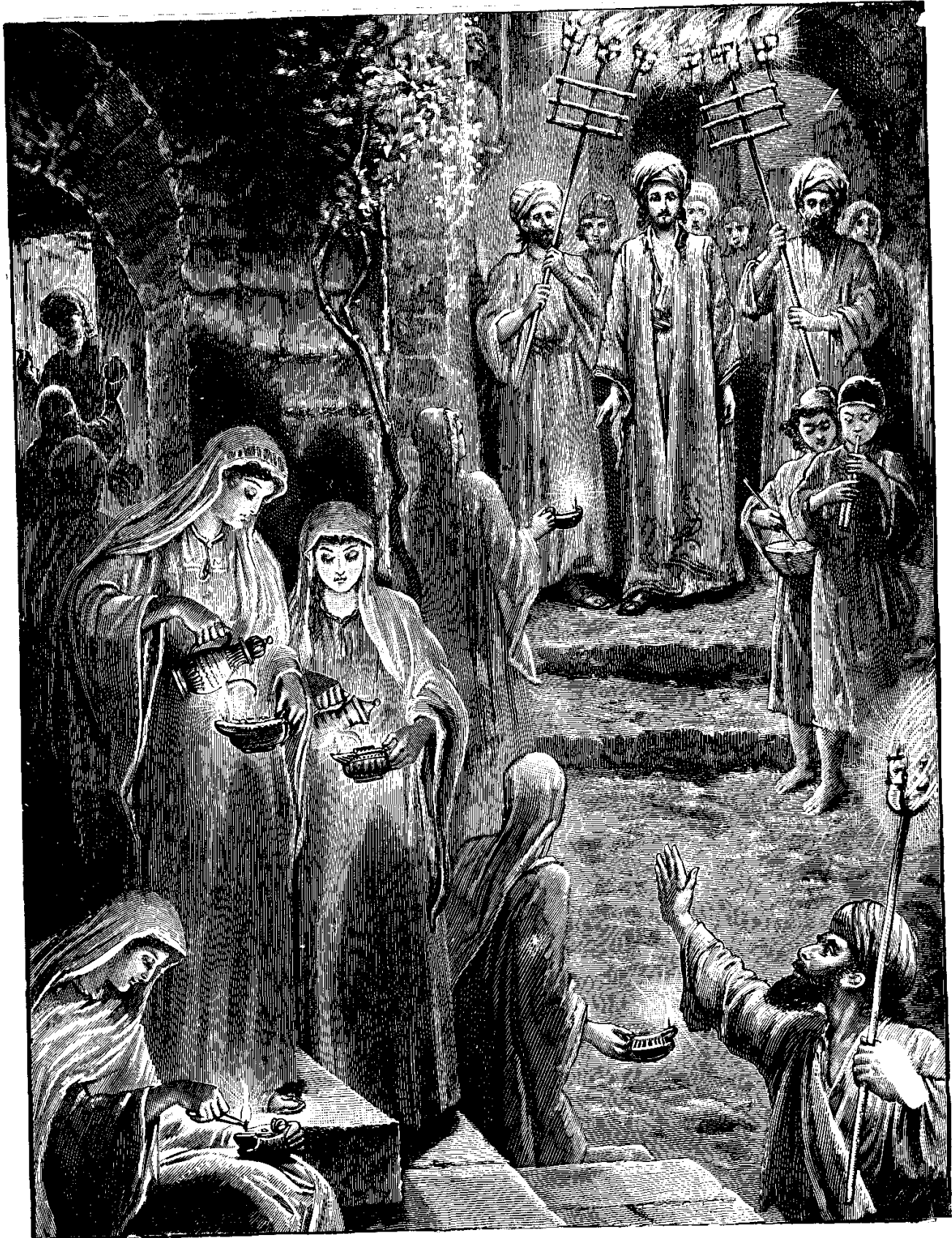
1. To what are "all our righteousnesses" likened in Isaiah lxiv.?
2. Where in Romans iii. is God's righteousness said to be for or "unto all"?
3. What does the same verse say as to the righteousness of God in regard to "all them that believe"?
4. "He hath covered me." (Isa. lx., lxi.)
(a) With what? (b) Who is the "He"?
5. (a) What kind of robe was put on the repentant sinner in Luke xv.? (b) Who ordered it to be put on?
6. (a) Did the son deserve such a garment?
(b) What did he himself say about his unworthiness?
7. "Not having mine own righteousness." (Phil. i.-iii.) (a) Who is speaking here? (b) What does he desire in preference to his own righteousness?
8. In Genesis ii. or iii. two sinners are seen standing "naked" and "afraid" in the presence of God. (a) Who are they? (b) Against whom had they sinned? Presently they are clothed. (c) Who clothed them? Quote the verse.

Searchers under 10 years of age.

Complete and write out in full the following passages:—

1. "And, behold..... last." (Luke xiii.)
 2. "For whosoever..... exalted." (Luke xiv.)
 3. "Likewise, I..... repenteth." (Luke xv.)
 4. "And he said..... thine." (Luke xv.)
- (Book, chapter and verse to be given in each case.)

Youthful Days.



Scripture Puzzle.

A puzzle I have made for you,
Of stories ten, divine and true ;
I therefore ask you to recall
A beast that figures in them all.

1. Beside a mount two men and he
Waited one day quite patiently,
When from their side two others went
To figure in a great event.
2. One day when trusted to his care
An aged father's treasure rare,
An unknown adjunct to his load
Did turn him backward on his road.
3. His voice was heard but once alone,
And then in stern, forbidding tone,
When, as the Holy Scripture saith,
He saved a wicked man from death.
4. A prophet once did speak his name
To one who to his city came ;
First on his doings he did dwell
Though he had wondrous things to tell.
5. He to one good and beautiful
Twice was a servant dutiful ;
First, when did woe her spouse betide ;
Then when a widow and a bride.
6. Sad circumstances once occurred
By which an awful lie he heard ;
Spoken by one who had refused
His aid to him he then abused.
7. There once arose from out his place
A man who scorned his sovereign's grace,
Who with this beast a journey sped
Which brought down judgment on his head.
8. He once kept watch by one who died,
A strange companion by his side ;
Then when his mournful watch did end
He journeyed homeward with a friend.
9. A stricken mother, sore distressed,
With breaking heart within her breast,
He brought to one whose power and love
Did her great cause of grief remove.
10. Our Lord when near His journey's end,
For this poor humble beast did send,
And on that one triumphant day
He served the Saviour on His way.

H. M. D.



Behold, the Bridgroom.

FOLLOWING an eastern custom, ten virgins went out with their lighted lamps to meet the bridegroom and escort him to his happy destination. As far as the outward appearance went they all looked alike, but it seems that five of them were thoughtful enough to carry an extra supply of oil, whilst the other five had not troubled about this important matter. But wise as well as foolish became weary of waiting for the bridegroom, who had been delayed for some reason or other. Night came on, it was getting late, and they all fell asleep. But, "at midnight there was a cry made, *Behold, the bridegroom cometh ; go ye out to meet him.*"

There was an immediate stir among the sleepers and they all arose and trimmed their lamps. Now the difference between the wise and foolish virgins was made plain, for the wise had oil enough to fill up their lamps and keep them going, but the lamps belonging to the foolish virgins

were going out and they had to go away to get some more oil.

In the meantime the bridegroom came along, and the five wise virgins, those who were *ready*, went in with him to the marriage ceremony and the door was *shut*.

The bridegroom was full of happiness at that time because he was going to be united to his bride, and he would be able to go on loving her always without any interruption.

But why all this interest in a wedding in a far-away land and in a time long ago? Who is this Bridgroom that is about to come? It is our Lord Jesus Christ! *Go ye out to meet Him.*

There were a few people, some of them very old, in the temple at Jerusalem long years ago. Their attention was directed to a Child only a few weeks old belonging to a man and woman in that group. In obedience to God's holy law the parents had come to offer a sacrifice. When the

ceremony was over an old man stepped up, took the Child in his arms, and blessed God, and said, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: for mine eyes have seen thy salvation." Like a lamp filled with oil and burning, that old man Simeon was filled with God's Holy Spirit, and knew that the Child he held was our Lord Jesus Christ. He had heard the midnight cry and saw the coming of the Bridegroom and went out to meet Him.

It is evident from the parable that the five virgins who had oil for their lamps were ready to meet the bridegroom, and go in to the marriage. The fact that they had the oil shewed their readiness. Now oil in scripture is a type of the Holy Spirit, and we should gather from this parable that only those who have the Spirit will be ready to meet our Lord when He returns, and go with Him. And it is also clear from the parable that His return will shew up those who are without the Spirit.

So that everything hangs upon whether we have the Spirit or not. But this is a matter that can very soon be settled. Persons who have the Spirit know that they have sinned against God. They believe, too, that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and look upon Him as their Lord and Master. They know that He shewed His love for them by dying on the cross for their sins, and they love Him too. Consequently they habitually speak or pray to our Lord and His Father, who is their Father as well, and desire to serve and follow Him. It is very simple, and all such people will immediately rise to meet our Lord when He comes, they will not be able to help doing so.

But the cry is, "Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye *out* to meet him"! There is much evil in the world, also much bitter sorrow, and everywhere there are men, women and children with hearts dark as midnight. To those who have the Spirit the call comes to go out, out to the dark hearts and places, fearlessly to tell of the great and glorious Lord who is coming.



Matthew.—No. 27.

CHAPTER IX. 18-25.

WHILE Jesus was speaking to the disciples of John, the chief man in the Jews' synagogue at Capernaum came to Him and fell at His feet, saying, "My daughter is even now dead: but come and lay thy hand upon her, and she shall live."

Jesus rose to go up with him, and so did His disciples. But as Jesus was on the way to the ruler's house, a sick woman came behind Him and touched the hem of His robe.

Why did she do that?

Because she had been very ill for twelve long years, and she said to herself, "If I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole."

What made her think so?

She saw something in Jesus that gave her confidence in His goodness; she noticed His ways of grace to the sinful and suffering people, and heard the kind words which He spoke to those who were hopeless and sorrowful, and she thought that ever such a little touch would draw out His mercy and power to heal her too.

I think this poor woman who trusted the Lord so simply was like those who speak in secret to God who hears in secret. He knows every desire of the heart that wants Him.

But did Jesus know that she had touched His clothes?

Oh! yes; nothing is hidden from Him. He turned round and looked at her and spoke to her.

Was He displeased with her for touching Him?

No; He called her "Daughter," and said, "Be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole"—and she was well, all the pain and sickness gone in a moment!

None of the doctors of Capernaum had been able to cure her dreadful illness, and as time went on she only got worse, but now all was changed. She had come to Jesus; her faith had touched Him, and His mercy touched her.

"What is faith?" perhaps you ask.

It is light from God which shews us something about God, and makes the heart understand that He is good. This sick woman's eyes could not see any reason for touching the Lord's robe; but the light that came from God into her heart made her believe that there was healing mercy in Jesus, and that it was for her. She could not have told any one why she gave that touch; her friends would not have understood her; but faith in Jesus made her say to herself, so that no one could hear her, "Jesus will heal me!" And she was right, for Jesus never disappoints those who trust in His goodness.

It is true that she did not deserve anything from the Lord, but still she believed that He was able to do her good, and that He was so willing to bless her, that she only needed to be near enough to Him to get His blessing.

Many in that crowd of people who were going with Jesus and His disciples to the ruler's house were pressing close around the Lord; many were touching Him, but the secret touch of one who had faith in Him opened His heart to her, and we may say—

"that feeble touch
Had cheered her Saviour's heart as much
As it had healed her own!"

When Jesus got to the house where the ruler's little girl was lying dead, it was full of noise and confusion, caused by the kind mourners who were beating their breasts and making loud lamentations, while some were playing flutes, as was the custom at funerals. But Jesus sent them all away, and said, "The maid is not dead, but sleepeth."

How sweetly that word must have sounded in the ear of the father and mother of the little girl!

But the poor ignorant and unbelieving people whom Jesus sent away, dared to laugh, as though they knew better than He—the Lord of Life in whose presence death could not stay!

When they had gone out of the room

where the child was lying so still and silent, Jesus went in and took her by the hand, and she arose. Her father's faith was answered; for he had said that if Jesus put His hand upon his little daughter she would live—and so she did; at His word she arose from her bed alive and well.

Jesus could say, "The maid is not dead, but sleepeth," for He alone has power to awake out of sleep—even out of the sleep of death. What a wonderful moment it was for that little girl when her eyes, which had been so fast closed, opened on her Saviour's face, and she felt herself held by His strong and tender hand! She could never forget it. Sometimes little children sing—

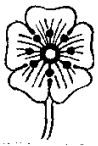
"I wish that His hand had been placed on my
head,
That His arms had been thrown around me."

But we must remember that though the Lord is now in heaven, He is as near to faith as He was to the poor sick woman who touched Him in the street of Capernaum, or to the child whom His voice and His touch brought back to life and health.

It is a very happy thought that Jesus has power to awake out of sleep even those who are sleeping in death. If those we love die, to us they are asleep; no word, no touch of ours can awake them. But the voice of Jesus can, and He will awake them one day. All who have been put to sleep by Him will awake at the sound of His voice, and their eyes will look upon Him in His bright glory. They will see His face, and live with Him for ever in that home of life and joy where death and sorrow are unknown.

From another of the gospels we know the very words which Jesus spoke when He took the ruler's little daughter by the hand. He said to her, "Talitha cumi," a common word of endearment in her own language, used by loving mothers to awaken their children.

"Talitha cumi!" The well-known word
Of tenderest greeting the maiden heard,
As Jesus bent o'er the little bed,
And laid His hands on the sleeper's head.



JEHOVAH—The LORD

Redemption.

Jehovah-jireh - The LORD will provide.

GENESIS XXII. 14.

Righteousness.

Jehovah-tsidkenu - The LORD our righteousness.

JEREMIAH XXIII. 6.

Peace.

Jehovah-shalom - The LORD is peace.

JUDGES VI. 24.

Salvation.

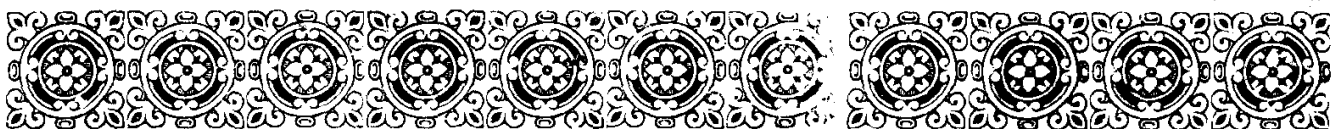
Jehovah-nissi - The LORD is my banner.

EXODUS XVII. 15.

Dwelling.

Jehovah-shammah The LORD is there.

EZEKIEL XLVIII. 35.



"Talitha cumi!" "My little lamb!"
At the gentle summons the spirit came,
And the power of death in the dust was laid,
When the Saviour spoke to the little maid.

"Talitha cumi!" The words of love
Will come to the sleeper from Christ above:
And the perfect love which can know no fear
Will answer with rapture the words so dear.

"Talitha cumi!" "Arise, my child!"
The way has been rough and the night been
wild;

But the morning has dawned of endless day,
Rise up, my fair one, and come away!"

"Talitha cumi!" We shall not fear
When the death-sleep ends with the words
we hear.

And the light of eternity breaks at last,
When the Saviour speaks as in days gone
past.

A. M. S.



Old Charlotte:

OR,

A LIFE AND ITS LESSONS.

CHAPTER V.

THE OLD, OLD STORY.

NOT long after leaving the service of Mr. James, Charlotte returned as lady's maid to her former mistress, Mrs. Monckton, whom she had left to give place to a nurse. This lady had been one of the children to whom Charlotte was nursery maid in her first situation.

But now that Mrs. Monckton's children were no longer in the nursery, their mother wished to have a personal maid again, and Charlotte was the chosen favourite, who very soon found herself again surrounded with every comfort and kindness, spoiled and petted by an indulgent mistress.

This was a great change after the busy, strenuous life she had been leading for so long. She must have greatly enjoyed sitting quietly at her needlework with time to *think* at last; but her thoughts would often travel back to the old days with a longing to see those loved ones again from whom she was now so far away.

"Click! click!" would go the needle against the thimble, and quicker, quicker, as the thoughts crowded in faster and faster.

Yes! she now had time to think, and into her mind no doubt there crept at times uneasy thoughts about all not being right between her soul and God. "Have I not been forgetting Him?"

Now when people begin to think seriously

about their souls, which Charlotte had so often done, the watchful enemy of souls will always at once seek to put all such thoughts out of their heads. Satan is the cleverest enemy that people have to fight. Being the god of this world, and the prince of the power of the air, he has the power to use almost any means to make people serve him instead of God. In the Bible he is spoken of as "that old serpent" and "deceiver." (Rev. xx. 2.) He "goeth about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour" (1 Peter v. 8); and also "as an angel of light." (2 Cor. xi. 14.) He seeks in various ways to deceive those whom he would keep from following Jesus.

"Now," probably thought the great deceiver, "I must watch Charlotte Trent. I cannot afford to lose her from the ranks in the broad way. I cannot let her turn to the narrow way. I must prevent it if I can."

And doubtless he did his best.

No one is indifferent to being thought well of, to being loved, praised and admired. And Charlotte was no exception.

Mrs. Monckton was *very* attached to her, for who had helped to make her childhood so bright and happy and entered into all the joys of her early married life? It was Charlotte.

Little wonder then that Charlotte was a great favourite with her—spoiled and indulged. She flattered and praised her dainty ways and usefulness until Charlotte almost began to think that there never was such a perfect person as herself, and as she afterwards said, she became "puffed up"—puffed up with her *own* goodness, forgetting that God says in *His* sight "there is none that doeth good, no, not one." (Psa. xiv. 3.)

Thus it was that the deceiver sought to hush Charlotte to sleep once more, and for a time, alas! he succeeded. But God is stronger than Satan. He could see and read Charlotte's heart, and He wanted it for Himself.

Satan could lull her to sleep by the praise of man, the sound of earthly voices, but God could awaken her by a "still small voice" and gently draw her to Himself. (1 Kings xix. 12.)

In the lodge by the gates lived Tagg, the gardener, and his wife, and with whom Charlotte became acquainted.

Mrs. Tagg was a Christian, she loved the Lord Jesus; and doubtless very soon discovered that the good seed had at some time been sown in Charlotte's frivolous heart, but that it had not yet "brought forth fruit." (Mark iv. 20.) She saw that below the surface, in spite of all her careless and worldly ways, there was a desire for better and eternal things.

Mrs. Tagg was accustomed to attend some meetings in the neighbourhood at which the simple gospel of the way of salvation for lost and perishing sinners was preached. She thought how much she would like Charlotte

to go with her one day; for having found Jesus as her own Saviour, Mrs. Tagg longed that others might also find Him. So she made up her mind to invite Charlotte to accompany her one Sunday evening.

Picture them then starting off one evening from the lodge, Charlotte in quieter mood than usual; after walking a little distance they soon find themselves seated in a small meeting room listening to "the old, old story of Jesus and His love."

The preacher, an earnest man, pleaded with his hearers to turn to Christ—telling them that they were sinners, needing Him as their Saviour if they were not already saved.

Charlotte listened as she had never listened to anything before. The words went deep down into her heart. *Anything but "the perfect Charlotte"* she felt, as she heard the message of God's love to sinners. All her sins came before her like a black veil and she saw, all at once, that sinner though she might be, God had provided a Saviour for her—even Jesus, of whom she could say, "who loved *me*, and gave himself for *me*." (Gal. ii. 20.)

Perfect peace filled her heart—all the load of sin, which had burdened her sometimes more or less for years, was lifted from her conscience. As she listened to the words which fell upon her ears, she believed in her heart that Jesus, *her* Saviour, had borne the punishment on the cross for *all* her sins, His precious blood had cleansed her from *all* sin and He was now raised and seated at God's right hand in heaven, which was henceforth to be her home—the home of her heart.

She left the broad way that evening and stepped on to the narrow way which "leadeth unto life." (Matt. vii. 13, 14.)

And who can say how happy Charlotte felt as she fell asleep on her pillow that night?—for the *first* time in true and perfect peace—peace which "the world cannot give." And upon awaking in the morning how bright her life must have looked before her, with the knowledge that she had such a Saviour and Friend to serve, love and live for as Jesus!

But because she was safely on the narrow way, this was no reason why her great enemy should leave her alone. He would gladly see her weary of the way, standing still, turning back with longing eyes to gaze at the broad way and murmuring at the difficulties of the narrow way instead of marching bravely on with her eye on Jesus.

This enemy likes to hear it said, "How miserable those Christians seem to be, and really they are no better than others!"

Now we will see how he tried to make poor Charlotte fail, to make her miserable, bad-tempered and anything but like her heavenly Master.

He had failed as an "angel of light," so now

he tried as a "roaring lion" to stumble Charlotte.

Mrs. Monckton, finding a change in her favourite maid, gradually felt less interest in her. She and Charlotte no longer had the same motives and worldly interests or tastes; and later on difficulties arose which made it advisable for Charlotte to leave her much-loved mistress—thus sharing "the rejection of Christ" and His sufferings.

But with His love in her heart she found that the pain of parting was softened, and to her joy and surprise, not long after, when looking for work, she was offered the situation of nurse in the family of Mr. Roper, the very gentleman through whom she had found peace when hearing him preach.

It was fresh work for Charlotte, but as there was only one little baby, an only child, she felt well able to undertake the post; she undertook her new duties with great pleasure, and looked forward hopefully to learning more about God and His things in Mr. Roper's house.

With the most sincere desire to please her new master and mistress, Charlotte commenced her nursery work, and she did her very best for the little child.

What then was her sorrow and disappointment to find that no matter *how* she tried, she never *could* please her mistress. Nothing she did was right, and she was greatly pained in consequence. It was all complaining and no praising now for Charlotte.

But Satan wished her to be more than "pained." He was *watching* and waiting for her to fail under the bad treatment which she suffered. Impatient she often *felt*, but she turned to God for strength and He helped her to overcome the anger and illfeelings which often arose in her heart.

So instead of getting in a temper and failing to follow Jesus, she would silently listen to the reproaches from her mistress and bore her interference in the nursery patiently; for whenever the fractious baby began to cry, its mother would come at once to see what was wrong, seeming to imagine that Charlotte was unkind to the child and that it was unhappy or hurt when it cried.

But God gave Charlotte grace to submit to her mistress and not to "answer again." She remembered perhaps the scriptures: "Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear: *not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward*" (1 Peter ii. 18); "Servants . . . *not answering again.*" (Titus ii. 9.) Even the smallest details of a servant's life are noticed by God.

But this state of things could not last very long; what with hard work owing to strenuous hours, unkind treatment and over-strain, Charlotte's health began to fail, and at last she became so far from well that, sorry as she was

to leave Mr. Roper's service, she decided to leave before she broke down altogether.

Although Charlotte suffered so much in that house, doubtless she never regretted having lived there; for in spite of all the difficulties, she had learned more about the things of God through Mr. Roper at the morning reading and many other useful lessons, not the least of which was that God has some disobedient and unruly children who sometimes hinder and put stumbling-blocks in the way of their brothers and sisters.

Doubtless Satan hoped to see Charlotte fail under these trials, but he was disappointed. She was not caught in his net, but rose above the difficulties and found rest in the love of God, for "in vain the net is spread in the sight of every thing that hath a wing" (Prov. i. 17, marg.), and the Christian has the wings of the Holy Spirit.

Charlotte now loved to read her Bible, and, among many other wonderful things, she discovered in it that at any moment the Lord Jesus might come from heaven and fetch her, and all those who love Him, away from this world to His bright home above for ever. Even those who have died, and loved Him, will be taken away too, for they will rise again, their bodies changed, to meet the Lord Jesus in the air, together with the others. This great event may happen at any moment, and therefore Charlotte always had it to look forward to; and the thought of it was constantly in her heart during the rest of her life; it helped to make her bright and happy as she followed Jesus in the narrow way.

So with simple trust in her heavenly Father, that He would care for her, she left the service of Mr. Roper with peace in her heart because by God's grace she had been an overcomer.

(To be continued.)

Hints to Searchers.

1. Begin searching this month if you have not already done so.
2. Write name, age, and address clearly at the top of your answers.
3. If possible, write in ink, write carefully, and make no mistakes in spelling.
4. Give book, chapter, and verse with each answer.
5. Rule a margin, number your answers, and leave one blank line between each answer and the one next to it.
6. If your question is divided into (a) and (b), divide your answer into (a) and (b).
7. Write only that part of a verse that answers the question asked, but if asked to quote a verse write out the whole verse.
8. Use one sheet of paper only, if necessary

write on both sides. If note paper is used, open it and write on it as though it were pad paper.

Bible Searchings.

The "Searchings" are to increase acquaintance with the Holy Scriptures. Answers to be sent to THE EDITOR, F. Shedden, Bryn Awelon, Flint Mountain, Flint, North Wales, not later than the 15th of this month, **with envelopes marked "Searchings" in top left-hand corner.** Age, and full name and address to be given.

Searchers 10 years of age and under 14.
omit Nos. 7 and 8.

Searchers 14 years of age and over.
answer all the eight.

1. In Genesis v. or vi. something is said about (a) man's heart and (b) God's heart. Quote the statements.
2. What did the Lord say as to man's heart immediately after the flood?
3. About 1700 years later God spoke again about "the heart." (Jer. xvi.-xviii.) What did He say then?
4. Hundreds of years after this some one refers in Mark vi. or vii. to "evil thoughts" and "evil things" of many kinds. (a) Who is this Speaker? (b) Where does He say these come from?
5. "Purified" hearts. (Acts xiv. or xv.) An "opened" heart. (Acts xvi. or xvii.) (a) Who purifies and how? (b) Who opens?
6. (a) On what did Moses write the law? (Exo. xxxiii.-xxxiv.) (b) Where will God write it by-and-by? (Jer. xxx.-xxxiii.)
7. In 2 Corinthians i.-iii. this contrast is referred to. What is contrasted there with (a) "ink" and (b) "tables of stone"?
8. In Ezekiel x. or xi. God has promised to "take" away one thing and to "give" another. (a) Quote the words. (b) What will the result of this be?

