



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

THE LABOURING MAN'S BOOK

REV. ASHTON OXENDEN



600062143M



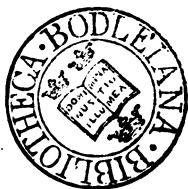
THE
LABOURING MAN'S BOOK.

BY THE
REV. ASHTON OXENDEN,
AUTHOR OF
"THE PASTORAL OFFICE," "PATHWAY OF SAFETY,"
"EARNEST COMMUNICANT," ETC.

LONDON:
WERTHEIM, MACINTOSH, AND HUNT,
24, PATERNOSTER-ROW,
AND 23, HOLLES-STREET, CAVENDISH-SQUARE.
1859.

270. c. 242.

**LONDON : WERTHEIM, MACINTOSH, AND HUNT,
24, PATERNOSTER-ROW,
AND 23, HOLLES-STREET, CAVENDISH-SQUARE.**



PREFACE.

My object in writing this Book is to give some help to that large class of Persons *who live by the labour of their hands*. There is many a Working Man who feels in his heart a desire to go right; but he wants a little guiding. He needs some Helper, who will deal kindly with him—some one who will not be content merely to stand at a distance, and tell him that he *must* do this and that; but who will draw near to him, and look into all his difficulties and hindrances, and then try and help him through them. He wants some Friend, who has a fellow-feeling with him, who will treat him as a Brother, and will speak in his ear a word of counsel or encouragement, as he may require it.

I hope he will look upon me as *that Friend*, and will believe that my heart's desire and prayer is that I may do him good.

May this little Book be made a blessing to every one who reads it! And may the very humblest Labourer who takes it up come to this conclusion—*that God has called him to live a useful and happy life in His service!*

CONTENTS.

	Page
CHAPTER 1. THE LABOURER IN HIS YOUTH .	1
„ 2. THE LABOURER MARRIED . .	13
„ 3. THE LABOURER IN THE MANAGE- MENT OF HIS CHILDREN . .	22
„ 4. THE LABOURER AT HIS WORK .	35
„ 5. THE LABOURER IN HIS HOME .	46
„ 6. THE LABOURER IN THE WORLD .	66
„ 7. THE LABOURER IN HIS CHURCH .	83
„ 8. THE LABOURER IN SICKNESS .	98
„ 9. THE LABOURER IN OLD AGE .	109
„ 10. THE LABOURER IN HEAVEN .	122
„ 11. PRAYERS	136
FOR A FAMILY	138
FOR PRIVATE USE . . .	152
FOR A SICK PERSON . . .	156

THE LABOURING MAN'S BOOK.

CHAPTER I.

THE LABOURER IN HIS YOUTH.

THIS Book may chance to fall into the hands of some Lad who has only lately begun to labour, or else of some Young Man of the age of eighteen or twenty.

You have probably passed four or five years of your life at school. And four or five years is a wide span in a man's life. Now, why was it you were sent to School? Was it because your Parents thought it well that you should have a little learning, and not be left behind by other youths of your age? Was it

to please the Clergyman, who of course wished to have the Parish School full? I will tell you why it was—because those who sent you there cared for your welfare. They knew that you would have to plunge into the rough world; and they thought it well that you should be acquainted with those things that would best fit you to take your part in it. They were anxious that you should conduct yourself creditably, whilst you are here, and that you should know something of what will make you happy, when this short life is past and gone. Yes, this, I should think, was the reason why you were sent to school.

And what has your schooling done for you? Has it put you on a level with other youths of your own class? Has it made you feel that you are not behind the rest? Has it fitted you for the work and business of life? Has it made you acquainted with many things, which you have since found to be useful to you? And above all, has it taught you to understand and to love that Bible, which shows us how a Christian should live here, and what his hopes are as regards the future?

I hope your schooling has done all this for you. And if so, then you will look upon those four or five years as among the most useful of your life. You will not be so foolish as to fancy that you have now nothing more to do with learning, and that you may throw it off altogether; but you will feel a desire to keep up what you have already gained, and to increase your little stock of knowledge by every means in your power.

For instance, there is perhaps an *Evening Adult School* in your parish. Here then is an opportunity not to be lost. Seize it by all means. Your basket will very soon get light and empty, if you are not constantly storing it. Your well will soon dry up, if there is not a fresh supply continually flowing into it.

Again, there may be a *Lending Library* in your village; or, if not, you may be able to borrow a book now and then from a Friend, or from your Minister. And how can you spend your spare time better, and particularly in the winter evenings, than by reading? But here let me caution you, that you must be a little careful about *what* you read. In these days

there are plenty of bad books and newspapers, which come in a young man's way. Now, when you know a book to be bad, put it from you, as you would a bottle of poison. Bad publications will corrupt your heart. And when once the poison is lodged there, it is not easy to get rid of it.

Choose some book that will be *useful* to you, as well as *interesting*. Thus you will be daily improving your mind, and increasing your amount of knowledge. And I am sure you will be amply repaid by the solid pleasure which this habit will bring you. Besides, it will keep you from ten thousand snares; for ignorance and idleness are the root of untold evils; and you remember the old saying, that "the devil always finds work for idle hands to do."

Take any young fellow who is in the habit of spending day after day without ever opening a book. How does he pass his spare hours? He is an idler, and is always ready to have a chat with every brother-idler who comes in his way. He saunters perhaps to the Public-house, just for something to do; and there he

is pretty sure to fall in with others like himself. He begins by going there only now and then, and is satisfied with a pint of beer and a pipe. Then his visits are more regular, and his appetite for drink grows upon him. He soon becomes a constant frequenter of the Taproom ; and ends by being a confirmed *Drunkard*, and, it may be, a *Gambler* into the bargain.

If you value the character then of a sober, steady man, let me urge you to shun the Public-house and the Beer-shop. It is very easy to get into the habit of going to such places, but not easy to leave it off. And such a habit is pretty sure to bring ruin upon a man, and make his life miserable.

I must say a word or two about your *Sundays*. Most likely you have been brought up from your childhood to look upon Sunday as a very holy day. And you have been accustomed to go regularly to church. I hope nothing will ever tempt you to give this up. A Sabbath-breaker is sure to become a bad man—not bad perhaps all at once ; but he is sure to grow into a bad man at last. And those who turn their backs upon God's

house, must expect God to turn His back upon them.

If you take my advice, you will be very particular about your Sundays. Never stay away from church. Don't let a small matter keep you from it; and be bold enough to say "No," when any of your companions try to persuade you to go elsewhere. When a young man keeps his Sundays and his church pretty closely, one feels that he is in a fair way to go right.

But there is another thing I want to whisper in your ear. In these days there are many who seem to think it manly to get free from the authority of their Parents as early as possible. They seem anxious to snap, as soon as may be, the tie which binds them to the home and friends of their childhood. They show but little respect to those above them, and are too independent to heed the advice of those guides whom they should naturally follow.

Now, this is a bad feeling. For if a young man has lost his affection for his Father and Mother, and has grown hard and selfish, he is

nearly sure to go wrong in every way. He will become heartless, and wilful, and unfeeling. He will be nearly sure to go astray; and his course will be from bad to worse. He will be like a ship that has lost its rudder. He will launch out into the world, and be tossed to and fro on its troublesome waves, without anyone to steady and direct his course.