Searchers under 10 years of age.

Complete and write out in full the following passages:—

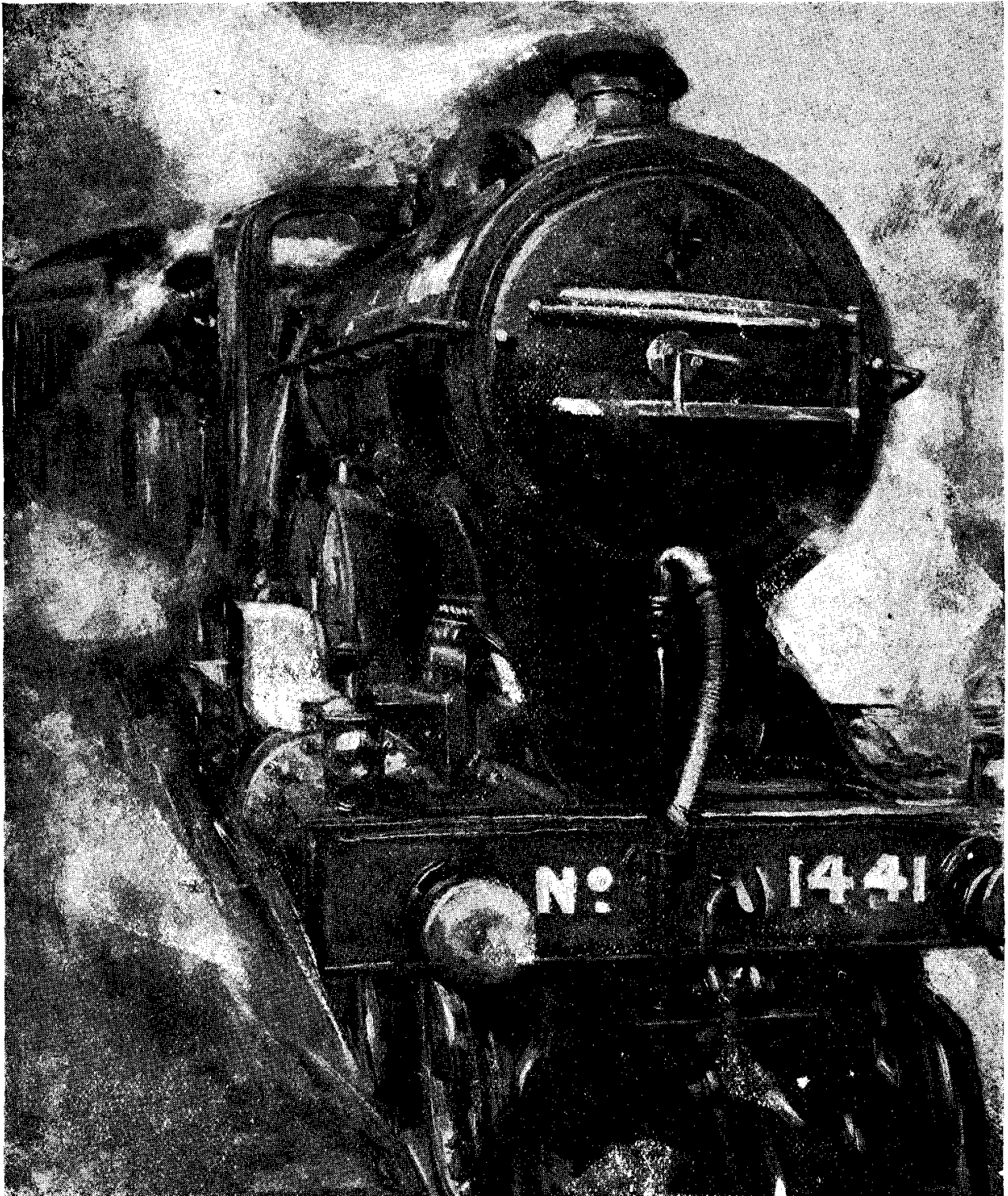
1. "Then Peter said up and walk." (Acts iii.)
2. "Neither is there must be saved." (Acts iv.)
3. "Wherefore God name." (Phil. ii.)
4. "And whatsoever the Father by him." (Col. iii.)

(Book, chapter and verse to be given in each case.)

Vol. X. No. 5.

MAY, 1919

Youthful Days.



Extract from a Letter to a School Boy.

WELL, to talk a little on the sober side of things—keep a straight course all through life, you cannot begin too early—get on the main line and keep on it; the points are always *set* right ahead. Do not slow down, and never stop. You may see a danger signal ahead, but whistle it down as soon as you pass the “distant,” and then it will be down as soon as you get to it.

The signalman knows those who are passing onward, and can tell from the steam blowing off that the driver has abundance of reserve power. Circuitous routes and loop lines only mean more work for the fireman, and possibly delays. If the rails get slippery do not let the engine slip and shake itself to pieces; use caution (plenty of sand), and you will be surprised how steadily you will go on. And even if apparently darkness sets in (night time), you will be able to see the signal lights clearly, your mind being well acquainted with their locality; and if you look behind now and then to see if all is well, you will see the Guard's bright lamps, shewing how He has been looking after all you are responsible for, and so you will reach the terminus in due time.

Do not forget to go round the engine to oil up continually—*love* is not a bad lubricant—try it; many have already done so, and can strongly recommend it. There is a great store, and do not be afraid of using plenty.



“Get ready for eternity.”

A MAN is in prosperous circumstances, strong and hearty; nevertheless he thinks it prudent to call in his lawyer and make his will. He would not have his estate left in disorder, or be distributed contrary to his wishes;

and as life is uncertain, he makes timely pre-arrangement for the disposal of his property.

A student is entering on a professional course. Everything depends on his industry now. He rises early, reads hard, and denies himself many gratifications. Why? The examination time is coming, and he must be ready; so he diligently prepares.

A captain is about to make a long voyage. Does he defer his preparations till the day of sailing? No. For weeks before he is re-fitting his vessel, loading up, laying in stores, and providing for future emergencies.

“A prudent man foreseeth the evil.” (Prov. xxii.) Are you prudent enough to look into the eternal future, and to make due preparation now against the evil that certainly is there? Perhaps you have invested your money most wisely, insured your life and your property, made your will, and done everything to secure many days of peace and prosperity in time to come, although you confess it is very uncertain whether you will have the future upon which you count. The rich man (Luke xii.) could say, *my* soul, *my* barns, *my* fruits, *my* goods, but he could not say *my* years. Enjoyment might have been his, but he had no time for it. That night his soul was required of him. Men doubtless called him prudent because he prepared for a happy old age; God calls him a fool, because he had made no provision for eternity. What would God call you? Are you so wise for time, yet so insensate in your folly in regard to eternity? You have something besides a body to be cared for. What about your soul? You are going to live longer than the few more years for which you are making provision? What about eternity. After all, you may be consuming your life in a laborious doing of nothing:

“Dropping buckets into empty wells,
And growing old in drawing nothing up.”

Get ready for eternity. “Acquaint now thyself with him [God], and be at peace:

thereby good shall come unto thee." (Job xxii. 21.) Would you wish to say at last, as a dying nobleman is reported to have exclaimed, "O God, how have I employed myself! In what delirium has my life been passed! What have I been doing while the sun in its race, and the stars in their courses have lent their beams, perhaps only to light me to perdition? I have pursued shadows and entertained myself with dreams. I have been treasuring up dust, and sporting myself with the wind. I might have grazed with beasts of the fields, or sung with the birds of the woods to much better purpose than for any for which I have lived."

Get ready for eternity. Let your very zeal for success in business and for making money be a rebuke to your indifference about your precious soul. You care for your body. You would stay at home, and leave your business to take care of itself if you were attacked with a feverish cold, or fancied that going to your office or your shop would risk the health of your corruptible body, that can only last a few short years. Why not give a little earnest consideration to that soul of yours?

King Henry IV. asked the Duke of Alba if he had observed the great eclipse of the sun, which had lately happened. "No," said the Duke, "I have so much to do on earth that I have no leisure to look up to heaven." So with many now. They are engrossed with earth, and have no gratitude to God, no hope of heaven, and no care for their souls.

Too busy to be saved! No time for thinking of eternity! Have you time to eat the bread of this life, and no time to feed your soul? Have you time to dress your body, and no time to array your soul in the righteousness of God! No time to be saved! Then, as one has said, you have stolen it, and put it to an evil use, for the Lord gave you time for that.

Get ready for eternity, and get ready *now*. If you want a place among the saved in heaven you must secure it at once. You will be too late to obtain a

place if you tarry till you want to occupy it. All the seats in heaven are "reserved," and must be engaged beforehand. Two gentlemen proceeded to an hotel, and one was provided at once with comfortable quarters, while the other was unable to get a room. "How did you manage so well," asked the latter. "Easily enough," was the reply, "I just telegraphed on before that I was coming—to have a room ready for me."

So *you* had better apply in time, or you will not get into heaven.

Get ready for eternity without delay, for, whatever you may think, you are not fit for the presence of God. Take time to reflect upon this. Do not die as a fool dies, and be lost for want of thought. You have sins that need to be pardoned; you are lost, and need One to save you; you are a waif and a stray on the highways of the world, and need a Father's love and a Father's home. You need—ah! if you would but think you would soon find out what deep, deep needs are yours. "O that men were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end!"

If there is one who reads this paper who desires to be ready for eternity, and who asks, How may I be ready? we reply, All the fitness, all the claims, all the hopes for eternity are in Christ. Getting ready for eternity is finding Him all and all-sufficient. His Person, His character, His work, are the one complete answer of God to the sinner's vileness and the sinner's needs; and, trusting in Him, you may be happy now, and ready for eternity in the company of the One who now saves all who make Him their choice.

Once more, dear reader, Are you ready for eternity? If not, get ready now.

J. N. B.



"For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it." (Mark viii. 35.)

A Word to the Boys.

READ the Book of Proverbs, boys! It was written by a wise father to his son, and it is full of practical help for everyday life. If you read one chapter a day it will last you just a month, for it has thirty-one chapters in it.

Wisdom—the principal personage—is a wonderful and beautiful figure of Christ.

Life is the great objective of the book, for God wants you to be happy here and to find *life*. Therefore the climax of the instruction is found at the close of chapter viii., where Wisdom is heard saying, "Whoso findeth me findeth *life*!"

"Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom." F. S. M.



Matthew.—No. 28.

CHAPTER IX. 26-34.

IT is no wonder that after Jesus had raised from death the little daughter of the ruler, His fame went out into all the land of Gennesaret. The One who is the Resurrection and the Life had come to the place, and God meant that every one should hear of Him. People were talking to each other of the wonderful thing that had happened, and of the wonderful Person at whose voice and touch the gates of death gave way. And so it was no secret that the dead child in the house of Jairus was alive and well; for God always leaves men without excuse; they can never say that they did not know that He is good.

The story went from house to house, and one told another, until the report of Jesus and of what He had done was carried into all the country.

You remember how the Queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon, though he was king of Jerusalem, and she was living in her own country, very far away. We may wonder how she heard: there were no telegrams in those days, and no little postage stamps, like fairy messengers, to

carry glad news from all parts of this great world.

But there were better messengers; people were filled with wonder and delight as they heard Solomon speaking the wisdom which God had taught him, and they carried the report of his fame into far distant lands, so that every one might hear of the wisdom of David's son.

Just so, long, long afterwards, God allowed the fame of "great David's greater Son" to be heard everywhere.

Jesus Himself spoke of the Queen of Sheba, how she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and then He said, "*A greater than Solomon is here.*" And so His fame was spread abroad; people told how He could heal the sick and awake the dead; and as He passed on with life and healing in His word and touch, we read that two blind men followed Him, and cried out, "Son of David, have mercy on us."

It must have been a touching sight. We often meet one blind man with some one leading him along safely; even a little child who can see may be the leader, or a faithful dog will guide the blind man to a safe path. But two blind men together! How helpless they look; how can they find the way, or escape falling into danger, when both are in the dark? These men were like the Jew and Gentile, both alike unable to see their way to God, or to find the right road—that "narrow way" of which Jesus spoke. But they had heard the fame of Jesus of Nazareth, and they thought, "The Son of David will surely take this terrible blind darkness away from our eyes," and so they lifted up their voices as He passed by, and cried, "Son of David, have mercy on us."

Did Jesus hear what they said?

Yes; He let them follow Him into the house, that they might be alone with Him, away from the crowd, and then He said, Do you believe that I am able to make you see?

They said, Yes, Lord.

Then Jesus touched their eyes, and said, "According to your faith be it unto

you." Their eyes were opened, and they saw Him whose voice they had heard and whose touch they had felt.

What a moment it was for them when their eyes opened upon Jesus, when they saw the Saviour who had come from God, and heard Him speak to them, and felt His healing touch! The story of these blind men is a beautiful picture of the way in which a sinner comes to Jesus now. And yet, how can it be, since the Lord is not now on earth, but in heaven?

It is like this: one who is "blind" and "lost" as to his soul first of all hears the report that Jesus can save. He believes the report, for the light coming from God opens his eyes, and makes him feel his need of a Saviour, just as the blind men did. If we have not come to Jesus, we are all in the dark about God and do not know the way to Him.

Suppose you were in a room which was quite dark—as dark as the world, both day and night, is to one who is blind. And suppose one little ray of light comes through a hole in the shutter; this tiny streak shews how very dark the room is, but it also shows that there is plenty of light outside; it is only the room that is dark.

The dark room is like the darkened eyes of the sinner, but when those blind eyes are opened to see Jesus, the Light of world, it is as if the shutters were gone and all the bright beautiful light came streaming in. For Jesus is the Light, the only light of men, and He says to every sinner, *Seek My face*. Happy is the child who can reply, "Thy face, Lord, will I seek;" believing, as the two blind men did, that He is able to make him see, not with his bodily eyes, but with the eye of the soul. Jesus told the men whose eyes He had opened that they were not to tell any one about it. He did not want people to praise Him, and it was of no use to tell them that He was the Son of David; each one must come to Him for himself to get healing, as the blind men had done. But their joy at receiving their sight was so great that they could not help telling the story wherever they went.

Just then some people came bringing a poor dumb man to Jesus. The devil had such power over this man that he made him unable to speak, so that he could not even say, "Have mercy on me!"

Jesus cast out the devil and made the dumb man speak, so that the crowds were astonished, and said they had never seen anything like it in Israel. But the Pharisees, who loved the praise of men, were displeased that the crowds were delighted with Jesus, and they said a very terrible thing—"He casteth out devils through the prince of the devils."

This was not only a very dreadful thing to say, but also very foolish, for why should the devil go against himself? But Jesus took no notice. He went on through all their cities and villages teaching people about the kingdom of God, and healing every disease and every bodily weakness, for His great heart was full of compassion for the crowds who had no one to teach or to guide them, and were cast away like poor wandering silly sheep that have no shepherd. The Pharisees who were blind themselves could not lead them, for they could not find the way, but Jesus was the Good Shepherd who leads His sheep into green pastures, and beside still waters.

A. M. S.



The Asses of Scripture.

AS we have seen by the scripture puzzle given last month, the ass holds a place in a great many scenes of scripture. Now there are several very interesting facts about the asses of the East, which help us to understand their use in the Bible, and I am sure all the readers of YOUTHFUL DAYS will like to read about them here.

The ass ridden by Balaam and others was not like our poor quiet, and often ill-treated, donkey, but a much bigger and swifter animal about four feet in height, and generally of a reddish-grey colour.

White asses were not uncommon, and kings, judges and rich men rode on them.

as a mark of distinction; they cost a great deal more to buy than grey ones, and are much valued, even at the present time in the East.

When we read of "saddling the ass," we must not think of saddles such as we see here on horses, but of a cloth thrown over the animal's back for the rider to sit upon.

The camel was also known in Bible times, and is still used for travelling through the desert. We also read of horses, but mostly in connection with war; but the ass was never used in battle, and is a symbol, or sign, of peace. Thus how beautiful is the meaning of the Lord riding upon an ass.

He came in peace to His people, their King, riding into Jerusalem upon an ass whereon never man had sat before.

This is the only time we read of the ass being used in the New Testament. The "beast" of the good Samaritan is usually pictured as an ass, but it is not called so in the Bible, and might have been a mule, also much used in the East. We do not read of Joseph saddling his ass, to take the young child and his mother into Egypt, though very likely he did so.

The fact of its not being mentioned elsewhere, brings out in great prominence the one beautiful scene of Christ's entry into Jerusalem.

That was a wonderful day. Oh! the beauty of the words they sung, words written of Him so long before:

"Hosanna to the son of David: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest."
(Matt. xxi. 9.)

H. M. D.

SOLUTION TO SCRIPTURE PUZZLE.

An Ass.

1. Genesis xxii. 1-7.
2. Genesis xlv. 1-14.
3. Numbers xxii. 22-34; 2 Peter ii. 15, 16.
4. 1 Samuel ix. 19, 20.
5. 1 Samuel xxv. 3, 20, 42.
6. 2 Samuel xvi. 1-4.
7. 1 Kings ii. 40.
8. 1 Kings xiii. 23-31.
9. 2 Kings iv. 18-38.
10. Matthew xxi. 1-12.

Old Charlotte:

OR,

A LIFE AND ITS LESSONS.

CHAPTER VI.

CHARLOTTE BECOMES A NURSE.

FORTUNATELY Charlotte soon recovered her usual health and strength, and after careful consideration she left "service" altogether, and eventually took up nursing, settling in lodgings in the town of Harstead, where she was soon busy at work for three leading doctors in the neighbourhood.

Charlotte was also willing to nurse any one who sent for her, taking each case as it came, whether through a doctor or privately; and as she shewed much skill in her nursing, she was consequently sought after by many people.

Charles Trent had lately married a young woman named Milly Carver, daughter of a respectable family in the village of Hazelford, where, in an old and picturesque cottage, her two brothers, Dan and Tom Carver, lived.

Charles Trent and his wife were settled in Branstone, the next village, and doubtless, whenever Charlotte could spare the time, she would go over from Harstead to visit them; and how great must have been her delight when one day a beautiful baby boy, little Jimmy, arrived at their cottage!

But she was unable to see much of those she loved, for the doctors and patients kept her very busy.

She never chose her cases, being always ready to go wherever she was called; one of the doctors objected to this, for he was interested in her, and wished her to get on, and to nurse exclusively among the rich. But this was quite contrary to Charlotte's principles; as a Christian she had no worldly ambition; she felt that God had called her to serve Him in the world, to which she, however, as one of His children, did not belong, and she knew that with Him there is "no respect of persons"—no partiality. She therefore went willingly to nurse or care for any one who sent for her, whether rich or poor, high or low; and although she could at any time earn the highest fees for her skilful nursing, she was quite content with the very lowest if her patients were poor.

And God, her Master in heaven (Eph. vi. 9), observed all her ways, and little did Charlotte know that by pleasing Him thus she was to be rewarded, not only in the next world, but also in this; and we read, "He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord; and that which he hath given will he pay him again."
(Prov. xix. 17.)

As Charlotte was able, she put by all she

could spare of her earnings "for a rainy day": but at this time all seemed bright and calm in her life as she went from house to house, from patient to patient, cheering and comforting rich and poor alike—giving at the same time "honour to whom honour" is due, and "custom to whom custom." (Rom. xiii. 7.)

See her as she walks into the sick room, her neat little figure in a clean holland dress, white apron and a snow white cap; but whether as a nurse or in private life, Charlotte never forgot to dress suitably as one who belonged to Christ, "whose adorning let it be . . . in modest apparel . . . with sobriety; not with broidered hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array . . . but with good works." (1 Tim. ii. 9; 1 Peter iii.) How gently and brightly she tends to the sufferer! Then with a quick light step she goes about the house, leaving smiles and kind deeds behind her everywhere—never too weary, never too busy to think of and to serve others, never "seeking her own" or thinking of self—"for even Christ pleased not himself." (Rom. xv. 3.) However dark or gloomy or full of suffering the room might be, a ray of sunshine seemed to enter it when Charlotte walked in; and who could comfort a child, soothe and quiet a restless sufferer or turn a pillow for an aching head like Charlotte? And she would sit at a bedside in a dark room by the hour "just to be at hand," as though it were the greatest pleasure to her, and thus ease the mind of a weary invalid.

But were all these little things done for man alone? No; not only for the eye of man, but for the eye of God, and when nursing any of God's children she knew well that she was serving Christ—He who said, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me" (Matt. xxv. 40), and again, "For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward." (Mark ix. 41.)

And during all these busy days, did she forget to give some of her time to the things of the Lord?

By no means; she had heard of, and found out, a place in Harstead where "the old, old story" was simply told, and whenever possible she made one of a little company who came together on Sunday evenings to hear the gospel preached; she also liked to attend a prayer meeting and a Bible reading during the week; but what was more precious to her than anything else was the time when they met together to remember the Lord Jesus in His death on Sunday mornings. (1 Cor. xi. 23-26.)

She had found some true friends among those she met at these times, friends who loved her as much as she loved them, because they had the mutual bond of the love of Christ.

One of these friends, Mrs. Andrews, became very fond of Charlotte. Her husband was foreman at the same shop at which Charlotte's mother had been housekeeper so many years before; and eventually these good people let Charlotte share their home, which she made her headquarters instead of using lodgings.

"I loved Charlotte at once," wrote Mrs. Andrews to a friend long afterwards, "and although she had very little free time, we always felt glad to welcome her when she came, and so sorry when she was called away. She was such a comforter to the little ones, with the funny little rhymes which used to be gaily repeated when they came crying after a tumble or with some trouble. The grey mare never lasted long after they came to her!" added Mrs. Andrews.

And happy days these were for Charlotte also, and grateful she felt to her Father above for all His goodness to her. Nothing promotes the happiness of God's children more than to be obedient to Him, and this Charlotte tried to be, with the natural result that she was happy in the unclouded enjoyment of His love.

To please Him was her first object and chief pleasure. Her happiness no longer depended upon the things of this world; she did not seek to drown her conscience with its fleeting pleasures and amusements, neither did she now care to go where it might be thought "out of place" to speak of the Lord Jesus, nor where she could not obey and follow Him freely.

There were, she found, many things about which she and her old friends did not agree; for some of them did not yet truly love Jesus, and did not care so much for Charlotte now that she followed Him. They thought it strange, this change in her; yet they found her the same bright, even brighter, unselfish Charlotte as ever—but some disliked the alteration they found in her. But every one should follow Jesus. He says, "Follow me."

For several weeks Charlotte had been nursing at Windown Hall, and the time was now drawing near for her return to Harstead, where the home of her friend, Mrs. Andrews, was still her headquarters.

Charlotte was being well spoiled at the Hall with so many luxuries around her, but the comforts she enjoyed when nursing the rich did not tempt her to refuse to nurse those who were poorer. She loved *all*, and served *all* alike, and won the hearts of all wherever she went, for who does not love one whom they can trust?

No gossip, no tale-bearing, no mischief-making no back-biting came from Charlotte; her very presence would rebuke anything of the kind. And why? Because she followed the Lord Jesus; not because her heart was naturally less deceitful or better than that of others. She kept close to her Saviour, who helped her to rule her spirit,

and "he that ruleth his spirit" is better than "he that taketh a city." (Prov. xvi. 32.)

How happy it would be if every Christian turned a deaf ear to such things, or having even "thought" evil in his heart" should "lay his hand upon his mouth." (Prov. xxx. 32; Judges xviii. 19.)

And there was no "pride of life" about Charlotte. (1 John ii. 16.) She was not elated or puffed up by being among "the flower of grass." (1 Peter i. 24.) She looked up to the flowers around her like a simple little blade of grass, and gave the honour due to them. Neither was she puffed up with her own importance if others gave her the honour due to her as a skilful nurse. Charlotte did not seek a higher position in the world than that in which God had called her; and it was well for her that it was so, for "godliness with contentment is great gain." (1 Tim. vi. 6.) And He who had hitherto supplied all her need had also promised "never" to "leave nor forsake" her. (Heb. xiii. 5.)

But to return to Windown Hall. Charlotte's time of departure was drawing near, and she was preparing to leave, when unexpectedly she received a summons to go at once to a lady unknown to her, living at the small town of Fordwater, some distance off. This lady was seriously ill, needing every possible care, and also, she was informed, was not well off and could not give the highest fees—but *this* did not trouble Charlotte.

"I must go at once! and I must be quick, too—there is no time to lose!" we can hear her saying, as after having had consent to leave the Hall immediately, she hastily packed her bag, with which, before long, she stepped into the railway carriage and seated herself ready for her journey across country.

(To be continued.)

Hints to Searchers.

1. Begin searching this month if you have not already done so.
2. Write name, age, and address clearly at the top of your answers.
3. If possible, write in ink, write carefully, and make no mistakes in spelling.
4. Give book, chapter, and verse with each answer.
5. Rule a margin, number your answers, and leave one blank line between each answer and the one next to it.
6. If your question is divided into (a) and (b), divide your answer into (a) and (b).
7. Write only that part of a verse that answers the question asked, but if asked to quote a verse write out the whole verse.
8. Use one sheet of paper only, if necessary

write on both sides. If note paper is used, open it and write on it as though it were pad paper.

Bible Searchings.

The "Searchings" are to increase acquaintance with the Holy Scriptures. Answers to be sent to THE EDITOR, F. Shedden, Bryn Awelon, Flint Mountain, Flint, North Wales, not later than the 15th of this month, **with envelopes marked "Searchings" in top left-hand corner.** Age, and full name and address to be given.

Searchers 10 years of age and under 14, omit Nos. 7 and 8.

Searchers 14 years of age and over, answer all the eight.