There is a right kind of independence, however, which every honest young workman *ought* to feel; not that sort of independence which leads a man to show no courtesy or respect where it is due, or to despise the laws of his country, or to disobey the reasonable orders of his master. But there is an independence which scorns what is mean and base; and this a Working Man may feel, just as well as any other. Let him be strictly honest and upright. Let him firmly resist the temptation to act otherwise—come in whatever form it may. Let nothing move him from what he believes to be his duty. Let him never be led to do what his conscience tells him is wrong, though there may be a prospect of his condition being bettered by it. Let him injure himself, rather

than step out of the right path. Let him be too high-minded to do a disgraceful action—too honourable to cheat his master or his neighbour—too pure to be the slave of sin—too generous to take an unfair advantage. Surely such an one, whether he happens to be a poor man or a rich one, will at all events be *a really independent man*.

I would then especially advise you, my Young Reader, to reverence and to love your Parents. God has given them to you to be the guides of your youth, and the friends of your riper years. We may have other friends and companions; but no one can be to us what a Father or a Mother is, and no one can fill that place in our hearts which they ought to fill.

But I must go a step further with you. There is another Parent besides your earthly ones—you have *a Father in heaven*. There is another Home besides your present one—*a Home above*. And this Father you are called to serve and love, and towards this Home your eyes should be continually directed. Just consider why you were placed here. It was not merely to get your

living, and to spend a few harmless years in this world. You have a far higher calling than this—a better and a nobler end to live for. God has placed you here that you may serve Him, and do His will upon earth as the angels do it in heaven. Yes, you and I are to be His servants. We are to do His bidding in this world. And then, after staying here a few years at most, we shall leave this world, and pass into another, where we shall be for ever—where we shall either spend a happy life with God, or one of endless misery away from Him.

How then should we act—you and I? Should it not be our great endeavour to please and obey our heavenly Master? Should we not think more, and care more, about our eternal Home, than about this present dwelling-place which we are so soon to leave? Should we not live like men who are hastening homeward?

But you will say, "It is hard for a young man in my class of life to be religious; for I suppose that is what you wish me to be." Yes, my Friend, I do wish it with all my heart; and I well know too that it is difficult

—very difficult. Satan is for ever tempting you to be careless. The world is constantly enticing you. Most of those who are of the same age as yourself are inclined to lead you astray. And if they see you disposed to religion, they will jeer you, and try to laugh you out of your good feelings. Aye, and your own evil heart is ready enough to yield to the temptation. It is easier to fall in with the ways of those about us, than to take a straight line of our own. It is easier to “follow a multitude to do evil,” than to pair off with the few who wish to go right. It is easier to swim with the stream, than to make head against it.

Oftentimes a Lad plainly sees a thing to be right, and wishes to do it, but some thoughtless companion puts in a word, and turns him from it. In this way numbers are drawn aside from the good path. Now, if you wish through life to go *right*, you must do this—you must dare to act differently from those about you, when you know that they are doing *wrong*. Make up your mind boldly to do this, and it will save you from committing many a sin; and further, you will have the happy feeling that

you have done what is right, which is far better than the approval of hundreds of wrong-doers.

It does indeed need some little boldness to make a stand, and choose a really Christian course. And well is it if you have grace enough to take such a decided step. True, there are difficulties; but remember, you are not alone. If you were, you might well be disheartened. But God is with you. He will help you. He will strengthen you in your weakness. He will stand by you in every trial. Go forth then in His strength, and you are sure to succeed. You may safely reckon on His almighty help, when you most need it.

Now then, before I close this chapter, let me urge upon you these few plain directions, on which I have already spoken :—

1. Try and keep up what you have learnt at school. Read a portion of some book daily, and especially that Book of books, the Bible.

2. Keep holy the Lord's-day, and be a willing frequenter of His House.

3. Shun every place where you are likely to get harm.

4. Choose steady, respectable, God-fearing Companions.

5. Never cast off your love and respect for your Parents.

6. Give your whole heart to Christ. And whilst others are serving the world and Satan, do you boldly and openly take Him for your Master.

Such is my advice. Only follow it, and I feel sure that your future course will be one of happiness. You will win the respect of all who know you. Your character will stand high among men. You will have God for your God. He will be with you on your journey through this wilderness; and He will bring you safely to that better world, where you will dwell with Him for ever.

CHAPTER II.

THE LABOURER MARRIED.

I HAVE started the Young Labourer in life. I have shown him how he may grow up to be respectable, useful, and happy—owned and blest by God, and honoured by his fellow-men. I have given him a few hints; and if he acts upon them, I am sure it will be well both for his body and his soul.

But Youth soon passes away; and then comes Manhood. Perhaps he now thinks of Marriage, and desires to have a Wife, who shall be his close companion, and his fellow-traveller on life's rough way.

Out of every hundred Labourers I take it that about ninety or more become married men. So that I have thought it well to give a chapter to the Labourer in his married life.

Now, don't be surprised if I tell you that a *very early marriage* is not desirable. It is better to get a little knowledge of the world, before you take so important a step. And again, it is well not to marry till you have managed to lay by a sufficient sum to start you in your new condition. For remember, if you once get into debt, it is not so easy to get clear again. It will hang like a chain about your neck. Perhaps it will be years and years before you are free. And you will be often wishing that you had made a wiser and more prudent start at first.

I would further advise you to be *very careful in the choice you make*. Remember, it is a *Partner for life* that you are to choose—who is to be your every-day Companion, the Sharer of all your sorrows and your joys, the Yoke-fellow who is to bear with you the heavy burdens of life, and walk with you in the path which God has marked out for you. And yet how often is it the case that a young fellow, when he makes up his mind to get married, takes up with the first girl who seems disposed to have him. Thus he presently finds himself joined

for life to one, who, instead of being a helper, is a hinderer to him in his after-course. Think twice, then, before you make your important choice.

And now I must ask you to bear from me a word or two about your *conduct before marriage*. I have known many a couple walk together for weeks, and even for years, with the understanding that they were one day to become man and wife. And all this time their minds were as pure, and their conduct as chaste, as could be desired. They were respected by all who knew them; and as they honoured God, He also honoured them.

But how many there are, who allow themselves to be drawn away from the path of virtue, and fall into a sin which God most plainly condemns? How often, alas! it happens that persons during the time when they are engaged to be married, shamelessly break the Seventh Commandment! Thus they not only damage their own character, but also bring down upon themselves the anger of a holy God. The poor thoughtless Girl becomes a Mother before she is made a Wife; and then

the thing is spoken of as *a misfortune*, instead of being called by its right name—*a sin against God*. Or else, to save appearances, they are married a few weeks beforehand, just as if the sin which has been already committed could be cleared off by the marriage which follows. Oh what a withering blight does this cast on many courtships! And the consequence is that God's blessing is withheld, without which no union can ever be a really happy one.

I have said enough to put you on your guard. May *your* case be altogether different from this! May you be able in after years to look back on your's as a chaste, pure, and holy marriage—one, in short, that has God's approval and blessing!

And now shall I mention some of the good qualities which the Person who is to be your Partner ought to possess? First of all, she should be about your own age. Then she should be healthy, and neat in her person; for a slatternly wife will be pretty sure to make your home a comfortless one. She should be gentle and good-tempered—no gossip or brawler. She should be modest and well-con-

ducted—not a bold, dressy girl, who cares no more for you than for another. She should be discreet and prudent—one likely to prove a good manager. And, what is of more consequence than all, she should be one who will help you on your way to heaven, not be a drag upon you—one who fears and loves God—one “whose adorning is not that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.”

She may not be either handsome or rich; but, if she has the qualities which I have mentioned, your choice will not be badly made.

“For ’t is the mind that makes the body rich :
And as the sun breaks through the darkest clouds,
So honour peereth in the meanest habit.
What! Is the Jay more precious than the Lark,
Because his feathers are more beautiful?
Or is the Adder better than the Eel,
Because his painted skin contents the eye?
Oh no, good Kate: neither art thou the worse
For this poor garniture and mean array.”

SHAKSPEARE.

It is of the greatest importance to you to make a good choice. Your happiness in life greatly depends upon it. Lay the matter before your heavenly Father again and again in prayer; for Solomon tells us that "a prudent wife is from the Lord." Ask Him to direct you in your choice; and then He will assuredly make your way prosperous.

And here it may be well to give you a hint about *the manner of spending your Wedding Day*. Do not make it a day of folly and revelry, as some do. It is a day on which you take upon yourself very important vows, and enter upon a most important change in your life. Though it may well be to you a joyous day, it should not be a day of mere feasting, or a day of unholy mirth.

Before you go to God's House, get your Prayer-book, and read the service over two or three times, so that you may be able to take your part in it, without making those foolish blunders, which so many make when they repeat the words after the Minister. And when the Wedding Hour comes, and you go to church in your best clothes, try and feel

that the act you are going to engage in is a most solemn one. In short, as I have said, your Wedding Day should be a very cheerful and happy day, but not a day marked by folly and intemperance.

But now you will expect me to say a few words about your *Married Life*. The Labourer and his Wife may, I think, be as happy as the King and Queen upon their throne. Yes, and I believe they may be happier; for they have fewer cares to harass them, and their plain, simple life is often marked by the purest and truest joys. They have, may be, a very humble abode; but the Bible tells us that "God is in the dwelling of *the righteous*." And if *He* is there, He will turn their cottage into a palace. They may have very slender means; but "the blessing of the Lord it maketh rich, and addeth no sorrow with it." There is such a thing as an "honest poverty," to which no shame or disgrace belongs. They may have none of the riches of this world, but much treasure laid up in heaven; for "hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and

heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him" ?

There should be a perfect understanding between man and wife. Their hearts should be knit together. There should be nothing concealed or kept in the background. They should have thorough confidence in one another. They should advise together about all the little everyday matters of life ; and especially there should be the freest intercourse on those great subjects which concern their eternal welfare.

They should likewise, in their daily conduct, be extremely careful to steer clear of those little petty quarrels and bickerings, which so often destroy the happiness of a married couple. Anything which is likely to chafe and irritate the feelings should be specially avoided. In the little everyday matters of life, they should learn to bear and forbear, and be ready at any time to give up their own will for the sake of peace.

But nothing so effectually draws the hearts of man and wife together as prayer. If they are in the habit of kneeling down together day by day, and approaching God's throne together

with one heart and one voice—this will of all things be the most effectual promoter of real union between them.

How truly happy that couple must be, who are thus joined together “in the Lord”—whose hearts are one, and whose aims in this life, and whose hopes beyond it, are also one—who are not only united by the closest earthly bond, but by the still stronger bond of grace. They will be pretty sure to prosper in their married life. For though, it is true, they will meet with their difficulties as well as others, yet they will not have to struggle through them alone. They will have a powerful Helper. God will smoothe the roughnesses of their path. He will be their Friend for life. He will bless them all their days. And when at length their parting time comes, it will only be for a little while. He will take first one, and then the other; but He will bring them together again, and make them eternally happy in His own glorious kingdom.

CHAPTER III.

THE LABOURER IN THE MANAGEMENT OF HIS CHILDREN.

WE will suppose that God has blest the Labourer and his Wife with a Family. Then every child should be looked upon as a separate gift from God—a loan lent to them by Him—a precious treasure, which they must watch over for His sake.

But are Children always a blessing and comfort to their Parents? I am afraid not: some are the reverse. Now, we know that God alone can touch their hearts, and by His grace make them what they ought to be. Still, very much depends upon the manner in which they are brought up. Let me then give you a hint or two about the management of your children.

1. Try to "*bring them up in the fear and nurture of the Lord.*" Remember, they have souls to be saved, as well as bodies to be cared for. Educate them then for Heaven.

2. *Pray for them.* Prayer is a Parent's duty, and a Parent's comfort. Without prayer all your efforts will be useless. Pray for your little ones from the very dawn of their earthly life. Ask God to be their Guardian and their Friend. And when you bring them to be christened, look upon their Baptism as a blessed ordinance which Christ has appointed, and not as a mere form which it is customary to go through. Place your children within the arms of a loving Saviour, and ask Him to shelter each tender lamb in His safe fold. Pray in faith; for many a Parent's prayers have been heard and answered long after that Parent has been laid in the grave. Pray daily; for you will daily need help from above to enable you to act wisely and rightly towards your children.

3. Teach them to *obey you.* This is best done by quiet firmness, and not by force. To correct is sometimes necessary; but it should *never be in anger.* For if you are in a

passion, your child will perhaps cringe before you for the moment; but he will never respect you.

Have you not often gone along a street and seen a mother run out, and seize her little child, and beat it, using at the same time loud and angry words? And what is the consequence? The child's heart becomes hardened, rather than softened, by such treatment; and its temper soon becomes ruffled and spoilt. It is always better to speak quietly and gently to your child, showing him that he has done wrong, and at the same time letting him see that you must be obeyed. You have probably noticed that some children are under the most complete control, and that too without any unkindness or violence being resorted to. There is no fuss, no angry words or looks, and yet the Parent's word is readily obeyed. Try and obtain this quiet, cheerful obedience, and you will soon find the comfort of it.

Again, when forced to punish, always endeavour to *suit your punishment to the offence*. Sometimes those who correct are a little unjust. For instance, a child's carelessness,

which causes perhaps some trouble or loss to the Parent, is often punished quite as severely as lying, or thieving, or any other sin against God Himself. You will see at once that this must be wrong.

As a general rule, I would say, *Use as little bodily correction as possible.* Never strike a child, unless every other means fails. A beaten child generally becomes sullen and wayward. Such treatment seldom answers. When I see a birch rod hung up over a cottage mantelpiece, I always suspect that something must be wrong in the management of that household.

In gaining obedience, be very careful too *never to try your child's temper needlessly.* A command is often given without considering if it is a *reasonable* command, and therefore likely to be obeyed. Thus perhaps a heavy burden is laid upon a child, which he is unable to bear; and then a rebellious spirit forthwith starts up. How often too are the most trifling faults taken notice of, when it would be far wiser to pass them by; or else a wrong moment is chosen for correcting them.

The system of *threatening*, again, is an extremely bad one. Threats, if not carried out, soon lose their effect; and if they are, then surely they sound harshly from a Parent who should rule chiefly by love. "I will tell your Father, you naughty child," is a threat which should never be sounded in their ears; nor should the Father's return be dreaded as a signal for complaints and long tales of naughtiness and disobedience. Let the Wife never make her Husband a bugbear to his child. This is not the way to render his home a happy one.

But worse still is it to *purchase obedience by a bribe*. This is frequently done; but it is a most hurtful system. You are busy, it may be, and your child is noisy and fretful. You know that if you give it a lump of sugar or an apple, this will be nearly sure to purchase a momentary quietness. And so, to save yourself trouble, you give it. But what is the consequence? Why, of course, ever after your child resorts to similar means to extort the bribe again. And henceforth it is clearly his *interest* to be petulant and disobedient.

4. *Have no favourites among your children.*

Try and love one as much as another; and be just to all. Nothing sours a boy's or girl's temper so much as the feeling that more favour is shown to others than to them. No family can live happily together where this is the case.