1. "He wrote of me." (John v.). (a) Who is the "He"? (b) Who the "Me"?
2. "All things . . . written in . . ." (a) What? (Luke xxiv.) "concerning me." (b) Who is the "Me"?
3. "They . . . testify of me." (John v.). (a) Who is the "Me"? (b) Who or what the "They"?
4. "He expounded unto them in all the scriptures." (Luke xxiv.) (a) Who expounded? (b) What did He expound? (c) Where did He begin? (d) What books in the Old Testament were written by Moses?
5. Of whom was David speaking when he wrote Psalm xvi.? What verse in Acts ii. proves that your answer to this is correct?
6. Of what did the Spirit testify through the prophets of old? (1 Peter i., ii.)
7. Most of Isaiah liii. is about the "sufferings of Christ." Something, however, is said here as to His "glory." Quote a sentence or two referring to the latter.
8. (a) Does Psalm lxix. refer more to His "sufferings" or His "glory"? (b) What verse in it is applied, part in John ii. part in Romans xv. to Christ? (c) Quote the two sentences.

Searchers under 10 years of age.

Complete and write out in full the following passages, underlining the same important word in each.

1. I.....life." (John vi.)
2. But he answered..... mouth of God. (Matt. iv.)
3. That he might make..... doth man live. (Deut. viii.)
4. Or what man..... stone. (Matt. vii.)

Book, chapter and verse to be given in each case

Youthful Days.



Did he Deserve it?

PROBABLY every young reader of **YOUTHFUL DAYS** knows the beautiful parable of the prodigal son, and you all remember quite well that when the father saw his poor, ragged son coming home again, while he was yet a great way off, he "had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him. And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son. But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet: and bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry: for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry."

If we had seen that younger son in the far country feeding swine, and longing to eat their food because he was so terribly hungry, and afterwards we could have seen him sitting at the feast in his father's house, we should hardly have known him for the same lad, should we?

And supposing some one had asked him, "Do you think you deserve that best robe and all the other things your father has given you?" what do you think he would have answered? Do you not think he would have said, "Oh! no; I deserved nothing but anger from my father; I deserved to be loaded with reproaches; I did not deserve to be treated even as a servant. If I had not known that my father was kind and loving, I dare not have come home at all; I hoped he would take pity on me, and perhaps let me be here as a servant; and instead of that he received me as his son. He covered me with kisses and has given me the clothes and ornaments that a son should wear. Oh! no, indeed; I did not deserve such kindness."

Dear young readers, the reason I am writing this for you to read is because some of you think that when the son repented, his repentance made him worthy of all those expressions of his father's love

toward him. Some of you think that if we confess our sins, we deserve God's forgiveness; but this is a very big mistake.

A sinner deserves judgment, and even if he confesses his sins, he still deserves judgment; he can never undo what he has done or pay the debt he owes, for God's word tells us that "God requireth that which is past." (Eccles. iii. 15.) But God in His great love sent His Son, and the judgment we deserve was borne by Christ upon the cross; He paid there the tremendous debt we owed. He deserved nothing but good, but He took the place of those who deserve nothing but judgment, and because of what He has done, God can now in righteous grace receive returning prodigals.

Repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ is the only way into blessing; but, however deep our repentance, however real our faith, we can never *deserve* either God's love or His forgiveness.

"THE FATHER is calling;
HIS LANGUAGE is, 'Come!'
HIS RICH GRACE is bringing
The wanderers home;
HIS HEART is delighting
The lost ones to bless;
HIS LOVE is inviting
The weary to rest."

E. E. S.



Three Short Prayers for Daily Needs.

THERE are three very important prayers of three words each which we need every day.

The *first* is, "Lord, save us." (Matt. viii. 25.) The disciples were in a ship. Jesus was with them; but there arose a great tempest in the sea, and the ship was covered with the waves. What did the disciples do? they were afraid, and awoke Jesus saying, "Lord, save us: we perish."

The *second* prayer is more individual, for it is Peter who wished to walk on the water to go to Jesus; but when he saw

the wind boisterous he cried out, "Lord, save me." (Matt. xiv. 30.)

The *third* prayer is "Lord, help me." (Matt. xv. 25.) It is also individual, and is used by a Syrophenician woman, who came to Jesus to ask Him to heal her daughter, who was grievously vexed with a devil.

In the first case it was the waves of the sea that seemed as if they would envelop them. But Jesus is not troubled, and when the disciples call on Him, He rises and rebukes the winds and the sea, and says to them, "Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?"

In the second case Peter had a right desire, he wanted to go to Jesus, and he walked on the water; but when he turned his eye and saw the strong wind he was afraid, and beginning to sink cried, "Lord, save me." Looking off unto Jesus will indeed save us.

In the last case it is the power of Satan which seeks to destroy, and the only thing is to get help from the Lord. She says, "Lord, help me." Children are sometimes afraid, it may be of the dark or anything else; if so, these little prayers will always help.



Matthew.—No. 29.

CHAPTER IX. 35—X. 22.

WE were talking last time about Jesus, the blessed Son of David, going about in the villages and preaching the glad news of the kingdom of God, and we noticed how while His lips were speaking these words of gladness, His hands were stretched out to heal every disease and every bodily weakness which troubled those who heard him.

Jesus felt compassion for these poor people, because they were like sheep who had no wise shepherd to take care of them. God said of David, the shepherd king, that He took him from the sheep-folds to feed His people Israel. That time was long past, but now Jesus, David's Son and David's Lord, had come, and He

was the good Shepherd who would lay down His life for the sheep.

When He saw the crowds as sheep not having a shepherd, He said to His disciples, "The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest."

And then He called His own twelve disciples to Him, and sent them to be workmen in the harvest fields, and He gave them power to do just the same things that He Himself did.

What were Peter and Andrew, James and John and the other disciples to do?

They were to cast out the wicked spirits which tormented those who were under their power, and to heal every disease and every bodily weakness among the people.

The Lord had authority to do these wonderful and gracious acts, and He had a right to give power to others to do the very same things that He did. But He said they were only to go to the lost sheep of the children of Israel.

Jesus knew that the nation of Israel would reject Him, and that "his own," to whom He came, would not receive Him, and He wished them to hear this last warning word: "*The kingdom of the heavens has drawn nigh.*" The good news that the disciples were to tell as they went was that He was there: the Sun of Righteousness, with healing in His wings for all who needed it. And they were to give this blessing freely, for they had received it freely; they were to invite these lost sheep to come to the good Shepherd, who had come—not, like David of old, from the sheep-fold, but—from heaven itself to tell them of His Father's kingdom, and to bid them come to Him in faith.

If they had all come, like the two blind men, saying, "Thou Son of David, have mercy on us," their eyes would have been opened to see who He was that was beside them, and their dumb lips would have been able to speak of His wonderful works, and to tell how grand His word to them, "*According to your faith be it unto you,*" had been.

What do you think those words meant?

If we think *back* a little, we shall understand them better.

The poor woman in the crowd had faith to say within herself, "If I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole," and Jesus said, "Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole." The ruler had faith to ask for the life of his little girl, who was even then lying dead at home, and she was given back to her father. The two blind men had faith to believe that Jesus was able to give them sight, and their eyes were opened to see Him. So, you see, each one got the blessing he desired from the Lord freely, according to his faith in Him—and so may we. They had faith in Him down here as Son of David, and they got the Son of David's blessings; we may have faith in Him as the Son of God who has gone up to God's right hand in heaven, and it is from Him there that the blessing must come to us now, a heavenly blessing.

The Pharisees, who professed to be so religious, had no faith in Jesus. They spoke evil of Him, and tried to keep others from believing in Him; but that did not prevent the good Shepherd from caring for His sheep. The Pharisees were like bad shepherds whose own the sheep were not, but Jesus felt that they belonged to Him; they were His own sheep, and He delighted to lead them in the green pastures of His love, and to make them lie down beside the still waters while He led them in paths of righteousness, with His own great name upon them. He wished to restore their souls, that they might be able to own Him and to say, "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want."

The disciples were to take no money with them, no food, not even change of clothes. Why was this?

Because the Lord sent them to find out the good grains, that is, the children of the kingdom. They would be glad to receive these harvest-men, and to shew them kindness for the sake of Him who sent them. Those who really received the

good news would be kind to the messengers who brought it; but how sad for those who did not receive their message! They would be treated like the chaff of which John the Baptist spoke. You remember he said that Jesus would gather the good grain into His safe place, but the chaff should be burnt up, because it was worthless. So these disciples were told when they left a city whose people did not receive them, to shake its dust off their feet. If the people shewed themselves worthy they would get the blessing of peace, but if they thought themselves unworthy of the kingdom they would be treated like the chaff that the wind blows away, and their end would be like that of the wicked cities which were long ago destroyed by fire, because they did not obey God.

Jesus knew that those to whom the disciples were going had an evil heart of unbelief, so He said to them, "You must beware of men; they will be like wolves who devour the sheep: but you are My sheep, and you must be harmless and gentle like doves, and yet wise as the serpents." And then He told them what would happen to His people by-and-by—their own relations would be cruel to them and would hate them if they loved Jesus, but they were not to be afraid, for the Spirit of their Father would shew them how to speak before those cruel enemies, and if they bore it all patiently for His dear sake they would know His great salvation, and they would find in the end that the sufferings at this present time are nothing compared to the glory and blessing of being His children in His kingdom.

It is the work of harvest-men to gather up the good grains of corn, so Jesus, the Lord of the harvest, sent His disciples to look for the children of the kingdom, and it would be easy to know who they were by the way in which they received His messengers.

Just so now; the Lord Jesus is the "Great shepherd of the sheep," but He allows those who love Him as Peter did to feed His lambs and to shew them the right way.

A. M. S.

EDALE. (C. M.)

HANNAH BARDSLEY.



“GOD IS IN HEAVEN.”

GOD is in heaven ; can He hear
A little child like me ?
Yes, little child, thou need'st not fear,
He'll listen e'en to thee.

God is in heaven ; can He see
If I am doing wrong ?
O yes, He can ! He looks at thee
All day and all night long.

God is in heaven ; would He know
If I should tell a lie ?
Yes, if thou saidst it soft and low,
He'd hear it in the sky.

God is in heaven ; does He care
Thence to send good to me ?
Yes, in His word He doth declare
All good He giveth thee.

God is in heaven ; would He save
A little child like me ?
Yes, little child, for Jesus gave
His life to ransom thee.

Bible Character.

FIVE worthy women once went on a mission to the ruler of their people; they occupied a peculiar position, they came with a special request, and were commended by the Lord for their manner of making it. It was granted to them on one condition, which became a law of the land. Who were these women? and, what was their request? C. E. H.



Old Charlotte:

OR,

A LIFE AND ITS LESSONS.

CHAPTER VII.

THE NEW PATIENT.

IN the front bedroom of a small creeper-covered house a lady of about five and twenty years lay upon her bed, evidently very ill.

She was much exhausted, and as she lay there she seemed anxiously to listen to the sound of her merry, romping children; for it was no easy task for any one to keep them quiet, and they were too young fully to understand how seriously ill their mother was; the doctor was very grave, and it was obvious that unless a friend or good nurse soon arrived to undertake the sick nursing and to superintend the care of the noisy children and household, there would be very little hope of the young mother's recovery.

For on this September day we find her under dark and lowering clouds; she has suddenly been taken dangerously ill; friends and relatives are far away; she longs for some one to care for her little ones and their father; she knows, too, how sorely she needs a capable and skilled nurse, and that, alas, they could ill afford the fees required by such a person; but happily she knows where to look for help—even above the dark clouds to that Almighty Friend who "knoweth what is in the darkness" (Dan. ii. 22.)

For Mrs. Clayden was, like Charlotte, one of God's children, and, just as He had marked Charlotte for blessing, so He had also marked her.

The gathering clouds, which of late had been darkening her sky, had been the means used of God to direct her eyes to heaven. He had spoken to her heart and conscience before her marriage; she had then looked up to Him

and cried for mercy as a lost sinner. But the voices of this world had attracted her heart, and she well-nigh forgot the voice of God.

But He had not forgotten her cry, and little by little He drew her heart from this world to Himself.

With the love of her little ones came the great wish to bring them up in the right way, and to do this, Mrs. Clayden knew that she must be walking in the right way herself.

Then came the struggle: it was long and fierce.

God, she knew, must be put first in her life; and no rest did she find for her soul until she had not only owned herself a sinner in His sight but also knew that she was forgiven and saved; she sought and found the Saviour, and with Him she found the joy that never fades, the "peace which passeth all understanding," and the light that brightens the darkest sky and pierces the thickest cloud.

Then with the eye of faith on Jesus in glory, it was her joy to follow Him; difficulties and sorrows she found in the way, but "looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith," she was able to run with patience the race set before her. (Heb. xii. 1, 2.)

The clouds did not disappear from her sky; the troubles of her life did not cease; they rather increased more and more as the years rolled by; but she followed on bravely and firmly, for the eye of faith looks beyond the darkest cloud and always sees a rainbow in it.

And now she was seriously ill, and it was well for her that she, like Charlotte, had "a very rich Father," who "knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him." (Matt. vi. 8.)

A nurse was wanted—one who would come as a friend as well as nurse, and Mrs. Clayden at last heard of one who was described as *a good nurse willing to work for moderate fees*. And having confidence in the recommendation she engaged her at once.

But before the nurse arrived, that silent messenger, the angel of death, was already hovering in the dark clouds above the head of the young wife and mother.

It was after some difficulty in finding her way from the station, that Charlotte was at last knocking on the door of the little creeper-clad house.

The maid took her at once to the sick room, and who can tell what a sense of relief came over the heart and mind of young Mrs. Clayden, ill and almost dying as she was, when for the first time she saw Charlotte's bright, peaceful face bending over her? The touch of her gentle hand, the sound of her soothing voice, gave her fresh strength and energy, and a feeling of rest and peace stole upon her.

Ah! no chance had brought Charlotte to that bedside. God knew what she would do *for Him* in that little home as she tended one of His tried children: He knew how lovingly she would care for the little ones and by thus relieving the mind of their mother as she lay between life and death, give her a better chance of recovery.

Did the words of the Lord Jesus ever ring in Charlotte's ears as she went from case to case?—those wonderful divine words: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." (Matt. xxv. 40.) "And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward." (Matt. x. 42; Mark ix. 41.)

But Charlotte's quick ears had soon caught the sound of the noisy children.

"Dear me!" we hear her saying, "this will never do! it was high time some one came to stop this kind of thing! The children *must* be kept quiet. No wonder she is ill—dear me! we must see what can be done, and I shall do my very best to get their mother well!"

And she did. Everything that love and good nursing could do, Charlotte did for the young mother; *her life was saved*, and in a few weeks she was recovering health and strength.

Charlotte did her best and God did the rest; her spirit was never weary; she was never impatient with the tiresome, noisy children who began to love her at once, and who tried, whenever their memories served them, to be "quiet as mice" to please Nurse Charlotte.

But of all the children it was Helen, the eldest girl, who loved Charlotte most. Doubtless the child, although only six years old, instinctively felt that Charlotte was "making mother well again"; and from that time Charlotte never lost her place in Helen's heart.

This was the first, but not the last time that Charlotte became an inmate of Mrs. Clayden's home. As the years passed by, when sickness entered it, Charlotte would be sent for to help with the nursing, always to the great joy of the little ones.

One summer, after a few weeks' illness, during which Charlotte had been the careful nurse, Mrs. Clayden was greatly needing a quiet rest and change away from her home responsibilities; it was therefore arranged that she should pay a visit to her old home and that Charlotte and the youngest child should accompany her.

Charlotte enjoyed this happy, restful time with her much-loved patient, whom she loved not only for her own sake, but because she, like herself, was one of God's children and sought to serve and obey Him; many helpful talks they had together in the quiet of the sick room, when they spoke of the One they both loved—the Lord of glory.

And God takes heed when His people thus converse together; for we read in Malachi iii. 16, "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: *and the Lord hearkened, and heard it*, and a book of remembrance was written *before him* for them that feared the Lord, and that *thought upon his name*."

Charlotte now delighted to roam with her little charge about the pretty grounds around the old house, and to stroll in the lanes and meadows gathering flowers.

Mrs. Clayden soon gained strength and Charlotte felt rewarded for her care when she saw her patient become more and more able to enjoy the pleasant walks and drives in the beautiful country.

During this visit Mr. Robert Rentford, Mrs. Clayden's favourite brother, arrived from London to spend a few days with his parents. He was delighted to meet his sister and to have a little time with her, especially because they both now loved the Saviour and delighted to talk together of Him and His things as they followed Him in the narrow way.

Charlotte was interested to see Mr. Robert, having so often heard her patient speak of him; *and had she been able to look into the future* she would have been even more interested to see him—but the future is wisely hidden from us by the Almighty and all-wise God in whom we are told to trust.

This happy visit came to an end all too soon. Mrs. Clayden returned home to a loving welcome from her husband and little children, and Charlotte bade her a reluctant farewell.

She left, but was not forgotten; she had endeared herself more and more to all in that little home in many ways. Mr. Clayden respected her wise behaviour and valued her excellent nursing and care of his wife; she won the hearts of the children by entering into their joys and sorrows with loving sympathy; and Mrs. Clayden found in her not only a reliable nurse, but a friend and adviser, for there were many things in which, as they conversed together, Charlotte, as an older Christian, was able to give good advice. Doubtless she saw that there were many things in her patient's circumstances which were liable to stumble her on the narrow way. So she gently sought to give wise counsel to the young wife and mother who found so little true sympathy with regard to the things of God among those nearest and dearest to her.

Mrs. Clayden saw a living example of a true Christian in Charlotte, whose quiet and loving words fell upon her willing ears; she listened, saw her mistakes or dangers, and learned that "Open rebuke is better than secret love." (Prov. xxvii. 5.)

And Charlotte had learned to "speak the truth in love." (Eph. iv. 15.)

(To be continued.)

A Child's Morning Hymn.

"Once more the sun's returning light
Has chased away the shades of night;
Once more I raise my morning song
To God who watched me all night long.

'Tis unto Him who knows the fall
Of ev'ry sparrow that I call;
Oh, how much more He cares for me,
And all my little acts doth see!

I know He loves me, for He gave
His Son to die, my soul to save;
And He will ev'ry good bestow
Till to His home in heaven I go.

Help me to please Thee through this day,
My God, in all I do or say;
May I Thy word to guide me take;
Bless now Thy child for Jesus' sake.

H. M. D.



A Child's Evening Prayer.

"Dear Jesus Christ above the sky,
Who hears the prayer of such as I,
I thank Thee for Thy help this day
Both in my work and in my play.

I thank Thee for my home, my bed,
And for those loved ones who have fed,
And clothed, and loved me, since the day
First in their arms a babe I lay.

To them, and all who love me here,
And are to me so very dear,
I pray Thee ev'ry blessing send,
Jesus, my Saviour, and my Friend.

And, Jesus, bless me, even me,
Thy little child, I come to Thee,
This night before upon my bed
I rest in sleep my weary head." H. M. D.



Hints to Searchers.

1. Begin searching this month if you have not already done so.
2. Write name, age, and address clearly at the top of your answers.
3. If possible, write in ink, write carefully, and make no mistakes in spelling.
4. Give book, chapter, and verse with each answer.
5. Rule a margin, number your answers, and leave one blank line between each answer and the one next to it.

6. If your question is divided into (a) and (b), divide your answer into (a) and (b).

7. Write only that part of a verse that answers the question asked, but if asked to quote a verse write out the whole verse.

8. Use one sheet of paper only, if necessary write on both sides. If note paper is used, open it and write on it as though it were pad paper.



Bible Searchings.

The "Searchings" are to increase acquaintance with the Holy Scriptures. Answers to be sent TO THE EDITOR, F. Shedden, Bryn Awelon, Flint Mountain, Flint, North Wales, not later than the 15th of this month, **with envelopes marked "Searchings" in top left-hand corner.** Age, and full name and address to be given.

Searchers 10 years of age and under 14, omit Nos. 7 and 8.

Searchers 14 years of age and over, answer all the eight.

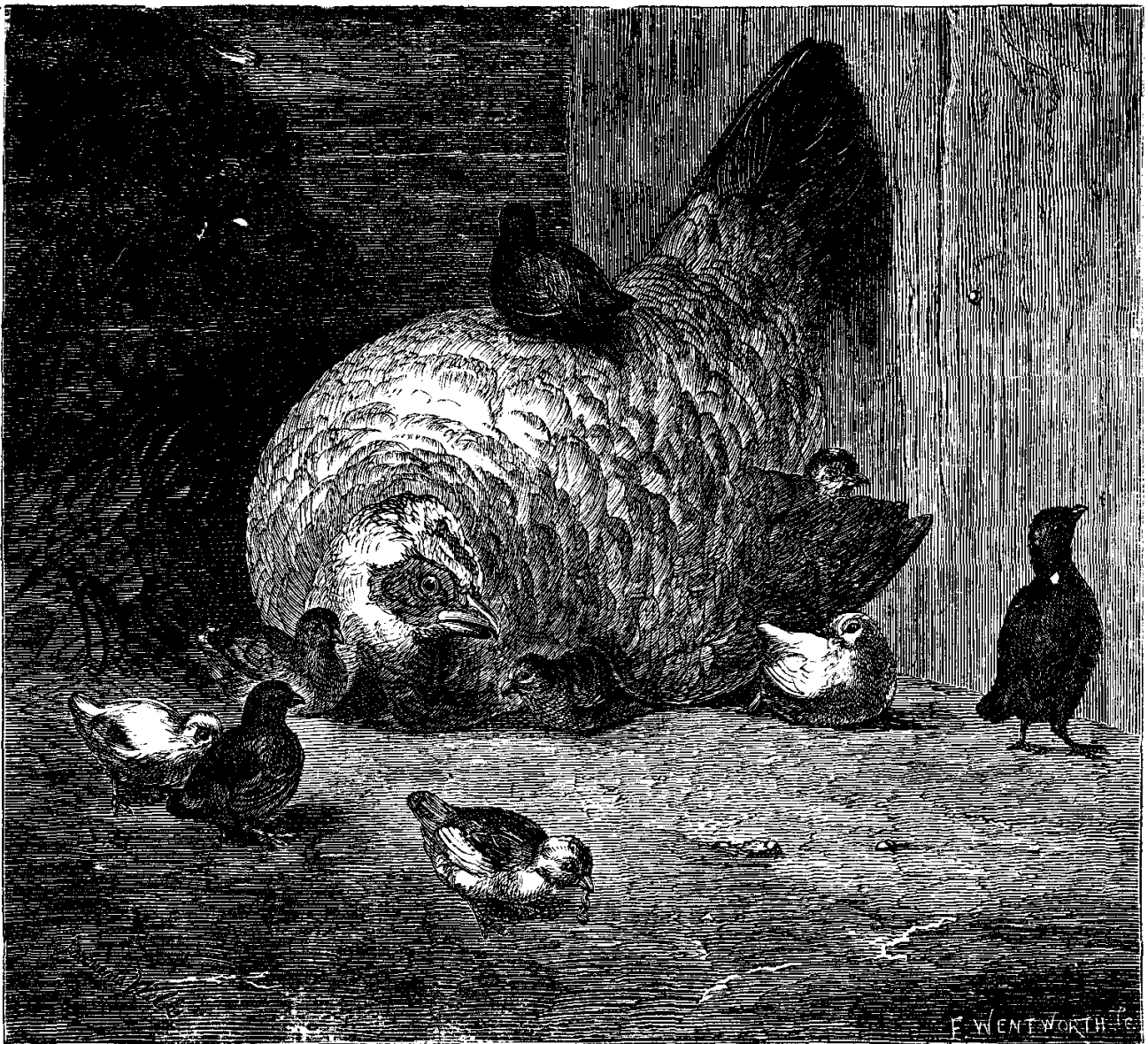
1. What does David tell us he had "heard," "twice"? (Psa. lx.-lxii.)
2. "Strength," "song," "salvation." Quote about half a verse in which these words occur. (Exo. xiv.-xv.)
3. "My strength." Quote a sentence of six words ending thus. (Isa. xlviii.-xlix.)
4. What did Paul say to Timothy about being "strong"? (2 Tim. i.-iv.)
5. Quote a verse from Ephesians that reminds you of this. (Eph. v.-vi.)
6. "My strength." (a) Finish the sentence. (b) Who is the speaker? (c) To whom is he speaking? (2 Cor. xi.-xii.)
7. Quote three sentences from Psalm xviii. in which the word "strength" is found.
8. (a) To whom does God give "power" and "strength"? (Isa. xl.-xlii.) (b) What does Paul say about being "weak" and "strong" that reminds you of this? (2 Cor. xi.-xiii.)

Searchers under 10 years of age.

Complete and write out in full the following passages:—

1. "Blessed the earth." (Matt. v.)
2. "Blessed see God." (Matt. v.)
3. "Blessed of God." (Matt. v.)
4. "Ye are.....be hid." (Matt. v.)
(Book, chapter and verse to be given in each case.)

Youthful Days.



"HE SHALL COVER THEE WITH HIS FEATHERS, AND
UNDER HIS WINGS SHALT THOU TRUST."

“Thy Faith.”

THERE were four occasions, besides others, when our Lord spoke well of the faith of those who came to Him. In each case the person in question believed that our Lord could do them some good, or help them in some way. They had each found out that nobody but our Lord could give them what they needed.

Faith is very simple; you believe that somebody is good, that is all. A child is taken ill and is in pain one day out of doors. He starts running home, and goes by the doctor and the nurse straight home to mother. Why? Because he believes that his mother is good and will comfort him and make him better. He has faith in his mother and is not old enough to understand what doctors and nurses are for.

Suppose I am a manufacturer, and a man asks me to make him a hundred bicycles. I know the man and believe that he is good, so I tell him he can pay me three months after receiving the goods. I have faith in the man and give him credit.

Why not have faith in God; why not believe that He is good? Are you afraid of dying and facing what comes after? God is good, our Lord Jesus died and rose again, and they know what will come after. Cannot we trust them?