5. Teach them to be *kind to one another*—to be forbearing and unselfish—not to be quarrelsome and pettish, but to give up their own wishes for the sake of giving pleasure to their brothers or sisters, or their playmates. Try and encourage a happy and cheerful spirit at home, so that all may feel that here is the abode of love, and kindness, and affection.

6. Try and promote in your little circle *cleanly and orderly habits*. Teach them to be very neat in their persons, and to look upon dirt almost as much to be avoided as poison. This, like many other things, they will best learn by *example*. Let them get into the habit, too, of being civil and obliging to all, and respectful to their superiors and elders, always touching their hats, or dropping a curtsy, when they meet any one above them.

7. If there is a good *School* in your village, take advantage of it, and send your children there, when they are of a proper age. And if you wish them to get real solid good at school, be sure to send them regularly, and let no trifle keep them away. It may sometimes be very convenient to you to have your elder girl at home for a day or two in the week ; but mark my word—*she* will be sure to lose more by every little absence, than *you* will gain by it. Take a pride in hearing a good report of your children. Show them that you take a real interest in their good conduct. But, if they have behaved ill, never take their part against the Master or Mistress who have corrected them. Suppose your child has been punished at school for something wrong—lateness, or idleness, or bad behaviour of any kind. Well, he comes home, makes a great piece of work about his punishment, but very little about his offence. You forthwith take part with your child. The young rebel is encouraged in his rebelliousness. He is supposed to be in the right, and the Master and Mistress in the wrong. And the poor child is

taught at this early period of life to call evil good, and good evil.

I would recommend you by all means not to remove your children from school too soon. You may feel that the few shillings they might earn at work would be very acceptable. But *for their sakes* do not break in upon their education, especially as the last year or two at school is the most important of all, and it is then that the greatest progress is made.

8. Let *Home Training* go hand in hand with school instruction. Let not what they learn there be unlearned under your roof. And above all, bear in mind that you must teach them by your *daily example*, as well as by your *words*. It is not enough to *tell* them what is right; you must also let your own conduct and your life be a kind of *picture* to them of what you yourself feel and believe to be right.

The example of a Parent may have an immense influence for good or for evil on a child. If, for instance, the Father is a swearer, will not the Boy be likely to swear too, though God's word tells him plainly that it is wrong?

Or, if the Mother puts herself into violent passions, how can she correct her girl for so doing? Or, again, you may be very strict in bidding them go to church; but if you do not go yourselves, they will soon find out that you care but little for God's House.

Only picture to yourself what will be the feelings of that Parent on the Day of Judgment, whose bad example has been a stumbling-block and a hindrance on his child's way to heaven. Just think what your sorrow would be, if your child should then say to you, "I was taught to love the God who made me, and the Saviour who died for me; but *you* undid by your conduct all the good which I learnt. You, who should have helped me on my way to heaven, have been the one to keep me back!"

9. Keep them from *bad company*. Nothing is more hurtful than this, and nothing more likely to bring them to sorrow. Many a well-disposed Boy has been corrupted by an evil companion, and has been drawn aside from the right path, to which he never perhaps returns. And many a young Girl has

been ruined by going to a Fair, or by getting into the company of the gay and thoughtless.

10. Do not encourage *finery in dress*. This is too often the beginning of a bad course. How is it that we so frequently see the modest little girl changed in a few years into a bold young woman, forward in look and manner, and perhaps even loose in conduct? The sad change is too commonly owing to the foolish indulgence of Parents. They allow their daughters to dress themselves out in a gay, flaunting manner; and this is sure to draw free notice on a young girl. They seem to forget that "modest apparel" is specially recommended in the Bible to all Christian women, and is in itself a great help to modest ways.

Then, again, Parents are not half careful enough about the sort of sweethearts whom they allow their daughters to encourage. "Certainly a lover is no evil, if he be a true one. And a prudent marriage is commonly an advantage and a happiness. But Parents have experience enough to know that every idle lad who would amuse himself with a young girl is not a lover, and that every courting has not marriage for its aim. And

again, if marriage be the aim, it is a Parent's duty to take heed that it be a *pure* marriage—a marriage between an honourable man and a modest woman; not a marriage of shame between two persons who have broken God's laws." *

11. Send your Girls to *service* when old enough. An idle life at home is anything but desirable. Be very careful also about the situations you get for them. Parents generally look out for two things—high wages and little work. Now, I would recommend you not to care much for either. Respectability is better than money, and a kind and watchful Master or Mistress is far better than high wages, or an easy situation. Place them where the well-being both of their souls and bodies will be looked to.

Here then I have given you several hints about the management of your Family. O Parents, you cannot tell what blessed effects may come from the wise and careful management of your little ones. They are exposed to dangers from the first hour that they begin to breathe; and it is your duty to shield and

* "A Mother's Care."

preserve them, as far as you can, from these. Like a careful Gardener, you must not only be ready to pick up the fruit when it has fallen, but you should endeavour so to shelter it from storms and tempests, that it may be kept from falling.

And how amply will you be rewarded for all your care and watchfulness, if God grants His blessing on the pains which you have bestowed! How much depends in after years on a little careful training in early life! Have you not sometimes seen a little fleecy streak rising in the western sky? In a few moments it spreads over the wide expanse of heaven, and waters the earth with a refreshing shower. Again, have you never seen a little, tiny seed dropped into the earth? The dews descend, and the sun rises upon it, and it starts into life. In a short time it spreads its branches, and becomes a shelter from the heat, and the birds of the air lodge in it. And so you have perhaps seen a little, smiling Boy standing by his Mother's side, repeating some hymn which he has heard from her lips. Or you have watched him kneeling at her feet, whilst he prayed that Jesus would

bless him and his dear Parents. Then, after a little while, when he has grown a little older, you have watched him going to the Sunday-school, there to learn the truths of God. A few years after, that little Boy has grown into a Man; and you have seen him in his turn become a blessing to those Parents from whom he received so much.

Yes, you will be more than repaid by the pains you take with your children. The task may be somewhat difficult; but you have a heavenly Helper near you, therefore you need not despair. The present moment is a favourable one for doing good. When the ground is soft and gentle, it is the time to sow the seed; when the branch is tender and supple, we can train it easiest; when the stream is small, we can best turn its course. And so, when your children are young, that is the best season to mould their character, and to lead them into the pleasant ways of God and of happiness.

My dear Reader, if you have a family, may God enable you to bring it up in His fear and love; and may it prove to be a constant comfort and blessing to you!

CHAPTER IV.

THE LABOURER AT HIS WORK.

DOUBTLESS God might have so ordered it, that the earth should of its own accord have produced its fruits. The soil might have needed no tilling, and the corn might have sprung up like the grass, without the yearly sowing of seed. God could have given us food without our labour, just as well as with it. But such is not His will. He has ordained that man should labour for the bread he eats, that it should not be obtained without the cost of toil—either his own toil, or that of others.

Hence it is that in this and other countries the Labouring Class is a large and important one. Without it there would be a general stagnation; there would be a famine in the land. Bread could not be purchased even

with silver and gold, if the Labourer did not cause it to grow. Shillings and sovereigns, however plentiful, would never of themselves satisfy the cravings of hunger; nor would banknotes shield the back from cold, and ward off the pelting storm.

Think not then that your work is to be despised. Oh, no; far otherwise. The post you fill is an honourable one; and, if God blesses it, it may be a very happy one. You may have the great comfort of feeling that in serving your earthly Master, you are serving God; and that even in your ordinary work you are pleasing Him. Lowly, toilsome, irksome that work may be; but still, if it is performed from Christian motives, it becomes (as has been well said) a consecrated offering of obedience to God, and of goodwill to men.

Far, far better is it to be a hard-working Labourer than a lazy Idler. The one is a useful member of society; the other a mere cumberer of the ground. "Of all tasks the most irksome is the task of doing nothing. Then the chief object of every day's existence is to hasten to its close; the only occupation is

to chide the leaden-footed hours for the weary pace at which they creep along. Life itself is to the unemployed an intolerable burden."

Yes, labour is honourable to all. Adam worked till the sweat fell from his brow. Jacob was a Shepherd to Laban. Joseph was at one time in service. St. Peter and the Sons of Zebedee were Sailors. St. Paul was a Tent-maker; and we find him exhorting his Thessalonian Brethren "to do their own business, and to work with their own hands." Even the Saviour of the world, when He came among us, "took upon Him the form of a servant," and "though He was rich, yet for our sakes He became poor." And no doubt he actually worked in the shop at Nazareth, and thereby put an honour on labour by his own bright example.

But the English Labourer does not usually work for himself, but for another. He has a Master who employs him, and an appointed task which is allotted to him.

Sometimes a man has no choice as to where his work lies, or what it is to be. He must

undertake a certain employment, or be thrown out of work altogether. If this is the case, he should take his portion cheerfully, and do his best. But, generally speaking, a choice is open to him. He has the opportunity of placing himself under this or that Master, as he may like best. Now, since much depends upon *the kind of service* you engage in, I will throw out a few hints, which may be worth your considering.

First, you will be wrong in taking a place, merely because *the work seems to be light*. A wise Traveller does not always choose the road that appears smoothest; for there may be many reasons why that road may be the worst in the end. And so too a Labourer may undertake a situation which is easy enough, but there may be many disadvantages belonging to it. The *lightness* of the post is not everything. There is more to be looked at than merely this—as, for instance, the kind of Master you are to work for, the sort of men you are likely to be thrown in with, and other matters which might be mentioned.

Secondly, do not think too much about *the*

amount of pay. You may have high wages, but a very uncomfortable place. More shillings may be coming in to you than to your neighbour; but you may have to earn them amidst much discomfort, and even suffering. It is true, at the close of the week you must look to your earnings. You need money for your daily wants; and the Poor Man has at best but little. Still, money alone will not make up for other things. It will not give you happiness. Much misery may come along with it.

For instance, suppose you have a good place as far as pay goes, still if it so happens that you are kept from home comforts—that you cannot spend a reasonable time with your family in the evening—that you are forced to neglect your wife and children—or that you are unable to get to church—then, what a poor make up for all this will a few extra shillings be at the week's end!

Thirdly, try and place yourself under one who has the character of being *a good and kind Master*. Some care but little for their men, so that they perform the work for which they are hired. But I rejoice to think there are but few

such in this country, and in these our days. The time is gone by when the Employer used to look upon his Labourer as a mere machine. In "the olden time," a few hundred years ago, he was little better than a slave. He was sure of meat and drink, it is true, at his Master's table. He was kept in good fighting trim for his Master's battles. But he was cared for only for the same reason that his owner's cattle were cared for—that he might be fit for use when he was wanted. But now, thank God, the Labourer is admitted into the great brotherhood of man, and is often treated more as a Friend than a Servant.

Still, even in these days, some Masters are kinder, more just, and more considerate than others; they are more anxious to promote the welfare of those whom they employ. Now, try to get into the service of such; it will, I am sure, add no little to your comfort.

Happy that Employer who has a kindly feeling for his workmen; who bears in mind that he is answerable to God for his conduct towards them; and who, instead of having always before him a selfish desire to further

his own advantage, lays himself out for the real good of those whom God has placed under him ! It is well when a feeling of confidence grows up on both sides—the Master respecting his Servant, and treating him with kindness ; and the Servant looking upon the Master as his Friend, having a constant eye to his interests, and cheerfully and willingly doing the work allotted to him !

Fourthly, never engage in any work which will *expose you to what is wrong*. For instance, if it should be proposed to you to undertake some unnecessary labour on Sunday—or if you should be set to do anything which is clearly contrary to the commands of God—pause before you engage yourself for such a work ; for it cannot be right for a Christian to do that which God's word condemns. You can never prosper, *if you knowingly do anything which is opposed to His will*.

John Bentley, of whom you may have read, was a poor man, but one who feared God. He worked for a millwright who was a worldly man. On one occasion his Master wished him to do some work on Sunday. John Bentley

positively refused. "I told him," said he, "that I would die first. Nothing should induce me thus to treat God's day. Ask me no more about it. I'm willing to work as early as you like on the Monday morning, and till I drop at night; but on God's day I will do nothing." He stood firm, for his conscience whispered to him that he was right, and he gained his point. So much so, that his Master, who had thus tried to persuade him to do what was clearly wrong, and whom he so nobly refused, proved afterwards a real friend to him, and honoured him for his Christian conduct.

This man's rule was *to do the thing that is right*; and it answered in his case. Such too should be our great rule, cost us what it may. And I am sure, if we act upon it, we shall be carried over most of the difficulties of life.

Fifthly, Having a fair place, and a good Master, *continue in his service*. In these days there is a spirit of change come over many of us—a restless feeling which runs through all classes. Beware of it. Few things contribute more to our peace than a fixed, settled, and contented frame of mind. Besides, one who is

always changing will soon lose his character as a man to be relied upon.

One reason why so few keep their places long is, that too much is expected both by the Servant and the Master. We are unwilling to put up with little difficulties. We are not forbearing enough. We do not make allowance for one another. And therefore, if everything does not go on quite smoothly, we get restless and impatient. Is it not so?

For example, your Master gives what seems to you an unreasonable order; and you instantly take offence. Or you return a short and sharp answer to some question which is put to you; and immediately he becomes angry. Or, it may be, you have a job set you which is not quite to your taste; and this puts you into a grumbling and dissatisfied humour. Or another Labourer appears to be more in favour than yourself; and a nasty jealous spirit comes over you.

Now, we should be prepared for all these little roughnesses; and we should try and take them patiently and good-humouredly. If there was more of the "give and take" principle on

both sides, there would be more of that lengthened service which we do now and then hear of even in these days, and which is so creditable to both Master and Men.

Lastly, always endeavour to *do justice to your Employer*. Deal fairly with him. Act honestly and faithfully towards him. Serve him as heartily and cheerfully, as if you were labouring for yourself. Do the very best you can for him. Work just as hard whenever his back is turned, as when his eye is upon you.

Labour is but a toil indeed, when it is taken up unwillingly. Every stroke of work done is an effort, when it is done grudgingly. But one who labours with a contented and cheerful mind, taking a real interest in his Master's concerns, labour to him becomes a pleasure, and he feels happy at his work.

Then too there is another thought which cheers the Labourer as he toils. He feels, whilst he earns his bread by the sweat of his brow, that he is not labouring for himself only, but for others who are dear to him. This sweetens his toil, and makes many a rough task smooth. And, when his work is over, he

hastens home with a light heart ; for he feels sure there is one there whose bright look tells him that his return is welcome.

But now I must be closing my chapter. As you have been reading it, the thought very likely may have come across you, "Ah, he who writes all this never was a Servant himself, and therefore does not know half our difficulties." No, perhaps not. But this I know—that we, all of us, are apt to increase our own difficulties ; but where there is a little watchful care, and patience, and forbearance, we may often wonderfully lighten them ; and perhaps one-half of them may be entirely got rid of. Try to do this with God's help, and you will be blest in the effort.