The poor woman in the city (Luke vii.) was a sinner and everybody knew it. Each of us knows what it is to be “found out,” and we cannot bear it; and perhaps the woman could bear it no longer. But you know the story: she went to our Lord Jesus with the box of precious ointment, washed His feet with her tears, wiped them with the hair of her head, kissed them, and anointed them. She believed that our Lord was good and could take away the shame of her many sins. He forgave her sins, and said to her, “Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace.”

Another woman (Luke viii.) had been ill

for twelve years. She had spent all her money in medicines, and was still no better. What was she to do? She could not cure herself, she had no money left, and there were no hospitals. She believed that our Lord was good and able to help her. You remember what she did—how she touched the hem of His garment and she became well at once. And how sweet were our Lord’s words, “Daughter, be of good comfort: thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace.”

There was no medicine in those days that could cure a leper. Those afflicted with this disease had to live away from their fellow men, waiting and suffering till they died. Ten of these men saw our Lord, and said, “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.” He sent them to the priest, and on the way they found out that their leprosy was gone. One of them believed that our Lord and God were good, for he came back to give thanks. To him our Lord said, “Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole.” (Luke xvii.) All those who believe that our Lord is good and cry to Him for mercy will receive a blessing, something that will come to make them happy.

The blind man begging outside Jericho cried for mercy and was heard. Nobody could open his eyes. But he heard that our Lord was passing by, and believed that He could do him good. So he called out, “Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me.” The Son of David graciously stood still, heard the man’s request, and said, “Receive thy sight: thy faith hath saved thee.” (Luke xviii.)

If you can read these pages you have eyes in your head that can see—an immense mercy. But can you see with your heart? A time comes to a man when he finds that his heart is blind; he cannot see God. Then he cries to our Lord, who answers by curing his blindness and giving him the Holy Spirit.

Amongst other things the man with the Spirit sees that:

- (1) He has sinned.
- (2) His sins helped to bring our Lord to the cross.

- (3) Our Lord suffered death for sin.
- (4) He rose again.
- (5) He is alive now.
- (6) He is glorified; in other words, sitting crowned on the throne of God His Father.

(7) God is the Father of those who have Holy Spirit.

The two women, the leper, and the blind man each believed that our Lord was good and could help them.

No words of mine can make you believe the same. I can only come by you, touch you on the shoulder, and say, "There is our Lord Jesus. Tell Him all your story, and ask for His mercy."



Matthew.—No. 30.

CHAPTER X. 23-42.

THE Lord Jesus taught His disciples that if He, who was their Lord and Master, was despised and rejected, they would be treated in the same way: if they were His disciples and learned of Him and followed in His steps, they could not expect anything else.

But He told them not to be afraid of cruel men, for God was looking on, and He could see in secret. Even if they were hiding in dark places, He would speak to them, and they were to tell out boldly to others what He said to them. And as for their cruel enemies, they need not be afraid of them, for they could only kill the body; that was the worst they could do, and to put the disciples of Jesus to death would only be to send them more quickly to heaven. With all their cruel hatred they could not kill the soul. Only God could do that, and it is not His thought to kill His creatures, but to bless them; He watches over even a little sparrow, though two could be bought for one farthing. How little does a naughty boy think when he throws a stone at a sparrow, and the little bird falls to the ground, that God takes notice of it.

The Lord taught His disciples that their Father in heaven, who cared for the

birds which would be counted of little worth by men, would take notice of the cruel ways of those who touched His children, for *they* were of more value to Him than many sparrows. And then the Lord Jesus said a very wonderful thing: nothing that we can think of is half so wonderful!

He said, that if one of those poor disciples who were as helpless as a sparrow in the hands of cruel men, should confess His blessed Name before them, he should have a reward.

What reward would he receive?

Oh, how grand it is!

The Lord Jesus would confess his name before His Father in the heavens. Just think of Jesus saying to Peter or to James or John—I heard you confessing that you belonged to Me, when those wicked men were beating you and throwing stones at you, perhaps even putting you to a cruel death; you were not ashamed of Me when men despised Me; I heard you confess My Name, and I will not be ashamed of you in all My glory; I will call out your names—Peter and John and James—and My Father will hear Me say that you are My disciples, and that when the world hated Me, you loved Me

I delight to think of how Jesus will confess the names of those dear people who have lost their lives for His sake—men and women and even children have been killed because they loved Jesus. But He knew them every one, and they will stand before Him in His kingdom, and they will hear Him say that He is not ashamed of them before His Father and before His angels.

But it is very sad to think of the other side; because it is also true that if we deny Jesus now, and are ashamed of Him and of His words, He will deny us in the day of His glory, and He will not know us in His kingdom.

The Lord's next word to His disciples was about peace. One of the names of Jesus is the Prince of Peace, and when He was born into the world of sin and strife a great multitude of the heavenly host praised God saying, "Glory to God

in the highest, and on earth peace, good pleasure in men."

But now Jesus said, "Do not think that I have come to send peace upon the earth; I have not come to send peace, but a sword."

Why did He say this?

Because there is no peace for the wicked; there could be no peace with God while His creatures were rebellious, and while they despised the grace and love which He sent down to them in His own Son. And it is still the same; men, women and children are disobeying God every day of their lives, and how can they have peace? "The way of peace they have not known," but Jesus died to make peace, and for those who confess Him, He is peace. He "made peace by the blood of his cross," and now He is sitting at God's right hand, and peace is proclaimed to those who obey Him.

When Jesus was down here, as He walked about the streets and lanes of Galilee, He was proving who was worthy of Him. He loved sinners, yet He could say, "For My love ye have given Me hatred." "Ye have both seen and hated both me and my Father." Thus men proved that they were not worthy of Him; but Jesus loved on, He first loved us when we were dead in trespasses and sins, and He taught those "lost sheep of the house of Israel" to whom He came, that they were His sheep, and that He would be their Good Shepherd if they would only hear His voice and follow Him.

A great many did listen to His message, and they showed that they were worthy by loving Him and being kind to His messengers. Jesus said, "He that loves father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me," and those who knew His great love to them did love Him first and best of all, so that they were able to say to Him, "We have left all, and have followed thee."

And the blessed Lord Jesus still wins hearts to Himself wherever the story of His love is told. If your heart delights in the love of Jesus, you like to follow

Him, and you like the ways of lowly obedience that you see in Him when He was down here, and the way He went led to the cross.

He gave His life for us, and if we love Him, we are ready to follow Him, even if we have to suffer for it. But we are sure of His reward, for if any one gives only a cup of cold water to one of the little ones who belong to Jesus, he will in no wise lose his reward.

Peace, it is peace, yes, peace for all who trust
In Him who came to seek and save the lost.

Peace, peace sweet peace,
'Tis everlasting peace.

A. M. S.



A Mental Picture.

No. 1.

THERE is a little door mentioned in the scriptures which is very interesting. It is not a literal door, and you cannot hold it with the hands, but it is a very important one, and it leads to one of the avenues of life. A watch should be set at this door to keep it, and a king once prayed that it might be so in his case. This door opens in the centre, and has, as it were, two leaves to it. When this door is open, sometimes good and sometimes evil comes through it.

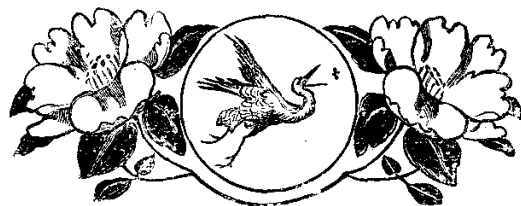
Where do we read of this door, and what was the king's prayer in connection with it?

C. E. H.

Bible Character.

Answer.

The daughters of Zelophehad. (Num. xxvii.)



“HE that dwelleth in the secret place
of the most High shall abide under
the shadow of the Almighty.

I WILL say of the Lord, He is my
refuge and my fortress: my God;
in him will I trust.

SURELY he shall deliver thee from
the snare of the fowler, and from
the noisome pestilence.

HE shall cover thee with his feathers,
and under his wings shalt thou
trust: his truth shall be thy shield
and buckler.”

PSALM XCI. 1-4.

Praise Songs.

HOW? WHEN? WHERE?

CHILDREN, do you praise God? When Satan tempted Eve one of the bad things he did was to sow a spirit of discontent, and very often we see some effects of it even in children, and this keeps them from praising God.

HOW?

With the whole heart.	Psalm ix.
With song.	Psalm xxviii.
With mouth.	Psalm cix.
With lips.	Psalm lxiii.
With tongue.	Psalm xxxv.

WHEN?

Daily.	Psalm lxxii.
Every morning.	1 Chron. xxiii.
Likewise at evening.	1 Chron. xxiii.
Continually.	Psalm xxxiv.
Every day.	Psalm cxlv.

WHERE?

In the sanctuary. God's house.	Psalm cl.
In the home.	Daniel vi.
In trouble. Paul and Silas in prison.	Acts xvi.
In the fields.	Daniel iv.
In time of joy. David.	1 Chron. xxix.



The Gospel.

SEVEN expressions are used in God's word to describe God's glad tidings, each presenting a distinct thought for our consideration:—

The Gospel	Phil. i. 7.
The Gospel of GOD	Rom. i. 1.
The Gospel of CHRIST	Rom. i. 16.
The Gospel of the GLORY OF CHRIST	2 Cor. iv. 4. (New Trans.)
The Gospel of the GRACE OF GOD	Acts xx. 24.
The Gospel of our LORD JESUS CHRIST	2 Thess. i. 8.
The Gospel of PEACE	Eph. vi. 15.

Old Charlotte:

OR,

A LIFE AND ITS LESSONS.

CHAPTER VIII.

CARVER COTTAGE

SEVERAL years have gone by since Charlotte was called to Virginia Cottage. Charles Trent, her brother, had been failing in health for some time. He struggled on with his work as long as possible, but at last was obliged to give it up altogether. His wife was a delicate woman, and as they had their little child to support, his enforced idleness was a great trial.

It was well for him that he had such a sister as Charlotte, who, as soon as she heard of the trouble her brother was in, began to send him help from her well-earned savings. This "kept the wolf from the door," but did not cure the fatal sickness; and by slow but sure degrees Charles Trent became weaker. At last he took to his bed, and Charlotte—willing Charlotte—was sent for.

We can well imagine her painful feelings on the day she entered the cottage and saw her brother so ill and suffering; the old motherly-love would arise in her heart which she had for him when they were two lonely little orphans long ago.

And now her brother was leaving her, and nothing her love could do could prevent it—a short time of devoted nursing, a last look upon his loved face, and Charlotte saw him on earth no more.

After his death it was decided that as Mrs. Trent and her two children, one an infant, were unprovided for, they should share the home of her brothers, who still lived at Carver Cottage, an old-fashioned picturesque place, with a pretty garden, standing back from the village street of Hazelford.

And Charlotte returned to her work. She had known where to find comfort in her sorrow—even in the One of whom it is said, "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows." (Isa. liii. 4.)

The clouds, however, which had been gathering, were to grow darker in her sky—but they did not hide the sunshine of God's love from her heart. Thus, soon after her brother's death, when the grave news came to Charlotte of Mrs. Trent's increased weakness, and it was thought well for her to go and help with the children and nursing, she packed up her things and left her work again with as willing and cheerful a spirit as ever.

She found that she had no easy task before her. The illness was prolonged, money was scarce, and there were so many mouths to feed. All Charlotte's further savings were soon gone, and she was at last glad even to take in a little washing in order to help with the expenses. This made her very busy, for already, besides the nursing of her sister-in-law, she had the care of the infant; there was also little George to keep out of mischief, all the cooking, all the cleaning to do, and also the mending.

Thus there was very little time for the mending or for thinking, but we can picture her sometimes taking her work to Mrs. Trent's room to sit and chat with her for a little while.

"Click! click!" would go the needle against the thimble as she stitched away, and sad, wondering thoughts would perhaps come into her mind as the conversation ceased. She knew that her sister-in-law could not be with them much longer—there was no mistake about that—and then—and she would almost put the thought from her—*What about the children?* Her friend, Mrs. Andrews, would, she knew, be willing to take them under her care if necessary, "They would be well cared for there—and trained in the fear of God—I should be free to earn enough to pay all expenses connected with them—Yes! I feel sure that will be the wisest plan—poor little things! I shall do the best I can for them though!"—and, with such thoughts and plans as these, the needle would have flown from her fingers with decided little clicks, as if the matter were settled and off her mind.

But the mother, as she lay on her bed, also thought of her two children—and as she thought, motherlike, *she* planned. Her plans were soon made, and, weak as she was, she, unknown to those about her, gathered all her strength together and carried them out.

One evening Charlotte and the two brothers, Sam and Ben Carver, were with the sick woman, when, turning to Charlotte, she asked her to go downstairs to fetch something.

This the ever-willing Charlotte did, and during her absence Mrs. Trent addressed her two brothers and bade them promise her that they would keep the baby under their own roof.

Overcome, doubtless, by the agitated manner and suddenness of the dying woman's appeal, they made her a solemn promise to carry out her wishes with regard to her child.

And knowing *nothing* of what had passed during her absence Charlotte returned to the room from her errand.

Later on Charlotte was alone with Mrs. Trent.

"Come nearer, Charlotte!" said she, turning with difficulty and holding out her wasted hand, "I want to speak to you!"

Charlotte went to the bedside and bent gently over the dying woman to listen to her.

"Don't let the boys be parted, Charlotte!

Promise me! Don't let them be parted! Promise me!"

"Yes, I promise, my dear!" said Charlotte without hesitation, her only desire at the moment being to soothe the dying woman—and perhaps her plans lately made to take them both with her to Mrs. Andrews flashed across her mind. "Yes, I promise they shan't be parted!"

And so it ended. Mrs. Trent soon fell into a quiet sleep as though satisfied with the answer, and ere morning broke her spirit had passed from time into eternity.

And Charlotte found herself caught in a net—a net of difficulties from which she felt unable to free herself.

For when the time came to decide what was to be done with the children, Charlotte told their uncles of the plan she had of putting them under the care of her friend at Harstead, while she continued her nursing in order to earn enough to support them (and of this plan Mrs. Andrews would have approved).

But the uncles would not hear of it.

They had, they explained, promised the children's mother to keep the baby under their own roof, and therefore, if Charlotte wished to bring them up together, she must do so *there*.

Poor Charlotte! This was a sore trial and a great blow to her. Never had she contemplated even the possibility of such a state of things; *Willing* she had been to do all she could for her brother's children, and willing she still was—but to be forced to remain at Carver Cottage in order to keep her promise that they should not be separated, was a greater trial than she had ever expected.

It meant giving up her liberty, her work, her friends—she must live with comparative strangers, and be practically dependent upon them; she had little or nothing in common with the two men save the fatal promises made by her and them to the mother of the little nephews—whom she loved so much.

And that love triumphed. She decided to remain at all costs with the children, and the knowledge that she had an Almighty Father to care for her, gave her courage.

Thus the clouds which had of late been growing darker and thicker had gathered until the storm broke—sweeping her brother and his wife from this world, and placing her in this unexpected position, with the care of the little orphans in their uncles' home upon her—and she herself *penniless*.

Whether it was wise of Charlotte to make the hasty promise to her dying sister-in-law we will not decide. The wishes of the dying are not always reasonable, and often greatly the reverse—which those who love them are apt to forget in the desire to comfort them by promising to do as they ask.

But, in any case, as she had given her word to her sister-in-law, and as the brothers had

given theirs, it seemed to Charlotte that it must be right to keep her promise. But she often said how she wished her sister-in-law had not bound her brothers as she did; for they felt compelled to keep their word, although it caused them great inconvenience and expense.

In everything we should have God's will before us—and our actions should be influenced by that will and no other. We should not choose our own way in anything, nor make any rash or unprayerful promise, or hasty arrangement; and should we have involved ourselves unwisely in any matter in opposition to God's will, it is far better, if we see our mistake, to own it before God and to give up our own plans than to persist in our own will—with however good an earthly object.

However, Charlotte felt that she must remain at Carver Cottage as housekeeper to the two Carvers in order to bring up the little nephews whom they generously undertook to keep.

What a change for her! She could scarcely have realised it at first—finding herself in such curious and unlooked for circumstances, and with so much responsibility upon her. Did a few tears come into her gentle eyes sometimes as she sat over her needlework when the children were safely tucked up in their beds, and the two men perhaps sat chatting apart by the fire?

"Click! click!" would go the needle against her thimble as the thought of happier days came before her—and if a few tears welled up in her eyes, she would quickly have brushed them away at the thought of our Father's care and promises, and of the motherless little ones lying peacefully on their pillows with none but herself to care for them.

And how about her patients, and the doctors who so valued her? Offers of work and good monetary posts had been firmly refused in spite of all persuasion to the contrary.

And about this time also, one of the doctors had offered her the position of matron to a small cottage hospital in the neighbourhood.

This was a great surprise to Charlotte, and feeling how kind it was of him, she found it very painful to be obliged to refuse and disappoint him, for even if she *would* have accepted the appointment, she could not do so now.

"All very well!" said the doctor testily, as he listened. "All very well, my good woman, but pray what are you going to do in your old age?"

"Oh, sir! I have a very rich Father!" replied Charlotte.

And they parted—the doctor, perhaps, to think over her words of faith and trust in God—words to be tested for many years, yet more abundantly answered than she ever expected—and Charlotte to continue her labour of love in daily toil and poverty, but in dependence upon that rich Father whom she ever trusted.

(To be continued.)

Bible Searchings.

The "Searchings" are to increase acquaintance with the Holy Scriptures. Answers to be sent to THE EDITOR, F. Shedden, Bryn Awelon, Flint Mountain, Flint, North Wales, not later than the 15th of this month, **with envelopes marked "Searchings" in top left-hand corner.** Age, and full name and address to be given.

Searchers 10 years of age and under 14, omit Nos. 7 and 8.

Searchers 14 years of age and over, answer all the eight.

1. "The prince of this world." (John xii.)
(a) Who is this? (b) What is said of him here?
2. He is again referred to in chapter xiv.
(a) Quote the sentence and say (b) Who is the "Me."
3. (a) What is he called "Prince" of in Ephesians i. or ii.? (b) What else is said of him here?
4. (a) Where in 2 Corinthians iii. or iv. is Satan called "the god of this world"? (b) What evil work is attributed to him here?
5. What four names are given to him in one verse in Revelation xi. or xii.?
6. What work does he carry on in the world according to this verse?
7. The serpent or Satan is mentioned three times in 2 Corinthians xi.-xii. (a) Quote a short sentence about him from each verse. (b) Who is the "me" in the last verse?
8. (a) What two things do we read of the devil or Satan in connection with Judas Iscariot in John xiii.? (b) What did the Lord say about him to Simon in Luke xxi. or xxii.?

Searchers under 10 years of age.

Complete and write out in full the following passages:—

1. "And sold.....into Egypt." (Gen. xxxvii., part of a verse.)
2. "And Pharaoh.....of Egypt." (Gen. xli.)
3. "And Joseph's.....in Egypt." (Gen. xlii.)
4. "And Israel.....I die." (Gen. xlv.)

(Book, chapter and verse to be given in each case.)



Youthful Days.



The day arrived, and with it, a parcel
brought by the postman.

"On Good Manners."

IS it not remarkable that the great apostle to the Gentiles, the Apostle Paul, the heavenly man, should consider the question of manners, and that which will corrupt them.

Manners mean, I suppose, our mode of life, the way we live our lives. Sometimes the word conversation is used. Really good manners are those which belong to Wisdom's children, and were exemplified in our Lord Jesus Christ, who "went about doing good." The Apostle Peter tells us to be pitiful, be courteous, to love as brethren. We ought also to have compassion; and if we want really to know how to conduct ourselves properly, let us read the first eight verses of 1 Corinthians xiii., and seek to follow out their precepts.

The world has an imitation of really good manners which it calls politeness, or good breeding; but often this is only a manner which is assumed, and leads to saying things which are not quite true, just to please. I once heard of a young lady who went to pay a little visit to an old lady. At tea-time there were some sprats on the table, and the lady said to her visitor, "Do you like sprats, my dear?" "Oh! very much indeed, thank you." The hostess gave her so many of them that she was at last obliged to confess that she did not like them at all. It was clearly a mistake on her part to profess something not true for the sake of politeness. On the other hand, I knew a little girl who was invited to her aunt's to tea. The buns on the table were not quite fresh, and being asked to have a second one, she replied, "The buns are bad." This was certainly not good manners, and gave great offence.

Most of us know the fascination of a friend, and young people do especially. How pleasant it is to see two little girls go to school together, or to walk or to play together; or for two boys to fraternise and to study or share their

games. You say, "Well, this cannot be wrong, we read of friends in the Bible." Jesus Himself uses the word friends, and calls His disciples so. Yes, surely, it is right also to have companions, provided they are of the right sort. But the apostle gives us a warning word: when we like any one, or are attached to them, we may be deceived, we are inclined to overlook their faults. We may make excuses for a little untruth, foolishness, or for bad temper, until gradually we become affected by it ourselves. The apostle tells us, therefore, "Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners." Do not be deceived into thinking that you can correct evil in others; but remember that you may be unconsciously led into evil by a companion. The Apostle Paul was a learned man, and the quotation (1 Cor. xv. 33) comes from an old heathen writer, from the "Thais of Menander," who, no doubt, had experienced it. You know that if one rotten apple be placed among a number of good ones, they will be affected by the evil, but the bad one will gain nothing from the good. C. E. H.



HOW sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In a believer's ear!
It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,
And drives away his fear.

It makes the wounded spirit whole,
It calms the troubled breast;
'Tis manna to the hungry soul,
And to the weary rest.

Blest Name! the rock on which we build,
Our shield and hiding-place;
Our never-failing treasury, filled
With boundless stores of grace.

Jesus! our Saviour, Shepherd, Friend,
Thou Prophet, Priest, and King!
Our Lord, our Life, our Way, our End,
Accept the praise we bring.

Weak is the effort of our heart,
And cold our warmest thought;
But when we see Thee as Thou art,
We'll praise Thee as we ought.

Till then we would Thy love proclaim,
With every fleeting breath;
And triumph in Thy blessed Name
Which quells the power of death.

Matthew.—No. 31.**CHAPTER XI. 1-15.**

WHEN Jesus had given those commands about which we have been reading to His twelve disciples, He went away to teach and preach in their cities.

What did He preach about? you may ask. We are told that He preached the gospel or good news of the kingdom. He told those who came to hear His gracious words that He had come from God, His Father, to redeem their life from destruction, and to cover them with loving-kindness and tender mercies.

John the Baptist had brought a message from God to the people. John spoke of the One who was coming after him—the Lamb of God. Now Jesus had come and He was teaching the crowds Himself. But John was not there to hear His voice; for the wicked king Herod had put him in prison because this true servant of God had not been afraid to speak to the king about his bad ways. While God's dear servant was in that lonely prison he heard of the wonderful works of Christ, who came to undo the works of the devil, blessed works of healing and of mercy, such as the Son of God alone could do. John heard all this, and he was puzzled and perhaps a little unhappy, for he thought—If Jesus is the great One of whom I said that He would come to set the captive free, how is it that He allows me to be shut up in prison? Why does He not come to set me free, and let me tell more people about Him?

John had had a lonely life in the deserts, but the day had come when he saw the One "mightier" than himself, whose way he had come to prepare. He had seen the Spirit like a dove rest upon Jesus as He came up out of the waters of Jordan when John had baptised Him, and had heard the voice from heaven which said, "Thou art my beloved Son, in thee I have found my delight." He could say,

"I have seen and borne witness that this is the Son of God"; and his joy was fulfilled.

So John sent a message to Jesus to ask if He really was the coming One, or whether he and his followers must wait for another.

Did Jesus say, "Tell John that I am the Christ of God, the One of whose coming he used to preach to the people"?

No; the Lord Jesus never spoke as men speak, and He did not speak to the mind or reason of men, He wished to prove that people had faith to believe in Him and to trust Him; whether they were, like the disciples on the lake, in a storm; or hungry, like the crowds whom He fed; or ill, like Peter's wife's mother; or in prison—it was always the same, the whole question was whether they could trust Him, and whatever the danger or trouble might be, if those who were distressed or afraid only had faith to believe that Jesus could help and save them, they found that it was all right. His eyes were upon them and His heart never ceased to love and care for them; even though He might not at once change anything that had troubled them, He could speak peace to their hearts and comfort them as none other could.

So when the Lord received the message from John in prison, He did not send word that He was coming to take him out of prison, but He said to the messengers: Go and carry back the report about Me, tell John what you have heard and seen—not what other people have told you, but what you yourselves know; what your own eyes have seen, and your ears heard—and let John see how much you yourselves believe in Me.

That is the best way to tell others of Jesus now, to tell them not so much what we have heard from other people, but something that we ourselves know and believe about Him. What a wonderful story the messengers had to tell! They could say they had seen blind men seeing, and lame people walking, and lepers made

quite well, and deaf people able to hear ; they could even say they had seen the dead raised to life ; and they had heard the glad tidings that was preached to the poor. All this the messengers were to tell John, and then they were to give him one little message from the Lord, all for himself. It was just this—“ *Blessed is whosoever shall not be offended in me.* ” Perhaps those who carried back that word from Jesus did not understand what it meant, but the one to whom it was sent would understand that it would be a happy thing for him if he had faith to believe in Jesus, though it almost seemed as if he had been forgotten by Him as the days and weeks went by and no deliverance came.

The Lord Jesus did indeed come to set the captive free, and to open the prison to those who were bound ; why then did He allow His faithful servant to suffer and die in prison by the hands of cruel men ?

It was because John was the Lord's chosen servant, the one sent from God to go before His Christ to prepare His way, and to shew the children of Israel who He was. But they had rejected the Master, and they would not have His servant ; the Bridegroom was going to be taken away from them, and the “ friend of the Bridegroom ” was in prison !

So Jesus said, Blessed is he who can believe in Me in spite of all those who are either against Me or care nothing about Me.

Jesus loved John ; He knew that he had borne witness to Him when he said, “ Behold the Lamb of God ! ”—and now the Lord bore witness to John. He spoke to the people about him, and said that he was more than a prophet, he was God's messenger, and no greater man was ever born than John the Baptist.

John had not been afraid to confess the name of Jesus before the wicked king Herod, and Jesus will not be ashamed to confess his name before His Father when He comes in the glory of His kingdom ; then John will get his full reward.

He did go before Jesus to prison and to death ; he gave up his own life for His sake.

Like the blessed Lord John loved righteousness and hated iniquity, and so he reproved the bad ways of the king, and God allowed him the great honour of suffering for righteousness' sake ; the little time in prison was soon past, but the Lord's faithful servant will have a long, long eternity of glory with Him by-and-by.

Jesus told the people who crowded round Him that if they thought John was a weak man who would be easily turned aside, they were mistaken. He was not a man who loved his ease and comfort—such people are found in king's courts, and are like the chaff which the wind drives away ; but John was not moved by any of the winds of this world, the favour of the wicked king was nothing to him. He might have no home but the barren wilderness or Herod's dreadful prison, but he was to God like the precious wheat which He gathers into His garner. Loved by God and blessed by Him, John was one who was as “ salt ” upon the earth, and as “ light ” in this dark world, and his reward is great in the heavens.

A. M. S.



Health.

A WORD TO YOUNG CHRISTIANS.

IT is of utmost importance to keep healthy. The Apostle John writing to a beloved brother said : “ Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.”

Soul prosperity or spiritual health is of great moment and we do well to see to it that we are keeping healthy.

“ Is there no balm in Gilead ; is there no physician there ? why then is not the *health* of the daughter of my people recovered ? ” asked the prophet Jeremiah.



AND it came to pass at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near, and said, Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that Thou art God in Israel . . .

HEAR me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know that Thou art the Lord God, and that Thou hast turned their heart back again.

THEN the fire of the Lord fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench.

AND when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces : and they said, The Lord, He is the God ; the Lord, He is the God.

1 Kings xviii. 36-39



How can we be maintained in spiritual health? is a question that arises in every true heart.

There are four great essentials to health.

(1) SUNSHINE.

The light of the knowledge of the glory of God, which shines in the face of Jesus Christ, is the sunshine for the soul. To keep near to Christ—to receive the warm rays of His glory into the heart—to see the shining of His face—is to keep in the sunshine. "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from among the dead, and the Christ shall shine upon thee."

(2) FRESH AIR.

How invigorating it is to breathe the atmosphere of divine love! We know the love of God, the love of Jesus and the love of the saints. It is like breathing fresh air to get away from the world of hatred, jealousy and strife, and enjoy the freedom of a circle in which God's love is known and where we love one another.

(3) FOOD.

The word of God is full of instruction as to food for the soul—unleavened bread, manna, the old corn of the land, the food for the priests, are all types of the way the soul is fed. Especially is it necessary for health that we should desire "earnestly the pure mental milk of the word, that by it we may grow up to salvation."

Do not neglect the daily feeding upon Christ!

(4) COMPANY.

We shall never be healthy if we are always alone. Of the apostles it was said, "And being let go, they went to their own company." In the company of those who love the Lord Jesus you will find health and happiness. Believers are the companions of Christ. What wonderful company to be in!

May we each be concerned to give heed to the exhortation: "Occupy thyself with these things; be wholly in them, that thy progress may be manifest to all." Then by the Lord's grace we shall be spiritually healthy, and be here for His pleasure and glory.

F. S. M.

Followed.

(Tune: "Art Thou Weary.")

SAVIOUR, long Thy love I slighted,
Long Thy patience tried;
Yet, for peace and satisfaction,
Oft I sighed.

Many times I heard Thee saying
"Come, oh! come to Me."
But no beauty in Thee, Saviour,
Could I see.

Thus my wayward course pursuing,
Far I strayed from Thee;
But in mercy Thou didst follow
After me.

Now Thy love my will has broken,
Lord to Thee I bow.
Take me, as a contrite sinner,
Save me now.

Derby.

W. L.



Hidden Cities from the Bible.

1. A beautiful babe lay cradled in the river.
 2. It is better to do than to promise.
 3. She bade Haman to a great feast.
 4. Can a leopard change his spots?
 5. It was near the end or close of a king's life.
 6. Sheep often foolishly stray.
 7. Shun empty flattery.
- Give one event connected with each place, with references.

Answer to Mental Picture.

No. 1.

See Psalm cxli. 3.



Old Charlotte:

OR,
A LIFE AND ITS LESSONS.

CHAPTER VIII. (continued).

CARVER COTTAGE.

CHARLOTTE had soon settled down into the daily routine in the old cottage, and was as happy as ever, notwithstanding all the fresh cares and responsibilities, for she cast her care upon the Lord and trusted in Him, and

"The heart that trusts for ever sings
And feels as light as it had wings."

How fond she grew of the children!—watching them grow with motherly pride—little George as he ran about the cottage, and baby Jim as he sat on her knee or lay kicking in his cradle at her side.

If the sun did not always shine outside the cottage, there was always sunshine inside to warm and cheer those who entered, for Charlotte's ready smile and pleasant manner and genuine love for every one were always at hand to soothe, cheer, or sympathise with any one who might be near. In seeking to please her Saviour she forgot *herself*, and, like the good woman we read of, she found happiness *not* in gathering flowers for herself along her pathway, but in scattering them as she went—leaving all behind for others to enjoy.

A few times only during the next fifteen years did Charlotte leave her post to visit friends, and only once to nurse a patient, Mrs. Clayden—one whom she specially loved.

She corresponded with Mrs. Andrews, who was a true friend to her during all those long years. She guessed that Charlotte, now having no means of her own, was greatly tried, and often sent needed help of different kinds and "just at the right moment," as Charlotte used to say.

Although the Carver men had good work and earned regular wages, the sum of money they gave Charlotte every week for the rent, food, and household expenses left nothing for clothes either for the children or herself. Indeed she never bought anything for herself and it was wonderful how God provided things that they needed. She used to say that she learned much of God's tender care at Carver Cottage. But her faith, both on her own and the children's account, was sometimes tried for a long time; often money presents which were given to her by friends had to go for housekeeping purposes. But perhaps the Carvers did not know of this nor realise how much in need she often was.

Indeed it was good and liberal of them to do as much as they did, though of course it was their duty. Charlotte was often tried in many ways, but God enabled her to bear all in silence even when she was tested. At times towards the later years, she felt they would be glad if she left the cottage. Of the Lord Jesus we read, "He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth," and "as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth." (Isa. liii. 7.) How often peace would remain, where quarrelling and unhappiness arise, if Christians always acted as their Lord.

In all her difficulties God did not fail Charlotte. He would send the needed help at the most needy times, for

"God never is before His time,
And never is behind."

For example, Charlotte had, as we know, a mother's pride in her baby boy, who thrived under her care. He had begun to look very clumsy in his long clothes, and Charlotte decided that the time had come to put him into short ones, he being nearly three months old. But alas! she found that she had not all the necessary little garments; there was just one missing. So she was greatly disappointed, for she particularly wished to "short coat" her baby on the traditional date. But she had no money with which to supply the need; however, she had a "very rich Father."

The day arrived—and with it, first thing in the morning, a parcel brought by the postman. Wondering what it contained, Charlotte opened it, and inside found *two* of the very little garments which she had been longing to possess for her baby!

Perhaps Charlotte never spent a happier day than that, realising, as she did, that God does for His children exceeding abundantly *above* all they ask or think. (Eph. iii. 20.)

On another occasion, when wishing to go on a visit, one of the very few during her time at the cottage, she had not a tidy pair of boots, and having no money she was sadly puzzled to know how to obtain another pair.

The next day was a wet one. The clouds were thick and dark, not only in the sky but in Charlotte's circumstances, for she had little hope of getting any new boots and consequently might have to give up her holiday.

Seeing that, being wet, it meant an "indoor day" for her, Charlotte decided to clean out a lumber room at the top of the cottage, for which she had long wanted an opportunity.

So she set to work with a will and presently as she was routing about, she came across an old box full of poor Mrs. Trent's things, and taking them out she discovered to her surprise a pair of boots, which, when she had tried them on, she found fitted her beautifully.

There is a saying that "God's weather never stops God's work," and in this instance it was the means of providing Charlotte's need and enabling her to have her holiday. "Is anything too hard for the Lord?" (Gen. xviii. 14.)

The years passed quickly by; the boys went to and fro to school, and Charlotte was always "busy as a bee" from morning till night. The uncles never seemed to see what difficulty she often had in providing all that was needed with the sum of money they allowed her; she often felt hurt and tried; but she would "look up," and so escape from the vexations around her.

As often as she was able on Sundays, Charlotte walked into Oldhurst, about four miles off; the distance never seemed too far for her, because she loved to go to the meetings where she heard about the Saviour, and praised and worshipped Him with others who loved Him also. Among these people were two ladies, the Misses Wilson, who were always pleased if Charlotte would go to their house for a rest and some dinner before returning home. She greatly enjoyed these little visits to her kind friends, who soon became much interested in her.

But Charlotte never neglected her proper duties to the men and boys at the cottage in order to go out on Sundays. She knew it would not please God for her to neglect home duties to profess to worship Him. For He "must" be worshipped "in spirit and in truth." (John iv. 24.) His children should shew the spirit of worship in all their ways, and "present their bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto the Lord." (Rom. xii. 1.)

So Charlotte, toiling on, made the cottage a happy home for "her boys" who bore her spoiling well; and perhaps there were no finer looking lads in the village than George and Jim Trent, and it was not their aunt's fault if they were not honest and upright; they had a daily example in her life and ways which was far better than any precept. She taught them the fear of God and about the love of Jesus, His Son, and how they should please Him in all things. She was always ready to listen to their boyish plans and to share their joys and sorrows.

And when evening closed in, we can picture Charlotte sitting down with her needle, while the two boys beside her listen perhaps to all the tales she tells, and as they laugh merrily together, the "click! click!" of the needle against Charlotte's thimble can scarcely be heard, and the apples roasting before the fire for supper, hiss and pop in vain, and gradually blacken on one side and fall in from very weariness of waiting to be turned!

(To be continued.)

Bible Searchings.

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Searchers 10 years of age and under 14.
omit Nos. 7 and 8.

Searchers 14 years of age and over,
answer all the eight.

1. What is necessary if a man is to "see the kingdom of God"? (John ii. or iii.)
2. What is said in Mark x. about receiving the kingdom of God?
3. (a) How often in this chapter is the kingdom of God mentioned? (b) To whom does the "such" in verse 14 refer?
4. "For the which ye also suffer." (2 Thess.) (a) For what were they suffering? (b) In 1 Thessalonians what does the writer say God had called them unto?
5. Quote a sentence from Acts xiv. that reminds you of suffering for the kingdom of God.
6. "Your brother and companion." (Rev. i. to iii.) (a) "Companion" in what? (b) Who is the speaker? (c) Where was he when he saw the wonderful vision?
7. What compensation did the Lord promise to His disciples because they had continued with Him in His "temptations"? (Luke xxi. or xxii.) Quote His own encouraging words.
8. What did the Lord say to Pilate about His kingdom? (John xviii. to xx.)

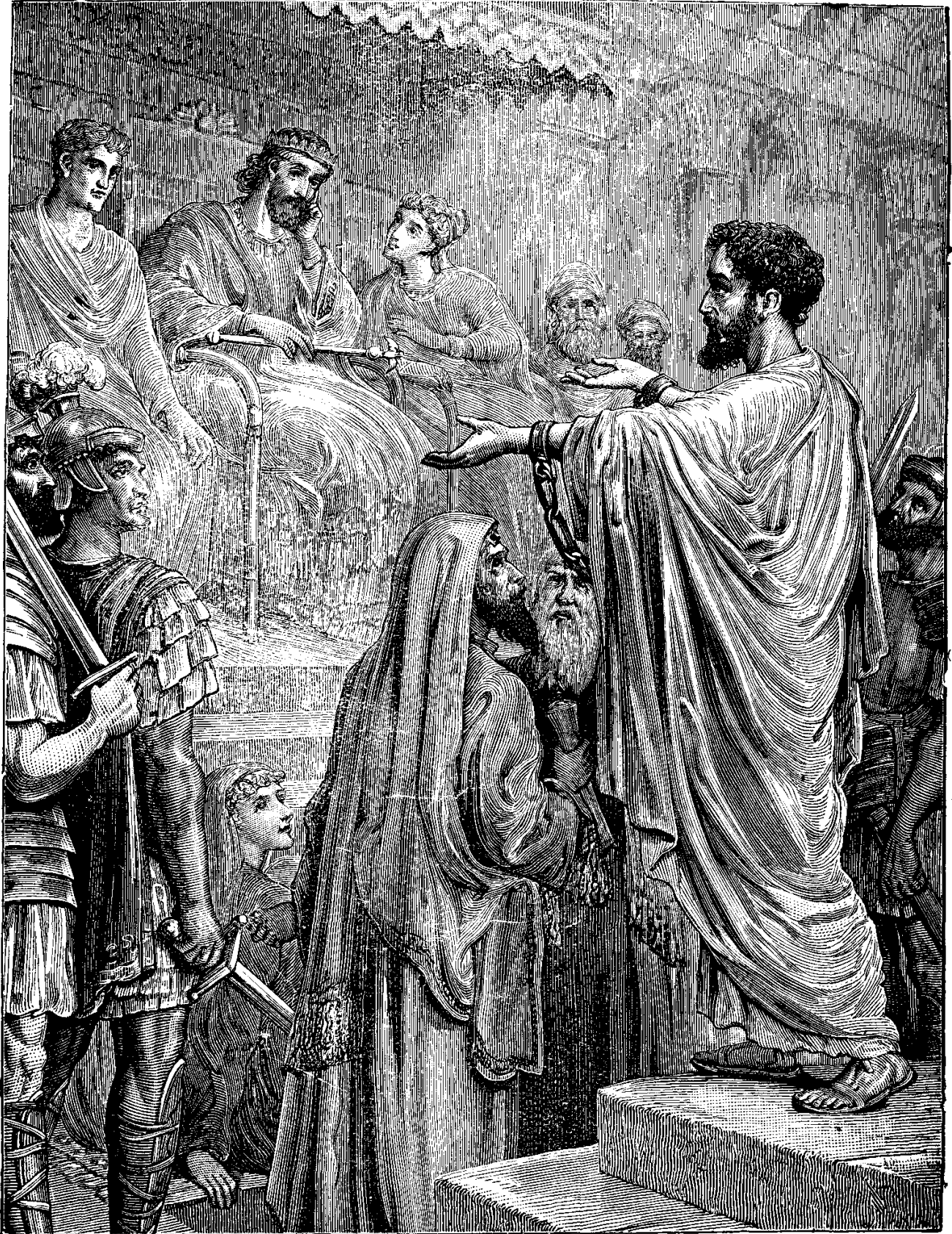
Searchers under 10 years of age.

Complete and write out in full the following verses:—

1. Watch come. (Matt. xxiv.)
 2. Watch the morning. (Mark xiii.)
 3. Watch the Son of man. (Luke xxi.)
 4. Therefore watch and be sober. (1 Thess. vi.)
- (Book, chapter and verse to be given in each case.)



Youthful Days.



My hope.

ON the front cover of this magazine a text is printed, "Thou art my hope, O Lord God." The man who wrote those words was getting very old, and during his lifetime he had learned that God is righteous and has the power to save people. A young lad in a situation for the first time has to learn everything, but as time goes on, he knows what his master wants without being told. Experience teaches him as he grows older. In some way like this the writer of this psalm had learned the ways and thoughts of God.

Perhaps he had wanted to do as he liked, and God in some way had warned him not to. He had seen that God punished those who did wrong. He had found out that everything that God had done was right, perfectly right. Then he had discovered that God could deliver or save those that trusted in Him. He had known people who had been in great distress, fearing that enemies were about to kill them or had found themselves at the point of death, yet when they cried to God He saved them. The writer of this psalm had been trusting in God from his youth, and his hope in God gave him such peace and joy that he was not afraid to die himself, for he says (Psa. lxxi. 20), "Thou, which hast shewed me great and sore troubles, shalt quicken me again, and shalt bring me up again from the depths of the earth."

Our hopes are all connected with something bright and happy. The farmer hopes that there will be a good crop of wheat this year and that he will get it in safely. The merchant hopes that the ship laden with his goods will get safely to Australia and that they will sell at a good profit. The boy at school hopes that he will succeed in the examination and that his name will head the list, and he looks forward to the prize-day. The young people in the family are hoping

that their parents will take them to the seaside for a holiday. All are expecting something to happen that will make them happy.

The Christian has a hope, he too is expecting something to happen that will make him happy.

Thus the Apostle Paul rejoiced in "hope of the glory of God." (Rom. v. 2.) He was looking forward to the day when everybody would praise God for His goodness, and that would be a happy day for Paul. At present a great many people do not praise or even thank God. They have received a great many mercies, but they hardly ever give Him a thought, how sad! A time will come when everybody will see the things that God has done are most excellent. Thoughts like this gave the apostle courage in the midst of his trials, so much so that he could sing at midnight in prison with his feet fast in the stocks. At first his troubles made him wonder what was going to happen and he became anxious. But afterwards he found that good things sometimes happened as a direct result of his sufferings, just as the Philippian jailor and his household were converted the very night that Paul sang in prison.

As time went on and more troubles came to the apostle, he became less anxious and more patient. His experiences made him hope. His heart was filled with the sense of God's love to him, and he looked forward to the day of God's glory with joyful anticipation, knowing that all he was hoping for would certainly come to pass.

"But we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience: and patience, experience; and experience, hope, and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." (Rom. v. 3-5.)

There is no need to hope for the forgiveness of our sins. God righteously forgives those who believe in our Lord

Jesus. In faith we believe that our Lord rose from the dead, and that we are justified before God. In other words, we tell God that we have sinned; He assures us of His pardon, and we can call Him our Father. These things can be known and enjoyed at the present moment. I trust that many of my young readers know that they have been forgiven and can pray to God their Father without fear.

I think what the Christian hopes for is to see our Lord Jesus as Son over His own house. (Heb. iii. 6.) On the cross our Lord was alone. But we look forward in hope to the time when He will be in the midst of a great company of redeemed, happy and praising people. At present He is not honoured by the world, He was cast out and despised. But in the time to come it will be just the opposite: all will own Him as the Son of God and say how worthy He is to reign.

We shall see Him then and we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is. (1 John iii. 2.) With this bright hope before us we purify ourselves. We turn away from the evil and corrupting influences of this world and think of our Lord and Master, desiring to serve Him truly and faithfully.

Is not this a "better hope"? Can you, young reader, say "This is *my* hope"?



Matthew.—No. 32.

CHAPTER XI. II.

WHY did Jesus say that "he that is least"—just a little one—"in the kingdom of heaven is greater than" John the Baptist, who was so great a prophet? Because what has to do with heaven must be greater than what has to do with the earth. Heaven is God's throne, and earth is His footstool. It is a very happy thing to know about God's footstool, but it is a greater thing

to know Him in His kingdom, and to be able to say, "He is my King, He reigns over me!"

When John was preaching, the wickedness of man made it very hard to find the kingdom of heaven: everything came in the way and stopped those who wished to reach it. The fear of other men, the thought of what they might say or think, the crowd who liked the broad way—all hindered those who were wishing to find the narrow way that leads to life. So the Lord Jesus said that only those who had strong faith to push through all the difficulties were able to reach the kingdom of heaven.

We have seen that this was true in the case of the four men who uncovered the roof and let down the sick man whom they carried, and laid him at the feet of Jesus; they had to force their way to Him.

Just so with the sick woman who touched Him, having pressed through the crowd that she might reach Him. Each one had to break away from something in order to get to Him; friends and relations did not help them, for they all had their own opinion of Jesus. Some said, "He is a prophet"—but every little one in His kingdom had to learn for himself who Jesus really was: the One come from God. Each one had to come to Him in faith, like the blind man and the leper of whom we have read, and say, "Thou art able to make me well"—and then he learned that Jesus was the Son of the living God.

John the Baptist was the last of the prophets whom God sent to speak for Him to His people to call them back to Himself. God had sent many prophets to teach the people what He felt about the way in which they broke His holy laws, but they did not listen to those messengers from God, and now they treated John just as they had treated all God's prophets—and God was going to end that way of dealing with His people who had forsaken Him. He would not send them any more prophets, nor

would He even talk to them any more about His wise and beautiful laws which He had given by Moses ; they had broken them, and He would give them something new, if they had ears to hear about it.

What a sad thing it would be to have ears that do not hear what God is saying to us !

John was a voice crying out in the wilderness, and calling men to confess their sins ; but the voice of Jesus—who was now speaking to them—was a voice from heaven, telling of forgiveness of sins and of God's love to sinners, and He said, " He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."

The Lord said the people He was speaking to were like little children calling to their companions and saying, " We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced ; we have mourned to you, and ye have not lamented." What does this mean ?

The people had heard the voice of John calling them to repent, and they had not mourned and been grieved about their sins with humbled hearts—they had been deaf to that voice, and it was now silent.

And they had not rejoiced with Jesus. If they had really heard the sweet tones of His voice telling of forgiveness and the love of God, they would have danced for joy.

Yet there were children of wisdom who did both ; they confessed with sorrow and believed with joy. The Lord Jesus was God's wisdom, and He had children in this world who had ears to hear and eyes to see Him. He came down from heaven to speak of excellent things, and the words of His lips were right things, but blind, sinful men were deaf to the sweet tones of heavenly music ; they were not worthy of Him because they loved something else more than Him. Yet He had children who were wise because they learned wisdom from His lips ; little ones in their own eyes, who had heard the voice of John when he spoke of the coming One, and now rejoiced that He had come to save His people from their sins.

To them Jesus was God's wisdom taught to them in love ; they danced for joy at the sound ; it was music to their opened ears, and Jesus' own delight was with these children of wisdom. A. M. S.



A Little Child of Seven.

A LITTLE boy of only seven years of age used to sleep in a cot in his mother's room. One night he wakened her by saying,

" Mother, should I not love God more than you and father ?" He seemed distressed and troubled, and the sense of having no love towards God had made him unhappy.

The mother listened, and then asked him to try and go to sleep again, and they would have a talk on the matter at another time.

The same subject came up again and again. The mother had many a talk with him, and explained to him that she could not make him love any one. But she tried to get him to think of Jesus and what He has done for sinners ; how He has suffered for them and bore their sins on the cross, and how He loved them and gave Himself for them.

About a month after they were again speaking on the same subject, and the little boy said,

" Mother, I do love God now more than you and father.

" Last night, when I went to bed, I prayed that the Lord Jesus would make me love Him, and I believed He would ; but I expected to see Him, and I thought He would come and stand beside my bed. So I lay quite still, and kept my eyes wide open, because I did not think I could love any one I did not see ; but suddenly I felt the love come here (pointing to his breast), and I am so happy because I do love Him now."

The love was there. The little boy had had that personal dealing with the Saviour, and in telling Him that he did



REJOICE in the Lord always:
and again I say, Rejoice.
Let your moderation be
known unto all men. The Lord is
at hand.

Be careful for nothing; but
in every thing by prayer and sup-
plication with thanksgiving let your
requests be made known unto God.

And the peace of God, which
passeth all understanding, shall
keep your hearts and minds through
Christ Jesus.

PHILIPPIANS IV. 4-7.

not love Him, it amounted to saying, "I have sinned and I own it all." Then he found out the Lord loved him, and could say, "We love him, because he first loved us." (1 John iv. 19.)

Just think of that "first love." It was when we were yet "without strength," and had nothing whatever to commend us that the Lord's love was set upon us, and that Christ died for the ungodly. His love is just the same now as then.

Human affection changes, often gets weak, and the measure of it is "that a man lays down his life for his friends" (John xv. 13); but Christ's love abides the same, and is always towards us.

How reasonable, therefore, that we should go and tell the Lord all the truth. So many might say, "Lord, I am a sinner; do have mercy on me;" and yet they might not feel really that they had sinned against the Lord. Far better to go to the Lord and tell Him they do not feel themselves to be sinners, and do not feel the need of mercy. For the Lord delights to bless when there is this real confession of need and desire of the heart. Why not then have that personal, individual heart to heart dealing with Jesus; and then may the result be, I do love Him because He first loved me. J. P. W.



Another Mental Picture.

I WAS not a precious stone, neither a priceless gem, yet I was worth a king's ransom. I was in the house of a warrior and I rested on his pillow. A king's daughter handled me, yet I never felt it, and though she looked upon me, and touched me I did not feel moved by it.

I was of the greatest use to her, yet there is no mention of my name, and no record of what became of me.

What was I?



Old Charlotte:

OR,
A LIFE AND ITS LESSONS.

CHAPTER IX. CHANGES.

TEN long years and more have gone by, and Charlotte is still pursuing her labours of love at Carver Cottage. She is now an elderly woman; care, toil, and poverty have aged her early; but she is not sad. Her face, though altered, is as bright as ever, and her brave back is sadly bent—not from bearing her *own* burdens (for she knows where to cast *those*), but as the result of bearing the burdens of others whilst she had been fulfilling "the law of Christ." (Gal. vi. 2.)

Doubtless many in the village of Hazelford can tell of a burden lifted or eased by Charlotte, and of homes where her cheery word and soothing, helping hand have been heard and felt. There are many homes from which she has taken the *burden* of sorrow, pain or trouble away with her, when with "I'll call again before long, my dear!" she ran out of the door.

Yes! Charlotte's back is sadly bent, but she still trots about the cottage with a nimble step, and her voice, though a little more shaky than of old, may be heard almost at any time as she sings about the house or as she sits by the fire-side with her needle and spectacles, waiting for the kettle to boil and the men and her boy Jim to come home for their tea.

"Click! click!" goes the needle against the old brass thimble, as she runs it in and out of her boys' socks which she is never weary of darning.

"Tired, Charlotte?" some one may ask, peeping in at the door.

"Oh! that makes me enjoy my bed, my dear!"

"But can't you rest more than you do?"