If my reader chance to be a Female, let her remember that what I have said refers almost as much to Mistresses and Maid-servants, as to Masters and Men.

CHAPTER V.

THE LABOURER IN HIS HOME.

THERE is something very delightful in the word “Home.” It seems to touch one of the best and tenderest chords in our hearts. Now, the Labourer has a Home as well as his richer brother. And if he is a right-minded man, that Home will be specially dear to him. There are enjoyments for him there, of which the bad man knows nothing.

Neatness and cleanliness are nowhere more needed than in a Poor Man’s cottage. Some say that “cleanliness is next to godliness.” Certainly we find them generally linked together : they go hand in hand.

We sometimes visit a cottage where all is disorder. There seems to be no Head, no regularity, no rule. Everything appears to be

out of place. The chairs are scattered about the room, which looks almost like a deserted battle-field—here a leg off, and there an arm clumsily fastened on with string. The walls look dingy and smoky; and more than one broken window-pane is stopped with a dirty cloth or a piece of paper. We cannot go in, whether it be morning or afternoon, but we are sure to find that we have called just at the wrong moment. All is in an uproar—the baby crying—the children untidy and quarrelsome—and each one appears to be doing what seems good in his own eyes.

Perhaps, next door, a very different scene meets one's eye. It is a Labourer's dwelling like the other. But cleanliness and health, obedience and happiness, affection and kindness, reign there. No angry words are heard, for the law of love prevails in this humble home. Its inmates have learnt that neatness and order are a real luxury, which they may enjoy, however poor they happen to be.

Every Cottager's dwelling should have an air of comfort about it. A small amount of care and taste will go a long way, and much

may be done with a very scanty outlay. It is a great mistake to suppose that wealth is necessary to ensure comfort. A little white-wash costs but a trifle; and it gives a look of health and cleanliness. Then, the tables should be nicely scrubbed or polished. The fireplace and irons should glitter. The mantelpiece should be kept dusted. The floor, even if it chance to be of brick, should be cleanly swept. And then a nice quiet print or two will give a furnished look to the walls—not those vulgar, flashy pictures which you sometimes see, but really good ones, which may be bought very cheaply, if you know where to lay your hand upon them. The bedroom windows should be set wide open, to let in pure air. And the children should be tidily dressed, without any of those cheap and tawdry ornaments, which are only an attempt at finery, but have anything but a pleasing and respectable appearance.

Now, the general arrangement of a house mainly depends on the Wife. If she is orderly and neat herself, she will like to see everything neat and orderly about her. She will see, for instance, that her husband's and her children's

clothes are properly mended. It has been said, that "neat and clean clothing help every man, woman, and child to get on in the world. The gaberdine may be old, and the corduroys rusty, and the boots in a hamper state. But in no person's garments does a stitch in time go so far, as in those of a poor man. A small tear soon becomes a great rent. And here you can pretty well tell what sort of a helpmate the Labourer has at home. Needles are cheap, and a hank of thread does not cost much; and a few minutes' careful stitching will be security against another strain. And a wife's pride should be to see her husband tidy."*

There is an old and good saying, "a place for everything, and everything in its place." But I think we may go further and say that there should be "a time or a day for everything, and everything should be done at that fixed time." For instance, you should have a special time fixed for washing, for cleaning, for mending, for reading, &c. Then all these things will be done in their turn, and nothing

* "The Farm Labourer." By a Physician.

will be forgotten or put off. This you will find a great help to you.

I dropped a word just now about *open windows*; but I must say a little more than a word. Cottagers are generally far too much afraid of letting pure air into their sleeping-rooms. They are usually packed there pretty close—three or four sleeping in a small confined space. It is important then that these rooms should be thoroughly ventilated, both in the day by opening the window, and also at night sometimes by keeping the door ajar. This will add greatly to your health, and prevent many fevers and other bad diseases.

The fact is, that every person needs a certain amount of fresh air to sustain life. When the air has passed through our lungs in breathing it becomes positively poisonous. And yet, in a small close room, with the door and window shut, the same air must be breathed over and over again, which is extremely hurtful. We may not feel the ill effects at the time, but we are sure to suffer afterwards; and the very smell is quite enough to show that all is not as it should be. It is true that a certain

quantity of fresh air will find its way through keyholes, and cracks, and crannies ; and if it were not for this we should very soon be fairly stifled : but we want something more than this to keep us in health.

It has been ascertained that a full-grown person spoils every hour by breathing as much fresh air as would fill two sacks. Therefore, if he was to be shut up in a room seven feet wide, seven feet long, and seven high, with the door and window fitting so tight that no air could enter to take the place of that which has been breathed, he would die in a very few hours, poisoned by his own breath !

A hundred years ago, when the English merchants had got a footing in India, Surajah Dowlah, the Sovereign of Bengal, looked with a covetous eye on one of the British factories ; and suddenly attacked the place with his army. About a hundred and fifty English were seized, and were thrust for the night into a small cell, which had been used as a prison, and went by the name of *The Black Hole*. This cell was only eighteen feet long, and fourteen wide, and had but

two small holes for windows. The door was closed upon them, and locked. The struggles and cries of these unhappy prisoners were for a while heard; but these sounds gradually died away. When the morning came, and the door of the prison was opened, the cause of this silence was but too plain. Of the hundred and fifty prisoners, a hundred had died in the night; and the survivors were in so miserable a state, that they were almost gone.*

Such are the fearful consequences, when human beings are forced to breathe the same air over and over again. Now remember this; and do not treat your children or yourselves like those prisoners; and do not make your bedrooms like the Black Hole at Calcutta.

There is another thing which is quite worth your attention. See that there are no *bad smells* about your house. Some people go on for years with a nasty cesspool, or a pigsty, close to their very doors. This is not only very disagreeable and offensive, but it is also destructive of health.

* "The Worth of Fresh Air."

Many of these little matters depend in some measure on the Landlord. If he chance to be one who really cares for the wellbeing of his Tenants, he will see that their houses are commodious and well arranged. He will take especial care that there are a sufficient number of bedrooms in each Cottage, so as to prevent the necessity of three or four big boys and girls sleeping in the same apartment—a thing which must shock the feelings of every right-minded Parent, and which often sows the first seeds of immorality among the children.

I have as yet spoken only about *the Inside* of the Cottage. But *the little Garden without* should be in keeping with *the House within*. It should be well looked after. Time and labour will not be thrown away upon it. The ground should be thoroughly dug, and well manured ; for, depend upon it, a little pains in this respect will be well laid out. Every weed too should be destroyed the moment it makes its appearance. The Cottager should take a pride in his House and Garden ; and though they may be on a small scale, they should be

the best of their kind. A few tasty flowers I would strongly recommend, both in the window, and before the house. The love of flowers is soothing to the mind ; and few things speak to us more forcibly of the love and goodness of God.

The House and Garden are generally a pretty sure index of the kind of dwellers there are within. If the one is neglected and slovenly, you will be nearly sure to find the other idle and badly conducted. But, on the other hand, if the inmates are industrious and orderly, you will see the same character stamped on all about them.

But let me say a little about your *Every-day Life*—I mean your *Home Life*.

The Husband's work probably calls him from his bed early. Now, remember, God should have *your first thoughts*. And if you do not give them to Him, the world will be sure to rush in, and take possession, and will keep it perhaps all the day.