"My *rest* is coming—and it will be for *ever*, my dear!"

"But you should think of yourself as well as others!"

"Oh, don't you worry about *me*—our Father above will take care of *me*, my dear!"

Thus she would answer, always cheery, always content, *always trusting!*

And "click! click!" would go the needle faster than ever; as she stitches the socks the picture of "her boys" rises in her thoughts, and a smile of satisfaction passes over her face.

Tall, fine boys they are. She may well think of them with pleasure and love. They are earning their living now, and both have good positions. George is away from home, and Jim

comes to and fro to Carver Cottage, and the time of his coming is Charlotte's happiest hour. She is never so content as when she has her boys at her side.

But as she stitches on let us follow the thoughts which, perhaps, cross her mind as a shade passes over her face—only to pass away in a moment, as she says to herself, "Ah, I must trust Him."

And, why these sad thoughts?

Because her work at Carver Cottage is almost done. She is not sad at the thought of leaving the cottage and the many trials connected with her work there; but she realises that she is soon to be separated from both her boys; she has fulfilled the promise to their mother faithfully: she has brought them up together at great cost to herself under the same roof for fifteen long years; now they are both respectably and comfortably started in life. There is no more need for her services at the cottage, for Dan Carver is about to be married and his wife will undertake the housekeeping instead of Charlotte. In a few months' time she will be penniless and roofless—but not homeless. Has she not a rich Father and an eternal home? and though she be a stranger here, will He not provide for the needs of His child until she is safely in her home above?

As she sits there over the fire it is easy to see in a moment that Charlotte has known what poverty means; her clothes are scanty and have a shabby appearance, as if they had been made to survive a great struggle; her hands and head tremble slightly, and she finds it difficult to see her stitches in spite of her large spectacles.

"Never mind," we seem to hear her say to herself, "it makes me sympathise with others, you see; and I know our Father will never really let me want; He supplies all my need but does not promise more; then we suffer sometimes for our own mistakes along our way, my dear; we miss our way, as it were, and lose our blessings by our failures; but He never fails us; He helps us through all our difficulties; we learn good lessons by our mistakes and find how He can turn them to blessings if we own them; He gives us strength to bear our trials, whatever they may be. Yes, I feel cold sometimes and tired, it is true, my dear, but I have little time to think about it, and 'the sleep of a labouring man is sweet' (Eccles. v. 12), and a hot brick soon warms my bed, my dear."

And as she sits by the candle-light and glowing embers, she has no one to whom she can pour out her heart even though she wished to do so. Hers has been a solitary life of late, and now, although nearly worn out, she has again soon to face this cold world and earn her living in it.

"Now, what *can* I do? I am getting old and can't take up nursing again—I am past that

now"—and the needle flies faster and faster—"I must make some inquiries in the neighbourhood and run into Gonstone and Harstead if I can manage it. Perhaps if I make it known that I want work, some one may find some use for me. Ah, Charlotte! you little thought in your proud and haughty days that you would come to *this*! but our Lord 'had not where to lay his head' and He will care for me. Perhaps I might get a cheap little room or attic and go daily to char; I'm too short of clothes to get a good situation. But there! I know God will provide, so I need not worry. He knows all about it."

And we see a smile passing over her face and a peaceful look settling there as she folds the socks and puts them away, and after lighting the lamp she prepares the tea table.

The clean floor and bright hearth make a cheerful welcome for the men and Jim, and looking around she continues:

"I hope they won't mess the place up to-day with their muddy boots. It's a wet evening—well, never mind! I must clean it up again if they do—but I wish they'd just think, and not make quite such a mess. But I'll say nothing again."

And she would have bustled about with the cups and plates and prepared the meal with as much care as if it had been "for the master himself" of days gone by.

Although all around her was dark, and she could not see the way before her, she looked away from the darkness to the light above—to Him who "knoweth what is in the darkness." (Dan. ii. 22.) She made her requests known to her heavenly Father, who says, "Be careful for *nothing*; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." (Phil. iv. 6, 7.)

When the men came in Charlotte would have been singing about the kitchen as usual we may be sure—just as if she had not a care—for

"The heart that trusts
For ever sings,
And feels as light
As it had wings."

During the past fifteen years Charlotte had learned how God could care for her and how He supplied her every need *as it came*; but often not until the very moment of her extremity did He come in on her behalf. And just so, long years before, the women of old, after all their anxiety about the great stone before the sepulchre of Jesus, had found it already rolled away *when they* reached the door.

One day, when about this time in autumn, Charlotte went into Gonstone, where she hap-

pened to see the Miss Wilsons; she took the opportunity to tell them that her days at Carver Cottage were drawing to a close, and how she was hoping to get some kind of work in order to support herself. The ladies were interested in her and very sorry to hear that she was in such difficulties. However, they spoke kindly and cheerily to her and Charlotte returned home with a light step as usual along the pretty lanes to the cottage.

She had gained little for *herself* within its walls, but had she not been "laying up treasure in heaven"? (Matt. vi. 19-21.)

Not *every* kind action, not *every* good work that is done *here* will find a reward in *this* world. There is often great loss and suffering consequent upon the good deeds done in this world, especially if done to the glory of God. But *nothing* is unnoticed by *Him*. There is a reward in heaven awaiting everything done here which God approves—which is done "in the name of the Lord Jesus." (Col. iii. 17.)

Charlotte had been laying up treasure in heaven by her obedience to the Lord, her patience, meekness, kindness, longsuffering, gentleness and other fruits of the Spirit which by dependence on God she had been enabled to shew to those around her. (Gal. v. 22.)

She did not *think* of what she did; it was not done by *effort*; neither did she let her left hand know what her right hand did (Matt. vi. 3); but by simply seeking to please the Lord day by day the good works followed.

How wonderful that God should tell His children to adorn themselves with good works! He wishes them to wear very precious ornaments, more precious than gold, pearls or costly array. He tells them *not* to wear any of these for adornment, nor to broider and plait their hair. (1 Tim. ii. 9; 1 Peter iii. 3.)

He has already *clothed* and covered for *His* eye all those who trust in Jesus with the "garments of salvation" and the "robe of righteousness." And the only ornaments which He wants to see upon them are "good works," and a meek and quiet spirit, and of these they cannot have too many.

Upon Charlotte were many such ornaments, seen only by the eye of God, and the ornament "of great price" was not lacking—which is a "meek and quiet spirit." (1 Peter iii. 4.)

(To be continued.)



Hidden Cities.

Answers.

- | | | |
|------------|------------|------------|
| 1. Babel. | 2. Dothan. | 3. Sheba. |
| 4. Cana. | 5. Endor. | 6. Lystra. |
| 7. Shunem. | | |



Bible Searchings.

The "Searchings" are to increase acquaintance with the Holy Scriptures. Answers to be sent TO THE EDITOR, F. Shedden, Bryn Awelon, Flint Mountain, Flint, North Wales, not later than the 15th of this month, **with envelopes marked "Searchings" in top left-hand corner.** Age, and full name and address to be given.

Searchers 10 years of age and under 14, omit Nos. 7 and 8.

Searchers 14 years of age and over, answer all the eight.

1. For what "purpose" was "the Son of God manifested"? (1 John ii. or iii.)
2. In the same book another reason is given why "He was manifested." Quote the words. (1 John iii. or iv.)
3. When John the Baptist saw "Jesus coming unto him" what did he say? (John i. or ii.)
4. If sin was to be "put away" a great "sacrifice" was necessary. What was the "sacrifice"? (Heb. viii. or ix.)
5. Quote part of a verse (1 Peter i. to iii.) that tells of where He bore our sins.
6. Why did He give "himself for us"? (Titus.)
7. What is said of the "blood of Jesus" in 1 John i. to iv.?
8. In Revelation we read of "white robes" (chap. v. to viii.). (a) What made them white? and of "washed" sinners (chap. i. to iii.) (b) How were they washed?

Searchers under 10 years of age.

Complete and write out in full the following passages:—

1. "Then I said in vain." (Isa. xlix., part of a verse.)
 2. "And he weakness." (2 Cor. xii., part of a verse.)
 3. "But they that wait and not faint." (Isa. xl.)
 4. "In quietness strength." (Isa. xxx., part of a verse.)
- (Book, chapter and verse to be given in each case.)

Youthful Days.



Faith, Hope, Love.

ACCORDING to an old story a number of Scottish people were hay-making in the Highlands years ago. It was a busy time and several families were there hard at work. One of the party, a mother, wrapped her little baby in a plaid and laid it in a grassy spot while she went on with her work. Unnoticed by them all a great eagle from the mountains near at hand came sailing along, saw the helpless infant, swooped down and seized it. Too late the terrified workers in the field saw the great bird rise with its precious load and carry it away to her nest on the crags. The only way to rescue the child was for some one to climb to the nest and bring the child down. One of the men in the field was an old sailor, who had been used to climbing. But when he looked up at the nest on the lofty cliffs it made him dizzy. Then the mother came forward, and step by step climbed up to the eagle's nest. She laid hold of her babe still wrapped in the thick plaid and unhurt by the eagle's talons, and reached the ground again in safety.

Love compelled the mother to climb those dreadful cliffs and bring back her child in defiance of the fierce eagles.

Faith believes that God is good; hope looks forward to the glory of our Lord Jesus; whilst love flows down from heaven like a mighty river and is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit.

True love always gives freely, trusting for love in return. The mother in the story gave her strength and risked her life to rescue her child. Perhaps the child was too young to understand the danger it had been in or the devotion of the mother. As it grew up it would learn what had been done and would therefore love the mother more than ever.

Jacob loved Joseph and gave him the coat of many colours. Years afterwards

in Egypt Joseph from the throne says to his brethren, "I am Joseph; doth my father yet live?" When the brethren returned to Canaan, Joseph sent ten asses laden with the good things of Egypt, and ten she asses laden with corn, bread and meat for his father. Jacob's love found its full return when father and son met again in Egypt.

David in the hold of Adullam longed for a drink of water from the well by the gate of Bethlehem. But the Philistines had their soldiers in the town at that time, and it was death for any of David's men that came within their reach. But David's three mighty men took the risk, broke through the host of the Philistines, obtained the water and brought it safely back to David. It was too precious for him to drink, so he poured it out as an offering to the Lord. Their love and devotion to their master led them to run the gauntlet in order to obtain what he desired. What a beautiful figure this is of God's love.

Just like David longing, so God desired to love men on this earth in such a way that they could love Him as well. Think of it, God loving men and men loving God. But something was in the way, making this happy result impossible. While men lay in sin, held under by Satan, it was impossible for God's love to rest upon them and be enjoyed. Sin in the heart prevents God's love being enjoyed, just as the Philistines kept David away from the water he wanted. But our Lord Jesus came down from God to live amongst the men held in bondage by Satan. He tried to overcome Him by subtle temptations, and appeared to have gained the victory when our Lord was crucified. But not so; our Lord "broke through the host of the Philistines," or in other words, He rose alive from the grave.

The good news, or gospel, concerning these things has been published worldwide. Those who believe the report find that the load of sin has been removed by Another, who died that they might

live. They understand then that God loves them and they begin to love God.

“God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

“We love him, because he first loved us.”

UNTIL Him who loved us—gave us
Every pledge that love could give;
Freely shed His blood to save us,
Gave His life that we might live;
Be the kingdom
And dominion,
And the glory evermore!



Matthew.—No. 33.

CHAPTER XI. 20.

AT this time Jesus began to reproach the cities where most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not.

In olden times the children of Israel had seen the wonderful works of God. Now they had seen the works of Jesus, and had heard His words of grace and kindness; yet they did not believe in Him—some even begged Him to leave them alone—to “depart out of their coasts”!

Jesus said that if the Gentile cities had seen what they had seen, and heard what they had heard, they would have repented. And He told them that in the day of judgment it would be better for the people belonging to those Gentile cities than for them.

It is the same now, there are many in far-away heathen countries, who have never heard of Jesus, and it will be better for *them* in that great day than for those who have heard of Him and refused Him.

The cities of Israel and Judah shewed plainly that they were not worthy of Him whose blessed feet trod their streets; even Capernaum, which was called His

own city, because there so many of His mighty works were done—it was there that He had healed Peter’s wife’s mother and the centurion’s servant and the paralysed man who was let down through the roof of the house where He was—that city which had thus been “exalted to heaven,” He said it should be “cast down to hell.” The wicked city of Sodom did not deserve such judgment as Capernaum did. You remember how Abram prayed for Sodom, and how God said that if He found ten righteous men there He would not destroy the city for their sake. But ten righteous men were not found there, and the place where Sodom once was, in a country beautiful as the garden of the Lord, still remains as a proof of the sure judgment of God on those who disobeyed Him thousands of years ago.

If you look at the map, you will find in the south of Palestine a lake into which the river Jordan flows. It is called in the Old Testament “the salt sea,” and the Arabs call it “the sea of Lot.” In the map it is marked “Dead Sea,” and this is what really describes it, for its waters are so salt and bitter that nothing living can exist there. This desolate place is only sixteen miles from Jerusalem, and it is where Sodom and Gomorrah, the wicked cities which God destroyed by fire, once stood.

A traveller once spent a fortnight on this lake and its dreary shores, and tells us that it is indeed a scene of death.

It was a great sorrow to the blessed Lord to speak in this way to those who rejected Him. He felt so grieved that His people would not come to Him that they might be saved, for He knew what a terrible thing it was for them to lose this great opportunity! He loved His people and pitied them, and it was sad to Him to see them like lost sheep who did not know their good Shepherd, and who turned a deaf ear to His words which ought to have been like sweet music to their hearts. And it was not

only that, but they rejected God who sent Him—Jesus was God's messenger to them, and by refusing the message they turned away from the One who sent it. This was the greatest possible sorrow to Him who came to do God's will, and He felt it in a deeper way than any one else could feel sorrow. He grieved that His people did not love God and did not care to hear about His Father in heaven. So He said, if they did not know God, *He did*, and He would stand alone as the one Man upon the earth, the only One who knew His Father, Lord of heaven and earth, and would bear witness to Him if no one else did. He would praise Him, though all Israel was dumb in silent unbelief; and He said, "I thank thee, O Father."


Why did the Lord Jesus thank His Father? Because He had chosen the babes, the little ones, to make them understand what the great ones in Israel had no hearts to care for, and because He had revealed His plans of love and mercy to those who were only babes in their own thoughts, but were the children of wisdom in God's sight, because they listened to what the Son of God told them of Him—and Jesus said, "Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight."

Even this grief, of being rejected by His own people whom He loved, Jesus would take from His Father's hand, and say—"Even so, Father," not My will but Thine be done. For His great desire was that God might be glorified, and His Father borne witness to, and if Israel had no heart to hear of Him, Jesus, God's own beloved Son, would praise Him. And He would let it be known that it was His Father's will to hide from the proud Pharisees what He would reveal to babes, for God looks at the heart and not at the outside of people. A baby can only cry and cling to some one greater than itself, and the blessed God likes those who cry to Him for everything, and who cling to Him who is strong and mighty to save, and this is good in His sight. As Jesus felt the sorrow about the people who re-

jected Him, and bowed His heart in holy submission to His Father, the great truth of His glory came before Him, He felt the suffering, but He saw the glory that would follow. He felt alone among men, the only One who loved His Father! But, as He spoke of it to His Father He saw that "all things" were delivered unto Him by His Father, so that as rejected by men He could say, "Even so, Father." How sweet to take all the sorrow and rejection from His Father's hands and to know that all things were given to Him by His Father. The very time when men did not know Him He delights to say His Father does. No man knows the Son but the Father, and no man knows the Father but the Son and he to whom the Son will reveal Him. Jesus was the only One on earth who loved God perfectly, and He had such confidence in His Father's love that He could say, "*Even so, Father*" to all the unkindness of men. He could say, *My Father knows Me and I know Him, and that comforts Me in every sorrow.*

Then Jesus spoke to the babes and said, "Come unto me." No one else had authority to say "Come unto me."

If John spoke the truth of God he pointed to Another, he told them to follow Jesus; so did all the disciples. !

But Jesus, God's perfect Man on earth, could stand alone and say, "Come unto me." He would reveal the Father to them—He would give them rest, rest of soul in the love of God. They were to come to Him as a babe would go to its mother and she would give it rest in her arms. How sweet the rest and the safety of love! 

Then He takes the babes by the hand and says, Now I will teach you to walk with Me. "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me"—you see that I am meek and lowly in heart, that I bow to My Father's will when everything down here is against Me; I say, "*Even so, Father*" and I rest in His love. Now you learn from Me to do the same—"for my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." A. M. S.



**SK, and it shall be given you ; seek, and
ye shall find ; knock, and it shall be
opened unto you.**

**For every one that asketh receiveth ; and
he that seeketh findeth ; and to him that
knocketh it shall be opened.**

LUKE XI. 9, 10.



The Love of Jesus.

- "The Son of God, WHO LOVED ME, and GAVE HIMSELF FOR ME." (Gal. ii. 20.)
- "Our Saviour Jesus Christ; WHO GAVE HIMSELF FOR US." (Titus ii. 14.)
- "Our Lord Jesus Christ, WHO GAVE HIMSELF FOR OUR SINS." (Gal. i. 4.)
- "Christ also loved the church, and GAVE HIMSELF for it." (Eph. v. 25.)
- "The good Shepherd GIVETH HIS LIFE for the sheep." (John x. 11.)
- "Unto *HIM* that LOVED us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood." (Rev. i. 5.)
- "WHO HIS OWN SELF bear our sins in HIS OWN BODY on the tree." (1 Peter ii. 24.)

Will you, dear reader, ponder the above remarkable words, which shew that simply yet powerfully the Spirit of God has stated in the word of God how the love of Jesus has been expressed in the GIFT of *Himself* in death.

In that same great and wondrous death we see the mighty LOVE of GOD told out too, for "in this was manifested the love of God towards us, because that GOD sent his only begotten Son into the world that we might live through HIM."

"I want no man to die for me," said a young person to the writer recently. "Then you refuse the only way of salvation," was the reply—for

"What can wash away my stain?
Nothing but the blood of Jesus!
What can make me whole again?
Nothing but the blood of Jesus!"

The stain of sin cannot be removed from God's holy sight except by the blood of Jesus. Sins must be punished. Sin must be condemned, for God is holy and hates sin. Terrible will be the portion of those who will bear their own judgment and be condemned for their own sin.

The good news which to-day sounds out is that in His wonderful love Jesus bore the judgment. He was made sin for us, and the condemnation was His.

Now the believer in Jesus knows that his sins are gone from God's memory, and that the One who was condemned for him is now in the favour of God at His own right hand.

There is no barrier in the way. God's love has flowed out to man, and is being enjoyed by those who have "believed in God who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead."

"There is no foundation," cried a dying infidel who had awakened to the reality of his lost condition just at his last moments. The feeblest believer in Jesus has a foundation that can never be moved—laid in the death of Jesus.

May you be able to say, "He gave Himself for ME."
F. S. M.



People who were hidden.

1. Who was "hid in the sand"?
2. Who were hid with stalks of flax? and how many?
3. Who were hid in a cave? and how many?
4. Who hid himself? (Judges.)
5. Who hid himself among the stuff?
6. Who hid himself in a field?
7. Who hid men in a cave? and how many?
8. Who was hidden in a bedchamber?
9. Who was hidden in the house of the Lord? and for how long?
10. Who saw an angel and hid himself with his sons?
11. Name one prophet and his friend whom the Lord hid.

C. E. H.

Answer to Another Mental Picture.

See 1 Samuel xix. 12-17.



Old Charlotte:

OR, A LIFE AND ITS LESSONS.

CHAPTER X.

WANTED.

THE passing years had brought many changes, not only in the life of Charlotte, but also in the life of her old patient, Mrs. Clayden, who, like Charlotte, had proved her heavenly Father to be "THE FAITHFUL GOD."

Her family and her cares had increased, but God's mercies to her had increased with them, and she knew well that never would He cause His child "a needless tear." She was now living a busy life with her young family in a pretty home outside the old town of Edgemoor.

She had always corresponded regularly with her favourite brother, Mr. Robert Rentford, who was still living a solitary life in a London flat; feeling very lonely at times, he suggested that his niece, Helen, should make her home with him; but her love for her parents and sense of *duty at home* made her hesitate to accept her uncle's offer, and she finally decided to remain at home. Mr. Robert was disappointed and not long after he determined to leave London for a home in the country, where it would be easier to receive his friends; and he eventually chose a house on the outskirts of the little town of *Gonstone*.

Doubtless God was over all these circumstances, working out His own designs in His own way. Perhaps we little realise how closely and intimately our lives are intertwined one with another. "And we know that *all things* work together for good to them that love God." (Rom. viii. 28.)

Mrs. Clayden had long since ceased to be in touch with Charlotte; owing to the busy lives of each, no letters now passed between them.

* * * * *

One summer day a wagonette drew up before the gate of Carver Cottage, and in it were seated the two Misses Wilson—one an invalid who was unable to alight.

It was seldom that Charlotte had "carriage visitors," and we can picture her surprise when she caught sight of them at the gate, and see her quickly popping on a clean apron, pulling down her sleeves, straightening her cap, then tripping down the flower-bordered path, wondering what could have brought them to see her so unexpectedly.

After a warm and cheery greeting the good

ladies told their errand, whilst Charlotte listened with surprise and thankful anticipation.

It appeared that they had recently made the acquaintance of Mr. Robert Rentford during one of his visits to Gonstone in search of a new home. He had told them about his domestic troubles: how his housekeeper refused to leave London, and he was now, he said, wanting an elderly and reliable person to undertake his housekeeping at Gonstone. The Misses Wilson immediately thought of Charlotte, who needed work; they knew she would be a suitable woman, and felt sure that she would find a good home at Mr. Rentford's. All this and much more they told Charlotte, who listened as in a dream.

"Well, to be sure!" we can almost hear her exclaiming as the ladies ceased speaking. "it would seem too good to be true. Of course I should be willing to go, madam, though I'm not so strong as I used to be, and there's just the question of my clothes, for I'm very short of them, but maybe I could manage to arrange something about them: and just to think of being housekeeper to Mrs. Clayden's own brother!—surely our heavenly Father is over it all!—and it would be *just like Him*."

And in anticipation of the probable future we can imagine that Charlotte could scarcely find words to express her feelings of thankfulness as the Misses Wilson drove away towards Gonstone.

Who can say what prayers and praise went up from Charlotte to our Father in heaven as she knelt by her bed that night?

He who "knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him" (Matt. vi. 8) knew that Charlotte not only needed a home and work, but that she also required a rest and suitable clothes before taking up fresh duties. And one by one each need was soon supplied.

Remembering that his sister and niece knew Charlotte in years gone by, Mr. Rentford wrote to ask if they thought her a "suitable person" to engage as his housekeeper.

They replied that they knew of no one *more* suitable, and told him they were very interested to hear of her again; so Charlotte was engaged as his housekeeper.

Thus in a few weeks, instead of being homeless, she was to find a new home in the service of one of God's people.

Shortly after accepting the situation, Charlotte received an invitation to visit her old friend Mrs. Andrews, who still corresponded with her; and soon all was arranged for her to stay with her friend, who offered to help her to prepare her clothes, the expense of which she undertook to meet.

With mixed feelings Charlotte prepared to leave Carver Cottage. She felt keenly the thought of being at last separated from her

nephews—of leaving Jim behind. But she knew that the parting would have to come sooner or later, and the thought that she was not going far away consoled her; she could see her boy sometimes.

The last day came; the cottage was tidied up to her satisfaction; her little bundle of things was packed, and as Charlotte put on her clothes ready for her journey to Mrs. Andrews she felt quite young again. But she no longer looked young; however, that did not trouble her, as she tied on her shabby black bonnet and flimsy veil; then in her long trailing skirt and black cloak, with umbrella and bundle and smiles, she passed through the door leaving behind her the scene of her loving toil, the home of the two boys she had loved so well. There is little wonder if a few tears fell from her eyes and down her withered cheeks as she walked down the gaily-flowered pathway; but before she reached the gate they would have been dried, and with a smiling face we see her turn to have one last look at the cottage.

There it stood, just as she entered it fifteen long years before; she saw no change in it; but *she* herself had changed and aged she knew, and was fifteen years "nearer home."

After a long journey she arrived at the house of her friend, where she received a warm and loving welcome, which reminded her of the days when she found a home under her roof years ago.

It was not long before Mrs. Andrews discovered the true state of things with regard to Charlotte's clothes and she was "*shocked*." She insisted upon helping her to get many new ones at once, and the two friends were soon busy with their needles.

"Click! click!" they would go against their thimbles as the two good women sat busily making all the necessary garments suitable for a housekeeper in a gentleman's house. *Every need was supplied*, and Mrs. Andrews saw that it was supplied well. She looked upon it as not only a pleasure but a privilege to share her own mercies with one of God's children—and doubtless remembered the words, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." (Matt. xxv. 40.)

"Ah!" thought Charlotte, as she watched the generosity of her friend, "I shall, God willing, do my best to repay all this kindness."

At last the rest was over; the clothes were all ready, the box was packed, and after a loving farewell to her friends, Charlotte, full of hope at the thought of the unknown future before her, was being hurried along in the train towards her new home.

(To be continued.)



Bible Searchings.

The "Searchings" are to increase acquaintance with the Holy Scriptures. Answers to be sent to THE EDITOR, F. Shedden, Bryn Awelon, Flint Mountain, Flint, North Wales, not later than the 15th of this month, **with envelopes marked "Searchings" in top left-hand corner.** Age, and full name and address to be given.

Searchers 10 years of age and under 14, omit Nos. 7 and 8.

Searchers 14 years of age and over, answer all the eight.