Get into the habit then of beginning each day with God. Lift up your heart heaven-

ward on first rising. You have not much time, I know. You are forced to hurry off to your work. But never go without first commending yourself to God. If you have no time for anything else, find time for this. Kneel down, and spend a few minutes in earnest, hearty prayer. Thank your heavenly Father for having kept you safely during the past night, for having watched over your dwelling, and refreshed you with comfortable sleep. And ask Him to bless you, and be with you, during the coming day ; to prosper you in all your doings ; and to keep your body and soul in safety. If you have time, too, by all means read a portion, if it is only a verse, of the Bible. That verse may contain the very word of warning or of comfort which your soul needs.

Then, after having taken your hasty meal, go forth to your labour, in the full assurance that God is with you, and with the earnest desire that, whether you labour or rest, you may do all to His glory. And even when you are at work, your heart may often rise above this world of toil, and mount up to that resting-place above, where you hope to be for ever.

The Labourer's meals are often hastily made, and are sometimes plain and scanty. But if he has a contented mind, he will enjoy them, and receive them as from God. Hard work and fresh air will make him relish the commonest fare. And whether he is alone in the fields, or at table surrounded by his family, he will never partake of God's bounty without expressing in a few words his thankfulness of heart. This marks the Christian man from another; or rather from the dumb animal, who receives his food without acknowledging the great and gracious Giver of it.

One day in the week however, if not oftener, the Labourer may enjoy his family meal at home. It is a pleasant sight to see the Sunday dinner laid out on a clean, but homely, cloth, and the happy children all seated round the table. That meal is more enjoyed than in many dwellings of the Rich, who fare sumptuously every day. The food is plain; but appetite supplies the sauce. And though there be poverty in the house, there will be the truest happiness in it, if love, and peace, and contentedness reign there. "Better is little,"

says Solomon, “with the fear of the Lord, than great treasure, and trouble therewith. Better is a dinner of herbs where love is, than a stalled ox and hatred therewith.”

A *rich* Home is one thing, and a *happy* Home is quite another thing. For though wealth can buy many comforts, there are some things it cannot buy—health, affection, peace of mind—these three defy the boasted power of money.

There is a Print, which you may possibly have seen, representing a lowly thatched Cottage, in which a Poor Man and his Wife and Children are seated, enjoying with much content and pleasure their humble meal. And above it are these words—

The best and purest Home for me.
Is that where best I love to be.

Good manners are not to be despised by any one; and they are just as needful in the Labouring Class as in any other. I have often found, in visiting a Cottager and his Wife, as much genuine politeness, and as much real nobleness of mind, as I have met with among the higher orders. It is true, there may be a

certain homeliness in their mode of speech, but it is none the worse for that. There is often quite as much gentleness of heart, and quite as much good common sense and delicacy of feeling, as we see in those who are above them.

I would recommend you to be careful in checking anything like vulgarity, or coarseness, or rudeness in your children, and to set them an example yourself of that kindness, and civility, and readiness to oblige, which ought to mark our intercourse with one another, and which specially becomes a Christian man or woman.

If the Husband loves his Wife, and his home is a happy one, he will find his enjoyment there. His own snug chimney-corner will be the place he most delights in ; and the Public-house or gay company will have no charms to draw him away.

And if the Wife is a good and wise woman, she will be specially anxious that the children should love their Father, and should always give him a cheerful welcome when he returns home from his day's work. "I wish," said Mary Harris, "you could see my children's

joy when their Father comes in. I brought them up from babies to watch for him, and crow, and clap their little hands at him. This pleases a poor man who has been at hard labour away from home all day. Then, they have been taught to do all they can to make him comfortable. I have always told them that everything they have to eat, or put on, or enjoy, comes from their Father's labour; that he supports us all, and we should all try to please him, and help in every way we can. You should see them all busy about him when he comes in. One will set his chair by the fire; another is ready with his old easy shoes to put on, instead of his heavy boots; another will have a little water for him to wash his hands and face. It is a happy time when Father comes from work. Oh, Jane, there are few Fathers who do not love their children, if they are not made plagues to them by bad management." *

And now let me ask you, *How do you spend*

"Cottage Conversations."

your evenings? Would that every Labouring Man spent his evenings *at home*. This is the proper place for him to spend them : it is the best place, and the happiest place. But, alas, the Public-house and the Beershop pull many a man aside, and rob him of his respectability and his happiness. And then, sure enough, his wife is neglected, his children suffer, and all goes to pieces.

I know that when a man does not stick to his home, the blame does not always lie on *his* shoulders alone. If things were as they should be in his cottage, it is most likely that he would not wander elsewhere. Many a man is driven to the Alehouse by the discomfort of his home. And many a man, who *might* have been a kind husband, and an affectionate father, is made cross and rough by having his temper tried day after day. A dirty house and screaming children have made many a good husband a bad one, and turned many a sober, quiet man into a drunkard.

But I am hoping that your home is what it ought to be, and that you love to be there. How then, let me ask, do you *spend your*

evenings? In summer, when the days are long, you are glad to give an hour or two, after work, to your garden. But, in the long winter evenings, I hope you can sit down, and thoroughly enjoy a little reading by your fire-side. I hope too you do not forget to help on the education of your children, by talking to them about what they were taught in church on Sunday, and what they have been learning at school during the week, and by trying to follow up what their Minister, or their Master and Mistress, have taught them.

And how do you *close* your evenings? I heartily wish that all families, from the highest to the lowest, knew the great blessing of *Family Prayer*. This is perhaps more difficult for the Labourer than for most men; but *it should be managed if possible*. His work calls him away at an early hour; and he is often home late, and he is tired too with his day's toil. But still a really Christian man will by some contrivance so arrange matters, that he can daily gather his little household around him, and offer up a simple, earnest prayer *for* them and *with* them. This may, at any rate, be done

once a day. And who can tell the blessings from above which rest upon a family, where God is thus honoured, and His blessing is thus sought?

It is said of the Israelites, that whilst the Lord at one time visited their oppressors, the Egyptians, with an awful darkness, which brought gloom and sadness into their houses, there was light in the dwellings of Israel. So there will be "light" in your dwelling, if the voice of Family Prayer and Praise is heard there.

Your children, I suppose, go to bed before you go—in fact, soon after you come home from work. Could you not, as soon as you have made yourself clean and tidy, draw them around you for a short family devotion. I would recommend your reading a few verses from one of the Gospels, or some other plain part of God's Word. Then offer up a short prayer of your own, or else make use of one of those which I have prepared for you at the end of this Book.

But this must not take the place of *Private Prayer*. No, it will not, and it cannot, if you know what true prayer is. There are wants

which each one has of his own ; and there are joys and troubles, which we wish to keep from every ear but God's.

Never then neglect Secret Prayer morning and evening—not the mere form of prayer, but the reality of it. God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth. We must not draw near to Him with our lips only, but with our hearts also.

Let Prayer, as good Matthew Henry says, be “the key of the morning, and the bolt of the evening.” If every Working Man would endeavour to make his house a house of prayer, what rich blessings would he draw down ! what misery would be avoided ! and what comforts gained ! Where true prayer is, there the Lord's presence and blessing are sure to be found. And, depend upon it, wherever you are, and whatever your lot, he who has this for his refuge need fear no evil.

I have recommended the reading a small portion of God's word at Family Prayer. But there must be a private reading of it too, for the benefit of your own soul. You may not

have time to read much ; then read a little. Only never let a single day pass without feeding on *some* portion of that blessed Book, which contains the words of eternal life, and pours out a treasure of comfort and blessing for our souls. Rather give up one of your daily meals, than debar yourself from this necessary spiritual food.