1. "Father I will." (John xvi. or xvii.) (a) Whose words are these? (b) What did He desire ("will")?
2. Christ "died for us." (1 Thess. iii.-v.) For what purpose did He die according to this scripture?
3. "We believe." (Rom. v.-vii.) What do we believe?
4. "To day shalt thou" (a) Finish the sentence. (Luke xliii. or xliiv.) (b) Who is the Speaker? (c) To whom does He speak?
5. In Philippians what did Paul speak of "having a desire for"?
6. In 2 Corinthians iii. to vi. he uses the words "willing rather." What was he "willing" or wishing for here?
7. "We (Christians) shall be caught up." (1 Thess.) (a) Caught up in what? (b) Caught up for what? (c) Then where shall we "ever be"?
8. "When Christ . . . our life shall appear." (Col.) (a) What will happen to those that are His? (b) In this month's answers how many times does the word "with" occur? (c) With whom?

Searchers under 10 years of age.

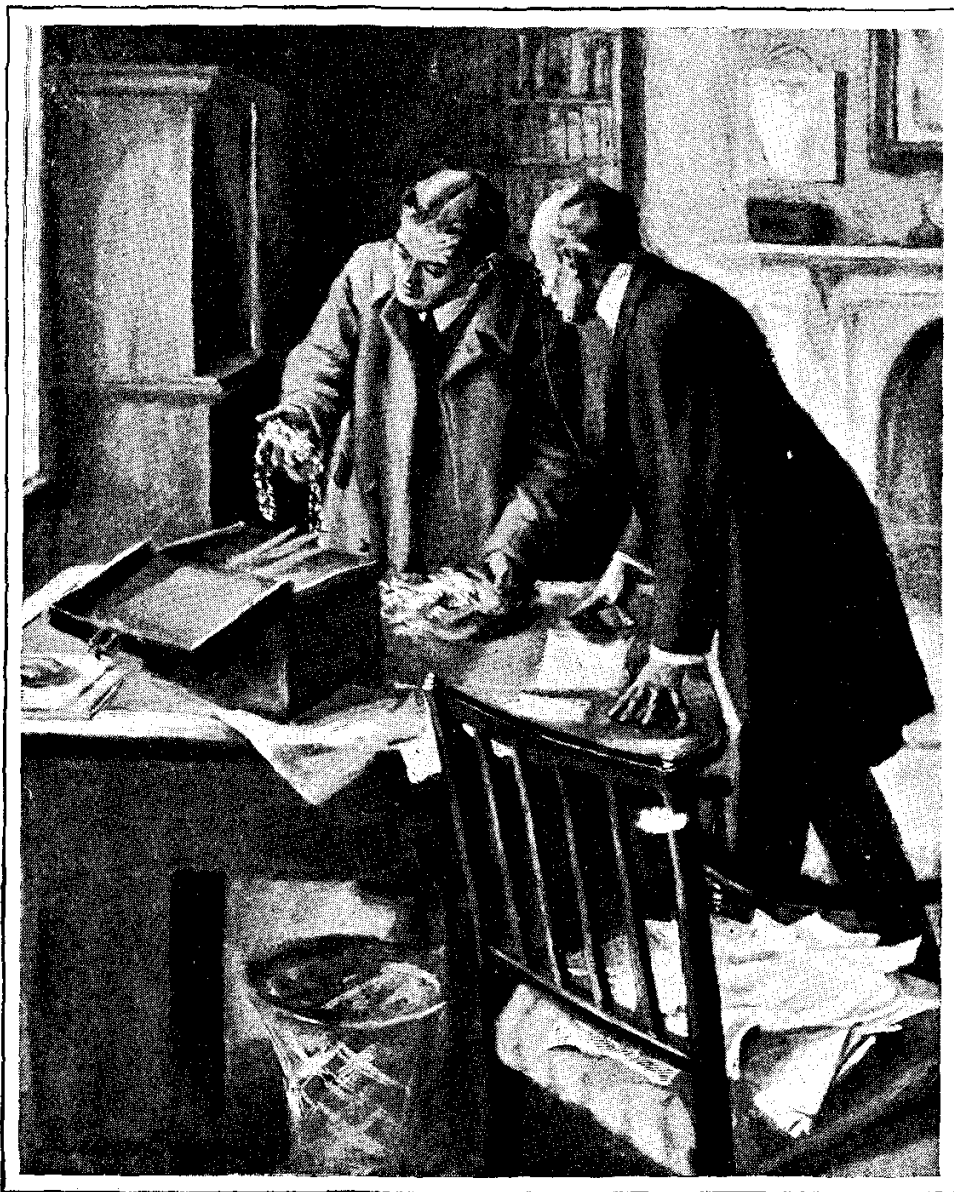
Complete and write out in full the following passages:—

1. "Glory to God..... men." (Luke ii.)
 2. "And one of them..... glorified God." (Luke xvii.)
 3. "And he said, Lord..... him." (John ix.)
 4. And Thomas my God." (John xx.)
- (Book, chapter and verse to be given in each case.)

TO OUR SEARCHERS.

We are sorry to see that so many have missed sending in their answers for August and trust that the omission will not lead them to give up "searching."

Youthful Days.



Title Deeds.

HAVE you ever been into a solicitor's office? If so, you have perhaps noticed in one corner a pile of black iron boxes, each locked and bearing the name of some client painted on in white letters. While you are waiting there a clerk comes into the office, opens a box bearing the name of Smith, and takes out a bundle of ancient-looking papers tied up with tape. Let us look as he unties the tape and unfolds one of the documents. It is written in peculiar handwriting, which has faded to brown through age. In answer to our question he tells us that it describes how a certain farm was purchased by Mr. Smith's great-grandfather many years ago for the use of himself and his heirs. The size and shape of all the fields are set down as well as a description of the buildings on the ground, besides many other matters. At the end of the document we can see the signature of Mr. Smith's great-grandfather, that of the man he bought the farm from, and those of the witnesses. And by each name is a seal. Also the document bears a stamp put on by the Government immediately after it had been signed, for which Mr. Smith's ancestor paid several pounds. This old faded parchment is Mr. Smith's *title-deed*, showing that the farm belongs to him and that it is lawful for him to occupy it or let it to a tenant and receive the rent for himself. He has no fear or anxiety, for his solicitor tells him he has a very good title to his land. We are very interested in all this, and as we pass Mr. Smith's farm on our way home we think he must be a very fortunate man

to have such a good title to a very nice little farm.

You will find in your Bibles a large number of most important "title-deeds," bearing the seal and stamp of the great God Himself. Some of them are extremely ancient, but they are still good, and cannot be set on one side as if they did not matter.

The first verse in the Bible is a very precious and valuable one. "*In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.*" When we look on this earth with its wondrous beauty, when we see the sun rise and set, and the seasons follow each other, when we look out on a clear night and see the stars shining like lamps, yet sunk to such infinite depths in space, let us not forget the Creator at whose word all came into existence. [A most excellent "title-deed" to find in the strong box.

Here is another close by the first. "*The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.*" Not a very long document, but most important and true. Our frail bodies are made of elements which are found in abundance in the earth's crust; if the breathing is stopped, the body dies; and each of us possesses a living soul. Man has not made himself or his race by some slow upward struggle, it was the act of God, the Lord God. According to this "title-deed" we owe our very existence to God; a touch from His finger would end our life here and bring back the soul to His presence.

In the New Testament we shall find another "title-deed," telling us the value of our souls. "*For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?*" (Mark viii. 36.) A man sets out to gain great power and in-



Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.

fluence. He lets nothing stand in his way. He is willing to tell lies in order to gain his ends. He takes goods that do not belong to him in order to enrich himself, he will even have his friends killed if they hinder his progress. Such a man forgets the "title-deed" we have just looked at. Alas! one day he will come before a high court where money and power are of no account. There he will find out that the neglected "title-deed" will have full weight and that he has exchanged the world for his soul and is lost.

How dreadful, you say, to be given a priceless soul and left in danger of losing it. But you need not be afraid, for here is another title-deed. *"Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord."* This gracious "title-deed" is sure and true, you will be really happy if you believe it yourself and submit yourself to the keeping of the Saviour born at Bethlehem. Although our Lord was born amongst the Jews, the glad tidings announced by the angel are for all people. This title is beyond dispute, the Saviour is for all; how happy are they who can say "He is mine."



Matthew.—No. 34.

CHAPTER XII. 1-8.

ON the sabbath day Jesus passed through the cornfields. His disciples were hungry, and they began to pluck the ears of corn and to eat them. The Pharisees saw them and said, "It is not lawful to do so on the sabbath day."

How little they knew of love, or of God's care for His people! They thought it did not matter about these poor disciples being hungry as long as they kept up the appearance of honouring the

sabbath day by refusing to do such a little thing as to pluck the ears from the yellow waving corn, and rub away the husk, that they might eat the grains. And so these proud Pharisees complained to Jesus of what His disciples were doing. How did Jesus answer them? He said, "Have you never read what David did when he was hungry and they that were with him?" David when he was hungry had gone into the house of God and eaten the shew-bread (those twelve loaves which were placed before God, to represent the twelve tribes of Israel, and were to be eaten by the priests only).

And the Lord went on to say, "do not the priests in the temple do many things on the sabbath day?"

Why did Jesus answer them in this way?

I think it was because the way in which these Pharisees treated Him reminded Him of David when he fled from Saul, because Saul wished to kill him. David was God's chosen one then, and yet he was an outcast in Israel, without even food to eat, and he was allowed to eat the holy bread with fragrant frankincense laid on each loaf; for David was as dear to God as the priest who lived in the temple, and who might eat of the holy things which belonged especially to God.

Jesus was the Son of David; He was God's chosen One, God's anointed One; to God He was King and Priest. But those blind Pharisees did not know Him: they were thinking only of the *words* of the law, while the great One who gave the law and who fulfilled it as none other ever did or could, was beside them, and they knew Him not.

So the Lord said: "In this place is One greater than the temple"—for Jesus was Himself God's Temple at that moment, because God was only to be known in Him. The glory of God had once filled the beautiful temple that Solomon built to shew forth that glory; but that house had long ago been destroyed, and now that another temple had been built,

it was spoilt by the evil ways of men who, while they spoke of it as God's house, used it for themselves, buying and selling there, and making it a den of robbers ; so that it could not be said that God was known in the magnificent building with its golden towers which it had taken forty-two years for Herod to build.

In Jesus alone God was seen in the beauty of holiness, in the unfading glory of His love.

But the Pharisees could not know Him, because they had not learned the meaning of what He had said to them before, as He sat in Matthew's house—"I will have mercy, and not sacrifice." It was not His way to let His people famish with hunger while He, who was Lord of the sabbath, was beside them.

Besides, the sabbath was the sign of God's covenant. But Israel had broken God's covenant ; they made a covenant with other nations and went after strange gods. How could they truly keep God's sabbath ?

The sabbath was given for men that they might enjoy the rest of God, but Jesus found no rest in this world. It was all work and toil for Him as He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil. How could He rest amid all the misery that He saw from day to day ? No : the Lord Jesus could find no rest ; "mercy" was what these poor lost sheep of Israel wanted, and the good Shepherd found nothing down here to make it a sabbath for Him.

But He is Lord of the sabbath, and He will one day bring in God's rest to men who will have learned that blessed thing about God, that He will have mercy and not sacrifice. Jesus made Himself the Sacrifice that He might be the One to proclaim the mercy ; and now He is at God's right hand for every weary, sinful one. He can say : "Come unto me, and I will give you rest" ; and every one who comes to Jesus now will be able to sing of the mercy of the Lord for ever and ever.

"Soon the bright, glorious day,
The rest of God shall come,
Sorrow and sin shall pass away,
And we shall reach our home.
Then of the promised joy possessed,
Our souls shall know eternal rest."

A. M. S.



Answer to People who were Hidden.

- | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. The Egyptian. | Exo. ii. 12. |
| 2. The spies. | Josh. ii. 4. |
| 3. Five kings. | Josh. x. 16. |
| 4. Jotham. | Judges ix. 5. |
| 5. Saul. | 1 Sam. x. 22. |
| 6. David. | 1 Sam. xx. 24. |
| 7. Obadiah. | 1 Kings xviii. 4. |
| 8. Joash. | 2 Kings xi. 2. |
| 9. Joash. | 2 Chron. xxii. 12. |
| 10. Ornan. | 1 Chron. xxi. 20. |
| 11. Jeremiah and Baruch. | Jer. xxxvi. 26. |



Old Charlotte:

OR,

A LIFE AND ITS LESSONS.

CHAPTER XI.

WEST LODGE.

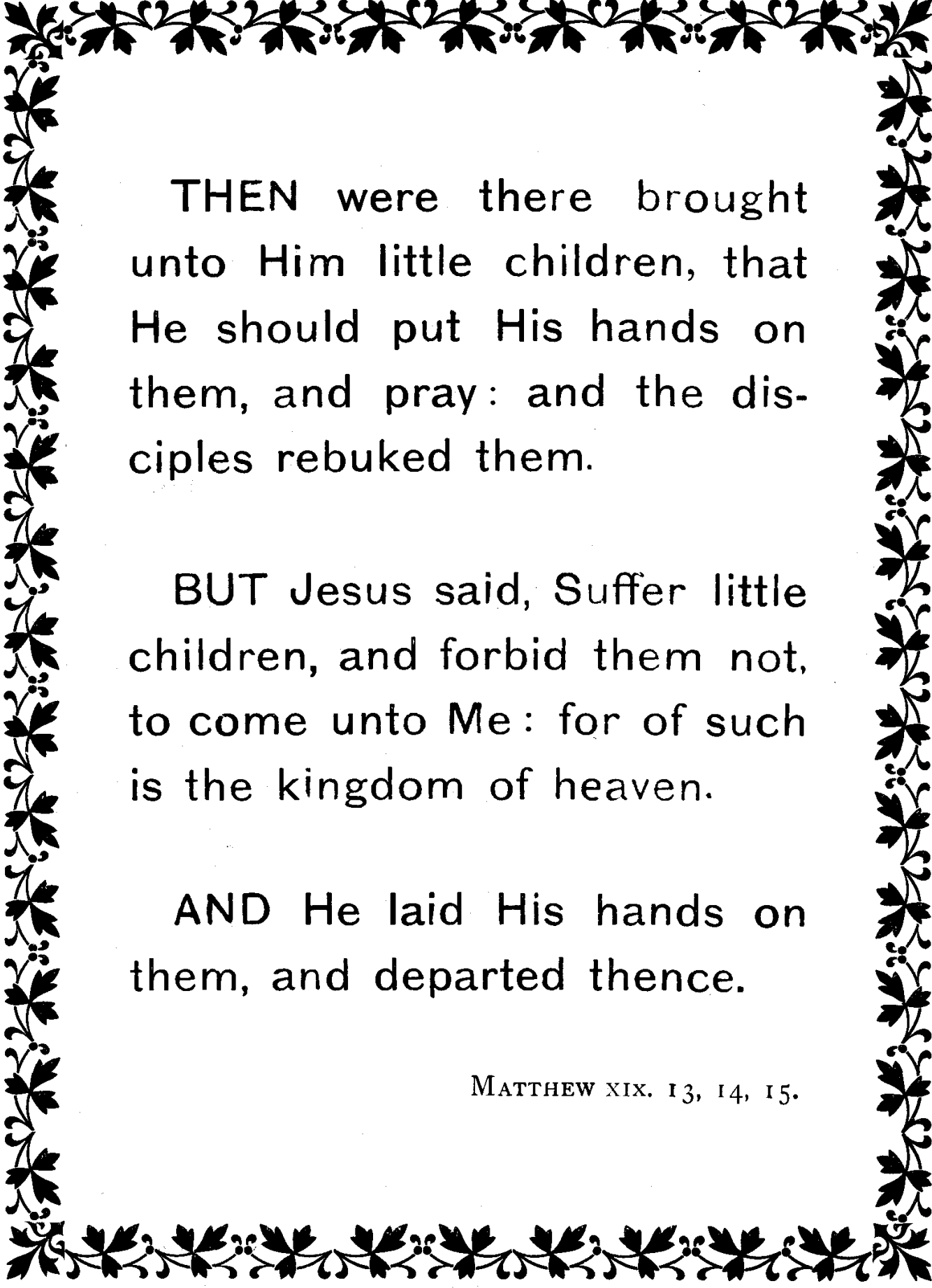
PERHAPS Helen Clayden herself will best describe Charlotte's new home and work.

* * * * *

"I shall never forget those happy visits to Gonstone at uncle Robert's, and how old Charlotte helped to make them so pleasant. I shall always remember her and her truly Christ-like ways. She seemed to *shine* for Him.

"How well I remember arriving at West Lodge for the first time! Uncle had just moved from his flat in London, and Charlotte—the dear old Charlotte of our childhood—had been chosen as his housekeeper ; but I had not seen her since I was about twelve years old.

"It was a beautiful October evening when, after a long, tiring journey, I arrived at the pretty little town of Gonstone. Uncle Robert with his beaming face and loving welcome met me at the station, and when he had placed me snugly beside him in the trap, we drove through the quaint town to a quiet, wooded part on the outskirts, where stood West Lodge. It is a

A decorative border of stylized leaves and vines surrounds the text.

THEN were there brought
unto Him little children, that
He should put His hands on
them, and pray: and the dis-
ciples rebuked them.

BUT Jesus said, Suffer little
children, and forbid them not,
to come unto Me: for of such
is the kingdom of heaven.

AND He laid His hands on
them, and departed thence.

MATTHEW XIX. 13, 14, 15.

square brick house, with flat windows and stone pillars before the door. As we drove up to the house Charlotte appeared at the door ready to give me the welcome which *only* Charlotte knew how to give. Dear old Charlotte! Just the same as ever, except for the bent back and look of age upon her sweet, peaceful face. She might well have walked out of our nursery of long ago, with the same large white apron and white lace cap—a little on one side!

"Well! to be sure! so *this* is Miss Helen!" said she after the first greeting, "and I know you are tired after that long journey, Miss, so let me take you to your room at once and then you will find tea waiting when you come down."

"I had soon taken my things off in a spotlessly clean and pretty room, and after a cosy tea in the dining-room I had to be taken all over the house. I was very glad to find that Charlotte had a large, pleasant bedroom; the kitchens and housekeeper's room were shut off from the rest of the house by a heavy door; so it was quite like a little home of her own, where she could have her "boys" and friends to see her whenever she liked. She spoke most gratefully of everything. It seemed that her coming to West Lodge was quite ordered by God: *she* was needing a home and *uncle* a housekeeper, and both were in this way provided for. I really think she sang all day long, for whenever the passage door was open I could hear her singing. It was always the same verse which I heard:—

'And shall we see Thy face,
And hear Thy heavenly voice,
Well known to us in present grace?
Well may our hearts rejoice!'

"*Nothing* seemed to trouble her, and indeed I think that nothing *did*! She seemed once and for all to have cast all *her care* upon God and to live in the joy and peace of knowing that *He cared* for her; she 'rejoiced in the Lord alway,' and being happy in God's love herself she drew others towards Him.

"Martha, 'the maid of all work,' who helped Charlotte, and Barton, the boy, must have had some happy times in the kitchen. Charlotte was never cross or "put out," and yet the work was done as well as anywhere else. Her patience was often tried, because uncle was not always punctual for meals. But she never seemed to mind; if we came in late from a drive—and I remember on one occasion we were *two hours* late—she would appear at the door smiling as usual with 'Oh! never mind, sir. I'm glad there was no accident!' and step off to the kitchen to dish up the belated meal.

"Sometimes when the work of the day was over I would steal into her own little sitting room, where I would find her busy mending a pile of things or chatting with a friend. When I

stayed, she fell to talking about old times, and shewed me her old treasures and photographs; but she never tired of telling about her boys.

"She often spoke of the goodness of God, and never wearied of serving Him in her quiet little corner; she shone brightly in it. She was always willing to ease another's burden, but if she took up a burden she did not expect others to help her to carry it. And it was not seldom that she obeyed those words, 'Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.' (Gal. vi. 2.) Thus she did not get *much time* to enjoy sitting and chatting in her little room. However, busy as she was, she never would allow that she had too much to do or that anything was a trouble; only she said that she always had 'one thing to look forward to all day—and that was going to bed at night!' So I knew that her back ached sometimes. And as my visits multiplied I became more assured of it, and felt that she was getting past her work. She had never been a strong woman, but always forgot self and was never occupied with her feelings."

* * * * *

Helen was right, for as the years went by her willing back, already bent with the toil at Carver Cottage, became more bent still; she was often tired, and after a few years at West Lodge, she *did begin* to find the work and responsibility of the housekeeping a little too much for her strength; but she was very loth to own it—and she looked above for renewed strength to go on.

Sometimes in a comfortable chair in her little sitting room, the day's work over, Charlotte would attack a pile of mending. She was now obliged to look very closely through her spectacles as she bent over her work. But the "click! click!" of the needle sounded almost as briskly as ever, and as she chatted to Martha or some friend, or her "boy," her aching back would by degrees be forgotten and the pile of mending disappear.

The thought, however, *would cross her mind* sometimes that she would soon be obliged to get different work; but she had a great wish to continue in the service of Mr. Rentford as long as he should need her. One reason for this was that she felt sure that God had sent her to the place, and He would have "every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called." (1 Cor. vii. 20.) She felt, too, that she would soon be too old and infirm for her duties, and a shade of anxiety would pass over her face, but only to be dispelled by the thought of her "very rich Father" in heaven, which brought sunshine into her heart again. "And after all, the Lord Himself may come to take us all home before my strength fails!"

"I do ask," she would say sometimes, "that

I may be able to go on as long as my master wants me."

Trust on, Charlotte Your Father above will not forget you! He has never failed you yet, and He never will! Remember that it is written, "As thy days, so shall thy strength be." (Deut. xxxiii. 25.)

Little, oh! how little, did Charlotte know *how* long her kind master would need her.

But God knew.

* * * * *

Time slipped by, bringing few changes with the years into the quiet routine of West Lodge. The visits of nephews and nieces, and of friends broke the monotony and cheered Charlotte's sociable spirit in spite of the extra work that was entailed.

But at length there came a summer which brought the inevitable changes which come at last unbidden into every home.

It was early in the month of August. Charlotte had gone away for a little holiday, which she much needed. She was to stay with her nephew, and then with her friend Mrs. Andrews, to whom since earning good wages she had refunded all the expenses of her outfit for West Lodge, and other matters intended as gifts.

Charlotte had waited, before starting on her holiday, for her master's return from a visit to the seaside with some friends whom he had brought back with him; they stayed a few days and then left, and then Charlotte packed her box, put Martha in charge of her master and the house, and went off with an easy mind for her holiday.

The sudden stillness of the house that summer day, when Charlotte and his friends had gone, seemed to come over Mr. Rentford, making him feel lonelier than ever in his lonely life.

Sitting down in the silence—silence broken only by the tick of the clock and the scratching of his pen—he wrote a letter to his niece:—

"MY DEAR HELEN,—The holidays have come and gone, and once more the furniture and I keep company together. . . .

"To-day Charlotte has left to spend a week with her nephew, and then she goes to a friend to spend a further week, and Martha looks after my welfare in her absence. . . . I have not much light on my own path at present. I often feel what a serious thing it is to initiate any step—it often leads to so much, and to make a mistake is so easy. Love to you all, from your affectionate UNCLE ROBERT."

The closing words of the letter were never forgotten by the niece to whom he wrote them. He was walking almost in darkness, but he made no fire or sparks for himself; he trusted in the name of the Lord and stayed upon his God. (Isa. l. 10, 11.)

And as it proved, there was no need for Mr. Robert to 'initiate any step.' He was soon to be wanted by his heavenly Master, and was found ready for the summons, waiting quietly upon his God.

Charlotte's visits and holiday were drawing to a close; she had greatly enjoyed the happy time, and one day when chatting to her friend Mrs. Andrews, she casually expressed a wish that she could stay with her "a few days longer." These were careless words, but not intended to imply discontent, and Charlotte little thought that she would ever regret having uttered them.

But on the strength of these words, Mrs. Andrews, quite unknown to Charlotte, wrote off at once to Mr. Rentford asking him to allow Charlotte to remain with her for a few days longer.

To this he consented, and Charlotte, with mixed feelings of surprise, pleasure and uncertainty, decided to stay on. She then determined to use part of the day of her return in going to see one of the daughters of her old master, Mr. James, by breaking her journey. She had never given up the cherished hope that some day "the young ladies" would find the true source of peace and happiness in Christ. She continued to sow the good seed in spite of resentment, as she had opportunity, and left it to be watered by God—perhaps, if needs be, by the water-floods of death—*death* to all earthly hopes and joys.

So Charlotte broke her journey and made the visit, and at last arrived at West Lodge, to find that, to her lasting consternation and dismay, her beloved master had *suddenly* been taken very seriously ill in the morning, with the result that the whole house seemed turned upside down with busy nurses, doctor and visitors.

Poor Charlotte's distress was very great: she so much wished she had not delayed her return. She had not obeyed the words, "Be content with such things as ye have" (Heb. xiii. 5.), and she at once felt full of regret, wondering whether, had she been with him to care for him, her master would not have been ill. However, she wisely waited for no repining; she turned to her duties at once, and with her usual briskness everything was soon put in order and every one made comfortable.

All that love and willing hands could do to keep Mr. Rentford in his earthly home was done—but all was of no avail.

He was wanted in his heavenly home, and a stronger love and a stronger Hand were drawing him quickly to it. God spared him to those who loved him for a few weeks, during part of which time first Mrs. Clayden and then Helen stayed in the house.

"It is almost worth while to be ill," said he one day, "to find out how much one is loved."

With willing, loving hands, and with the help of nurses, Charlotte watched over and cared for her sick master, until one Sunday evening, as she was sitting alone by his bedside, every one else being out, he became suddenly worse. Then it was Charlotte—faithful Charlotte—who spoke the last words, gave the last loving look of farewell as she supported him on her arm in his last few moments of suffering. No other human voice was near, no other loving eye was at hand when the call came to him, and his happy spirit left its earthly home for a better and eternal one—to be "absent from the body," and to be "present with the Lord." (2 Cor. v. 8.)

He, with all Christ's own, will soon be raised and changed. At the first resurrection his spirit will be "clothed upon" with the raised and glorified body, and then with all the redeemed will live and reign with Christ for ever.

Of this Charlotte and those who loved him best were well assured, because they knew that he had *faith in Jesus*, the only Mediator between God and men.

Thus they did "*not sorrow* as others which have no hope." (1 Thess. iv.) "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent [or go before] them which are asleep. For 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 ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

(To be continued.)

To the "Searchers."

As the "Searchings" this month have been particularly well done, I should like to give you all a word of praise. Very few have lost marks, and no one has lost the extra mark given for spelling and neatness.

On looking through the list, several have missed just one set of answers. Will those who have, please answer the missing month, and the marks will be put to the rest—we shall

have then a longer list of "Diligent Searchers." Any inquiries will be gladly answered.

THE EDITOR.

Bible Searchings.

The "Searchings" are to increase acquaintance with the Holy Scriptures. Answers to be sent to THE EDITOR, F. Shedden, Bryn Awelon, Flint Mountain, Flint, North Wales, not later than the 15th of this month, **with envelopes marked "Searchings" in top left-hand corner.** Age, and full name and address to be given.

**Searchers 10 years of age and under 14,
omit Nos. 7 and 8.**

**Searchers 14 years of age and over,
answer all the eight.**

1. (a) What prayer of seven words is recorded in Luke xvii. or xviii. ? (b) Whose prayer is it ?
2. What words of God to Moses are quoted in Romans viii. or ix. ?
3. Micah tells of something that God delights in. (a) What is it ? (b) Quote the sentence. (Micah v. to vii.)
4. (a) Quote a verse in Matthew xi. or xii. in which the word mercy occurs. (b) To whom is Jesus speaking here ?
5. (a) What verse in Matthew viii. or ix. reminds you of this ? (b) Quote the second half of this verse.
6. "He saved us." (a) Quote the sentence in Titus in which these words are found—seven words. (b) What does the same verse say it was "*not by*" ?
7. (a) In what Psalm does a sentence about "mercy" occur in every verse ? (b) Quote the sentence. (Psa. cxxx. to cl.)
8. "Let him return unto the Lord." (Isa. liii. to lvi.). (a) Finish the verse. (b) What parable in Luke xiv. or xv. gives us a lovely illustration of this ?

Searchers under 10 years of age.

Complete and write out in full the following passages :—

1. "Blessed is he.....
Lord." (Matt. xxiii, part of a verse.)
2. "Come.....
you rest." (Matt. xi.)
3. "The next day.....
of the world." (John i.)
4. "Come.....
the Christ." (John iv.)

(Book, chapter and verse to be given in each case.)

Youthful Days.



Charlotte was at the door ready
to receive us.

"Is it Well with Thee?"

(2 KINGS IV. 26.)

"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one." (John x. 27-30.)

DEAR BOYS AND GIRLS,

As the year passes into the shadows, we would lovingly ask:—

"Is it well with thee? Is it truly *well*, well with *thee*?"

If you are held by that once nail-pierced hand, that divine hand, the hand of JESUS, the sinner's Saviour, and by the omnipotent hand of His God and Father, then indeed it is "well with thee." The disappearing year will hold no terrors for those of you whose sins are forgiven through faith in that precious blood. But, oh! to have an uncovered and unforgiven past, and to be calmly passing out of the year without knowing that divine cleansing, that divine protection, and that divine love, which all greatly, so greatly, need to know, how can it possibly be "well with thee"?

Let us urge you to seek the Lord NOW, to seek Him "while it is called TO-DAY," to "call upon him while he is near," so that you may make His acquaintance, and, if spared, step out of the old year into the new, praising Him "for all that is past," and trusting Him "for all that's to come."

Yours very lovingly,

(Derby.)

W. L.



Grace before Meat.

IN the Old Testament there are two descriptions of a meal which will well repay a little careful consideration.

Abraham, the friend of God, was sitting

in the door of his tent during the heat of the day. Looking up, he saw three men close by. According to the laws that prevail in thinly populated countries, strangers passing the door must be provided with food. Abraham ran out to meet them, bowed down, and begged them to eat a morsel whilst resting under the tree. They consented and he ran off to make everything ready. Sarah his wife mixed three measures of meal, swept the fire aside and poured out the mixture on the hot hearth to bake. A young, tender calf was fetched from the herd, killed and dressed. Very possibly the animal was cut up and the pieces dropped in a cauldron of boiling water. The meal was served with butter and milk, and Abraham stood by while the strangers ate. It is a most beautiful picture of true hospitality, but there is no allusion to any saying grace or giving thanks before the meal.

The people of a certain city were making a feast or sacrifice, and according to their custom would not begin eating the sacrifice till Samuel the prophet came to bless it, which looks like saying grace before meat. About thirty people were specially invited to eat at Samuel's house. Just at this moment Saul, the son of Kish, arrived in the city. God had told Samuel the day before that this would happen, and Saul was taken in and made to sit down amongst the most honoured guests. Samuel had previously ordered the best portion of the meat, the shoulder, to be reserved. The servant now brought it in and set it before Saul, who was bidden to eat. Apart from the general blessing of the sacrifice there appears to have been no thanksgiving in Samuel's house. (See 1 Sam. ix.)

In both these incidents we see how God-fearing men conducted their households. Things were done in an orderly manner, and every one was ready to do what was required at the proper time.

In those days all those who wished to come near God and speak to Him had to

bring an animal or bird to be offered up as a sacrifice.

But in our time things are different. Our Lord Jesus has offered Himself once and for all as a sacrifice for sin. In mercy and righteousness God accepts all who come to Him by Jesus without any more sacrifices, for none are now needed. As Christians we remember what we deserved as sinners, and are thankful to God for receiving us.

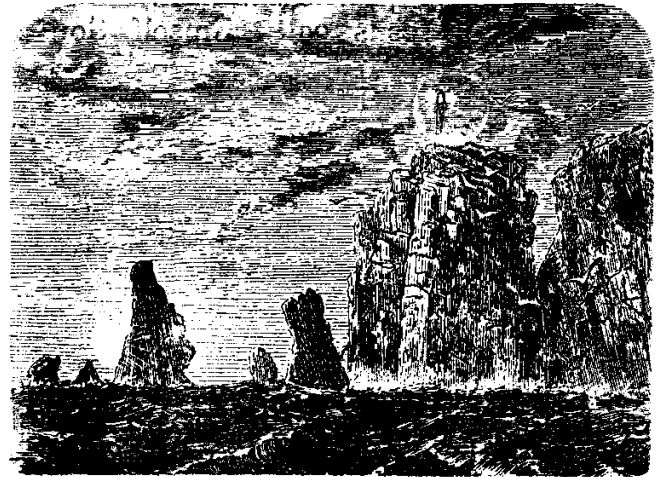
We understand that we owe God for everything, our parents, our homes, our clothes, our food, and so on; we thank Him for all. God is so good to us that with the Apostle Paul we "give thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." (Eph. v. 20.) Indeed, it is God's will that we should "in everything give thanks." (I Thess. v. 18.)

We can do this in our hearts every time we think of any of God's great mercies to us, and nobody near to us need know that we are doing it. But the following instance will shew the happiness or blessing that followed on one occasion when thanks to God before a meal were spoken in such a way that all present could hear.

Paul and his companions sailing to Italy were caught in a storm of such violence that all hope of being saved was given up. At the end of fourteen days the sailors judged they were drawing near to land, and in order to prevent being thrown on the rocks, the ship was anchored. When daylight began to come, Paul found some food in the ship and begged all the people to eat, for they had taken nothing during the storm. He told them that the food was for their health, and not a single person would be hurt. Then he took some bread, gave thanks to God in the presence of them all, broke it and began to eat. All were encouraged to follow his example and eat as well. What a great change, from despair to happiness, as a result of a Christian saying "grace before meat."

Let us, young or old, follow Paul's

happy example, and give thanks aloud to God at table in our own homes. Times are bad just now, food and clothing are dear and scarce, those who rule seem almost as helpless as the master of Paul's ship, and the wise folks hardly know what is going to happen next. On the other hand we as Christians are certain that our Lord Jesus Christ is seated as Man at the right hand of His Father. Let us then as we eat our food day by day give thanks to the "Giver of all good," trusting that blessing and happiness may come upon the heads of all who may share our meal.



Matthew.—No. 35.

CHAPTER XII. 9.

JESUS told those Pharisees who talked so much of the sabbath, that He was Lord of the sabbath. It was He who gave a day of rest to men; even the animals were to rest from work on the seventh day—as a remembrance that God rested from His work on the seventh day—that was when God created the world—the skies, the earth, the sun, the sea, all were created by God, and then He put the man and woman into this beautiful world where everything was very good. But you know the story of Adam and Eve,

and how they disobeyed God for the sake of an apple! so that there was no rest for them; their hearts could not enter into God's rest. They were disturbed and unhappy, and ran away to hide from God. When Jesus came into the world, He obeyed God in everything because He loved God with all His heart, and Jesus loved even those naughty men and came to do them good. Now He said to them that He did not ask them to bring Him anything, He was bringing them something. God did not want their sacrifices—He wanted them to come to Jesus to receive mercy from Him. The Son of man was Lord of the sabbath.

Why did Jesus call Himself Son of man? Because they rejected Him as Son of David. He was born King of the Jews, and ought to have sat on David's throne in Jerusalem; they ought to have received Him as the greater than Solomon, who would bring them all the sure mercies that God promised to David. But they refused Him. They did not believe in Him, and they were content to have a man like Herod for their king! So Jesus said His disciples were not to tell people any more that He was the promised One—He would call Himself the Son of man, and He would bring His mercy to all men—not only to the Jews, but to every kind of man, a black man, or a white, or a red man—He would not make any difference—all might come to Him. They thought God only cared for the children of Shem—the Israelites—but when they refused Jesus, God said His mercy should go to other men. The children of Japhet and of Ham should learn how good He is, and that Jesus had come to save all kinds of men, not only the children of Israel. As Son of man He would die for all, that all kinds of men might believe in Him and be blessed.

Then Jesus went into their synagogue, and He saw a man with a withered hand. The Pharisees watched Him to see if He would heal the poor man. So they said to Jesus, "Is it lawful to heal on the

sabbath day?" Jesus said, "If your sheep fall into a pit on the sabbath day would you try to get it out of the pit?" Of course they would. But Jesus was the good Shepherd, and He was thinking of His own sheep. He could not see a man with a withered hand and not heal him. He was going about this world doing good and healing all that were oppressed by the devil, and God was with Him. So He said to the Pharisees, "It is lawful to do good on the sabbath day."

Then Jesus turned to the man and said, "Stretch out your hand." Did he say, "I cannot; this poor hand has never been stretched out"? No, he obeyed the word of Jesus, and stretched out his hand so that it was at once as well as the other hand. This vexed the Pharisees, so that they talked together about how they could destroy Jesus.

What a sorrowful sight it was to Jesus: men talking of keeping His sabbath with such wicked feelings in their hearts; hating the One who came to shew mercy, and not caring to see a poor suffering man healed and made a useful man instead of being a helpless man. God's way is always to make us useful and restful, as Jesus said, "Come unto me . . . and I will give you rest." He is the sabbath, the rest of God, to every one who believes in Him.

We read in the last chapter how Jesus rejoiced that His Father, who is Lord of heaven and earth, was revealing His precious thoughts about His Son to the babes who believed in Him. So in this chapter Jesus remembers what God taught His prophet to say hundreds of years before Jesus came into the world. God said, "Behold my servant, my beloved, in whom my soul delights." God would send Him to shew mercy to the Gentiles, and in His name should the Gentiles hope. Before Jesus came they were without God and without hope. But now God's blessed Son was revealing the Father to men on earth, and if the Jews would not listen to His voice the Gentiles would learn to hope in His name,

After this they brought a poor man to Him who was possessed by a devil. How terrible! and he was blind and dumb. He could not see; all is darkness to a blind man, and he could not speak even to say to Jesus, Have pity on me. But Jesus did not wait to be asked, He healed the man—Jesus cast out the devil and made the man able to speak and to see. His new eyes could look at Jesus and see Jesus looking at him with a look of pity and love, as when He said, "Come unto me . . . and I will give you rest." What rest it was to have the love of Jesus in his heart instead of the devil making him unhappy and unkind and blind and dumb. Now he could see Jesus and speak to Him, and he could tell other people what a great thing Jesus had done for him.

The crowd who saw this man were greatly astonished, and they said, "Is not this the Son of David?" They felt that Jesus must be God's sent One—but the Pharisees heard it, and they said a dreadful thing. They said, "He casts out devils by the prince of the devils." Jesus knew their thoughts, and He said, "How can Satan cast out Satan?" It was a foolish thing to say that Satan would go against himself, and it was a terribly wicked thing to say that what Jesus did by the Spirit of God was done by Satan.

Then Jesus said a very solemn thing that ought to have touched their hearts. He said if they spoke against the Son of man it might be forgiven, because He was going to die on the cross for sinners; but if they spoke against God's Holy Spirit it should never be forgiven—there is no forgiveness for those who call the work of the Spirit of God Satan's work.

Then Jesus reminded them that God's Holy Spirit knew what was in their hearts, and our words shew what we think and feel, so we are judged by our words. God hears a naughty word when a child says, I will and I won't. It shews there is a disobedient heart. Not like Jesus,

who always said, "Even so, Father; not as I will, but as thou wilt." That is the obedience of love. If we love any one we like to obey that one, and if we love Jesus we delight to say, "Not my will, but Thy will be done." We can always find out how much we love any one by asking ourselves whether we like to do what pleases them or if we would rather do what we wish ourselves.

Suppose you say you love me and wish to be with me, and I say, Well, I always walk on the footpath, and if you do the same that will prove that you love me. But you say, I do not like to walk on the footpath. Then how can you shew your love? Jesus said, "Take my yoke . . . and learn from me." He wants us to walk with Him in the narrow way that leads to life. If we love Him we like the way where He is walking with those that love Him, and He will never leave them nor forsake them.

A. M. S.

Old Charlotte:

OR,

A LIFE AND ITS LESSONS.

CHAPTER XII.

THE END OF THE JOURNEY.

ON that October morning when the blinds at West Lodge were left down, when Charlotte had no breakfast to get for her master, and she sat down to have her own, she realised with a sad heart that once more she might soon be without an earthly home.

But she rose on the wings of faith above the dark clouds which gathered in her sky, and with happy confidence in God she looked up to Him, and His peace kept her heart and mind in her old age as in her youth.

And God did not fail her: He who "is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think" intended to answer her faith—the faith that trusted in Him as a "very rich Father"—the faith that never said "How?" (Eph. iii. 20.)

The funeral was over; the precious dust of Charlotte's late master had been committed to God's keeping, and with a sorrowing heart Charlotte returned to West Lodge, her way dark

before her, her faith severely tested, for she knew that the house would soon be in other hands.

But the hearts of all men are in God's hand, and "He doeth according to his will . . . among the inhabitants of the earth." (Dan. iv. 35.)

When arranging his affairs in view of leaving his earthly home for a heavenly, Charlotte's master had not forgotten her faithful services to him during the time she had been in his house; and to her great surprise, after the funeral, she was told that he had left a provision for her, so that she would not again be wholly dependent upon her own labours for a living.

"It seems too good to be true!" wrote Charlotte to her friend Mrs. Andrews, as soon as she had leisure to sit down and tell her the good news. Her heart was very full as she wrote: we can picture the tears of gratitude falling slowly down her withered cheek as she expressed her feelings with her pen: but, as usual, her eyes would soon be dried—those eyes which were wont to shine with a heavenly light of joy and peace.

Within a few weeks after the death of Mr. Rentford, his house had passed into other hands, the furniture had been removed, and Charlotte—old Charlotte—what had become of *her*?

We will leave Helen Clayden to answer this question for us.

"We were very pleased when we heard that Charlotte had decided to come and live near us. We had, of course, expected her to settle at Gonstone, near her native village of Branstone. But, no! she would do no such thing. And I believe it was because she thought that by being near us she might get opportunities of being of use to us sometimes in little ways. It was just like Charlotte. She never thought of *self*, for she knew that 'even Christ pleased not Himself.'

"We found her some pleasant rooms in a quiet road off the main street of the town to which we had just moved; there was a row of small trees on each side of the road; the houses were built of white brick with a basement, and had three stories above and a long flight of stone steps to the front door. The front room on the second floor was Charlotte's sitting room; it was large, sunny, and had three windows from which nearly the length of the road could be seen.

"All was straight and ready for her at last; the furniture came from her own rooms at West Lodge, and had been given to her; it was arranged carefully, and looked very comfortable and homelike in the strange house.

"And when at last Charlotte arrived and sat down to tea for the first time at her *own* table, she must have felt that 'the storm of life' was over.

"We often ran in to see her when we came to the town; there was always a loving welcome, a sunny smile, and a willing ear to listen to weal or woe—for no one did ever more truly 'rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep' than Charlotte. She was 'set free' by Christ and enjoyed such 'liberty of heart' that she was free indeed to sympathise with those around her—in all kinds of circumstances of old or young.

"Sometimes we caught her busy with a little ironing or cooking; and how she loved to roast an apple on the hearth!—for she always liked a baked apple.

"She often trotted from the town to see us, and paid us a regular weekly visit on Fridays, when she came for the day. This was no selfish visit—she came by her *own* arrangement to darn the stockings. It was my duty to darn them, but she *insisted* upon undertaking to ease my burden, and who can describe the sense of relief which came over me when I peeped into the big basket on Friday evenings, and found each pair of socks and stockings rolled up into a neat little bundle like a little black orange! Then she *would* take all my laces and ties—'Just to get them up, miss, as I did for my ladies long ago! I shall feel quite young again, to be sure.' And before going home she always went to the nursery for a promised romp with the children, and never was a child so happy as when with her.

"Oh! how happy she was in her new life. She had old friends to stay with her and 'her boys,' as she called them, to see her.

"Then, as if she had not done enough in her life-time, she must needs think it over in her mind how she could do a little *more*, for she wished to use her time and mercies in God's service. And her thoughts ran upon the many young servants, nice christian girls (Sarah, our cook, among them), whom she knew in the neighbourhood and whom she met at meetings, etc. She knew that some of them were far away from home and friends, and that when out for a holiday or on Sunday afternoons had nowhere to go and nothing to do but to walk the streets and lanes or to visit some new acquaintance in a strange kitchen.

"And Charlotte thought of a plan.

"She made it known that every Sunday afternoon she would be very pleased to see any young girl or woman of her acquaintance and their friends, too, at her rooms.

"She provided a tea for them; and after a pleasant time in her cheery company, where in conversation the story of Jesus and His love was never forgotten, she used to ask them to go with her to a gospel address in the evening at a place which she attended in the town.

"And she 'received all who came' to her—

just as we read of the Apostle Paul in his 'own hired house' in Rome.

"And what a practical way it was of *returning thanks to God* for the little home He had given her!"

Many a time did Helen and Charlotte sit together over a bright fire busy with the endless stockings, talking over old times as the needles ran in and out with the wool—Charlotte's rather more slowly than of old—the "click! click!" sounding at longer intervals on the old brass thimble, which seemed to say, "I'm getting rather worn out at last and shall need a long rest soon!"

It was wonderful how God provided for *all* Charlotte's *need*—all that was good for her, though not all that she might *naturally* have wished for.

Not only did He give her the little home and a certain provision, but as she was glad of a few little earnings, He opened up the way by which she was able to earn money without hard toil, and He watched over her still as a loving Father and Almighty God.

Occasionally she was asked to take part or whole charge of a house while the family was absent, and in this way she was kept for several weeks at a time and had a pleasant change also.

For some time, too, she helped daily with the nursing of a dear old lady who lived near her rooms; this was a great pleasure to her no doubt, and brought back to her mind the old days when as a young and active woman she nursed for the leading doctors in Harstead.

And did her own words, said to the doctor long ago, ever ring in her ears as she moved about the sick room—those words which God had *never let fall to the ground*? "I have a very rich Father!"

Here she was, in her old age, nursing from her own little home provided for her by her "very rich Father," through the brother of one of those many patients whom she had nursed "for moderate fees"—nursed for love and not for money.

God is indeed "a very rich Father," and He is also a faithful God. He honours those who honour Him, and cares for those who care for His poor—"He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord; and that which he hath given will he pay him again." (Prov. xix. 17.)

There is little doubt that every "moderate fee"—less than the amount she *might* have earned in those days long gone by—was amply repaid by God through the forethought of her last earthly master when he left a provision for her old age.

Cared for by her "very rich Father," every *need* supplied, free of anxiety with regard to her nephews, who returned their aunt's long

years of devotion by shewing their love and respect for her in her old age, Charlotte's cup of happiness was filled to over-flowing; and in spite of her increasing lack of strength, she bustled about in her rooms as cheerily as she used to set to work at Carver Cottage when her boys, as little children, were hanging about her skirts.

Her mind was free, her heart was free, her time was free, and yet she was *never* free to do her *own* will; *that* was bound by the law of love—divine love—to Him who had bought her with a price, and to whom she belonged, and of whom she could say with joy, "My beloved is mine, and I am his." (Cant. ii. 16.) To please *Him* was still, as in her youth, her greatest, her chief delight. She loved those about her, and loved to serve all with whom she came in contact—but only in so far as it did not draw her heart from Christ nor hinder her from serving Him who is "the chiefest among ten thousand . . . yea, he is altogether lovely." (Cant. v. 10-16.) He it is of whom she could also say, "I am my beloved's and his desire is toward me." (Cant. vii. 10.)

As Charlotte moved in and out among her fellow men there was a "liberty of heart," a brightness not of earth, nor of this world about her which made her appear *detached* from things here. Her heart was not here; her treasure was in heaven, and "where your treasure is there will your heart be also." Her mind was set on "things above, not on things on the earth." (Col. iii. 2.)

No one could have been with her long without noticing this. She was delighted with her rooms, thankful beyond measure, yet there was no setting her mind on her surroundings, and becoming absorbed with "feathering her nest."

She was satisfied with a joy and a love outside this scene where she was simply "passing through"—passing on to glory, and, "In spirit there already."

Her *greatest* treasure was not here, and therefore this world was to her an empty place!

* * * * *

Again it is December, and Charlotte's birthday, which was first celebrated in the old town of Harstead so long ago, has just gone by.

To-day she is busy in her room packing up her things ready to go on a visit to her elder nephew. He is now married, and living in a comfortable little home of his own in London, where he has a good situation.

Let us take a last peep at Charlotte as we might have found her if we had called in just before she started on her journey.

Old Time has done his work upon her since she left West Lodge; she now looks quite an old woman, and is a little tottery and shaky as she moves about the room.

Last winter she had been ill. The fogs and smoke of the town had tried her chest and stolen her strength.

However, so far this year she has kept well, and is, in the excitement of the thought of visiting her "boy's" little home, trotting about the room quite briskly; and every now and then she sings a few lines of the favourite hymn so often on her lips:—

"And shall we see Thy face,
And hear Thy heavenly voice,
Well known to us in present grace?
Well may our hearts rejoice!"

The happy, peaceful look, still seen on her aged face, tells that the words come truly from her heart, where all is unclouded brightness.

She is greatly looking forward to holding her boy's first baby in her arms, and to feel that she is "grannie" at last!

Soon everything is packed and ready, and the room tidied up.

Then, after putting a few hasty stitches to one of her old gloves with rather a shakety "click! cli . . . ck!" of her needle, she pops the old brass thimble on the mantelpiece, and puts on her bonnet and cloak.

"Dear me! I mustn't forget the bill for the washing!" she says half aloud, "They'll be calling!"

And going to a drawer she takes out the money, wraps it up in the bill (*the only one she owes*), and places the little packet on the table.

"Now I'm ready!" and she takes up her bag and umbrella with a happy smile and leaves her "little home"—for ever!

* * * * *

Great was the sorrow of all who loved her when the news reached them that Charlotte had passed away a few days after her arrival at her nephew's home.

She had been quite well at first, and delighted to see the new baby; but a cold, aggravated by a thick London fog, was too much for her, and after a few hours' suffering she fell peacefully "asleep in Jesus"; and her spirit left this world for that beautiful home which is fairer than any earthly abode and of which she had so often sung:—

"High in the Father's house above
Our mansion is prepared;
There is the home, the rest we love,
And there our bright reward."

A. S. I. L.

ERRATA.

In the above abridged narrative of "Old Charlotte," the reader is asked to read "Gonstone" instead of "Oldhurst" whenever the latter occurs; and on page 31, line 19, "an only or second child"; and omit lines 9 and 10.

Bible Searchings.

The "Searchings" are to increase acquaintance with the Holy Scriptures. Answers to be sent to THE EDITOR, F. Shedden, Bryn Awelon, Flint Mountain, Flint, North Wales, not later than the 15th of this month, **with envelopes marked "Searchings" in top left-hand corner.** Age, and full name and address to be given.

Searchers 10 years of age and under 14, omit Nos. 7 and 8.

Searchers 14 years of age and over, answer all the eight.

1. What are we exhorted to "desire," as "new born babes"? (1 Peter i. or iii.)
2. In Jeremiah xv. what did the prophet say about the "words" and the "word" of God?
3. What did David say in Psalm xvi., xvii. about the word of God's lips?
4. What did Job say (chap. xxiii., xxiv.) about the words of His mouth?
5. Where were God's people told to "lay up" His words? (Deut. xi., xii.) Quote half the verse.
6. When were they to speak of them? (Same chapter.)
7. Quote four verses from Psalm cxix. each beginning with "Thy word."
8. Quote three sentences (not verses) from John xvii. in which the words "I have given them" are found, and say who the speaker is in this chapter.

Searchers under 10 years of age.

Complete and write out in full the following passages:—

1. "Thy faith..... peace." (Luke vii., part of a verse.)
2. "Daughter whole." (Matt. ix., part of a verse.)
3. "Go thee whole." Mark x., part of a verse.)
4. "Receive saved thee." (Luke xviii., part of a verse.)

(Book, chapter and verse to be given in each case.)



**LOVEST THOU ME MORE
THAN THESE?**