And here is a word of encouragement for every humble Bible reader:—"In Epping Forest, in the county of Essex, there dwelt an old Shepherd, who understood the Sacred Scriptures better than many who had been favoured with a good education. You will ask, why he understood them better? Well, I will tell you. It was because he read a chapter every evening, and then selected a verse which he learnt and pondered over the next day, whilst he was attending his flock. So by learning different verses every day he acquired such a knowledge of Scripture, that the hut of the old man was often visited by people who came to be instructed in the way of truth, until he died at a good old age."

May God Himself be your Teacher, when

you read His holy Word ! Then you will indeed understand it and profit by it. And when you engage in Public Prayer, or Family Prayer, or Private Prayer, may your heart be prepared by the Holy Spirit, and may a devout frame be given you !

Whatever your neighbours may feel, let it be *your* desire to make your Home a Christian Home. Let this be your hearty resolve—

**“ AS FOR ME AND MY HOUSE, WE WILL
SERVE THE LORD.”**

CHAPTER VI.

THE LABOURER IN THE WORLD.

SOME of the happiest hours of your life are perhaps those which you spend in your own peaceful home, and within the circle of your own little family. Here you are surrounded by those most dear to you. Here the tender and affectionate feelings of your heart are drawn out. And here you can often turn your thoughts towards your Father and your Home above.

But these calm and quiet hours are few. They are the bright spots in the journey of life—the pleasant resting-places by the way. For we all have to plunge more or less into the cold rough world. We are called to fight our battles in it, to encounter its trials, and to face its temptations.

The Christian man, whether poor or rich, must feel that it is no easy matter to pass through a world so full of dangers. And yet it is the will of God that we should take our part for a while in this busy scene, and whatever be our lot in it, He promises to shelter us, and keep us safely. When the Saviour was just going to leave this world of suffering, He thought much of all his people, and of you and me amongst the rest. He foresaw all the difficulties and perils, which we should meet with in our course. And yet what did He ask his Father to do for us? He did not ask Him instantly to hurry us away from the scene of danger, and to shelter us at once from all our troubles. No, He felt it needful that we should remain here for a time. He saw that it was good for us to be put upon our trial. And so this was what He asked for us—“Father, I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but *that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.*”

Yes, here we are in the world now. This is our place at present. It is an evil world; but, thank God, we have a Keeper, an almighty

Guardian, who can *protect us in the midst of evil*, and who *will* protect us if we place ourselves in His safe keeping.

And now a word or two as to how we should conduct ourselves *in the world*; and especially how a Labourer should act in the ordinary course of his daily life.

I have already said that you will be thrown in with the world. It cannot be otherwise; and God would have it so. Your work is in the world. You mix with men of the world. It cannot, I say, be otherwise. But is there not a way of doing the world's work, so as to please God? Is there not a right way, as well as a wrong way, of doing it? Now, I want you to hit upon the right way, so as to have God's blessing with you. And, I do trust, this is just what you wish yourself.

Your work perhaps lies in the fields; your's is the labour of the hands. Another is called to the work of doctoring, or shopkeeping, or to the work of fighting his country's battles, and some too to the great and blessed work of preaching the gospel. Whatever our work is,

we may do it in a godly and Christian way. The Labourer should feel that his calling is the very one which his heavenly Father has chosen for him. And he, as well as others, may lift up his heart to God, and say, "Father, bless me in my work. Thou hast chosen it for me. May I do it happily and cheerfully for Thy sake."

Some people seem to think that they could honour God more in any other situation than that which they fill—that in many other callings it would be far easier to serve Him. But no; the post which He allots to us is just the very one, in which we shall best do the will of Him that sent us. Let me show this to you by an example.

Supposing you had two children; and you were to say to the Elder one, "I have a work for you to do. Go into the street, and take a basket with you, first filling it with bread and other provisions. Go from house to house, and find out the poorest and the most needy; and give to each one something to relieve his wants. And as you dole it out, speak a word or two of kindness, as the case may be."

And supposing you were to say to the other,

“I have a work, my child, for you to do also. Go into my garden; and in the further corner of it you will find a spot overgrown with weeds and thistles. I wish you to work there, till all the rubbish is completely cleared. It will be a hard and dull occupation for you, but I wish you to undertake it.”

Doubtless the task given to the Elder Child would be the more delightful of the two. But would not each Child please his Father best, by doing *the work allotted to him* with a cheerful and ready obedience, though that work might chance to seem the least interesting of the two? And so it is with us. It is in doing the work apportioned to us by our heavenly Father that we shall best serve and please Him. Wherever our path of duty lies, *there, in that path*, we may expect God's blessing. For when we do heartily, and cheerfully, and with all our might, *the work which is before us*, then it is that we are really doing that which He would have us do in the world. ✻

Again, a Labourer may show a Christian spirit by the way in which he conducts himself among *his fellow-labourers*. He should never

be tempted to use bad language. He should be watchful against the first risings of evil temper. He should never say hard words against his employer when his back is turned. He should never allow himself to speak evil of any one, not even bear to hear it. He should never be drawn in to use idle gossip about his neighbours. He should always be the one to lend a helping hand when it is needed. He should have a kind and pleasant word for every one. There should be nothing austere or forbidding about him ; but his outward manner should show the peace and happiness that dwells within.

In all your dealings strict *Honesty and Uprightness* should mark your conduct. It will not do to make a profession of godliness, and then to go and act as worldly people act—to speak holy *words* with your lips, but to do *deeds* which God's Word condemns. You must take no wrong advantage ; you must carefully speak the truth ; and in all things show yourself to be a Christian. Thus, whilst men distrust others, they will have no reason to distrust you ; your name will stand high among them ;

and what is more, you will be acting rightly in the sight of God.

I believe that an honest, upright Christian man or woman will be respected in every station. A few of the bad ones may at first jeer you, because you are so particular, and because you will not do as they do. But, depend upon it, in their heart they will think you right, and honour you for it. They would like you better, some of them, if you would go with them to the Public-house or the Village Fair; but they know all the while that *they* are acting the foolish part, and *you* the wise one.

Further, in order that you may live uprightly and respectably in the world, you should be extremely careful in *the management of your little money matters*. Never run into debt. Pay ready money for everything. Your scanty income will go half as far again by this means. You will be able to go to the best shop for your goods, instead of buying them at an inferior one for the sake of the credit they may give you. In most Villages there is a good country shop, and a fair-dealing Trades-

man ; and if so, he deserves your support. The Labourer has need to think of the shillings and sixpences, and to make them go as far as possible, or he will never be above the world. I am “not one of those who believe that the Poor, with proper economy, can live on *air*. Nor have I much faith in the nourishing qualities of nettles and young thistles, which were lately recommended in one of the public newspapers !” Nor, again, do I suppose that anything is to be saved by buying the very cheap clothing, which is hung out of our town shops in these days to catch the needy purchaser. No, what you want is good nourishing food, and strong substantial clothing. And to obtain this you must be very saving, and lay by your little income to the best advantage.

And this leads me to say a word or two about *laying by*. To be always hoarding money is miser-like ; but to put by a little against a time of need is only common prudence. Be very cautious however about *lending* it. You may wish to help a neighbour who is in difficulty ; and it seems hard to refuse him the

loan of a few shillings, if you have them by you. But it is perhaps better to help him in some other way, if you can. For it is easy to borrow, but very hard to repay when the promised time comes.

Now, we will suppose you have a little sum left you by a Friend, or you have saved a few pounds out of your hard earnings. What is best to be done with it? I have no hesitation in saying that the safest place for it is *the Savings' Bank*. Many a poor fellow has been persuaded to lend money to some Friend, in the hope of obtaining a larger interest for it than he can get at the Bank. And what is too often the consequence? Why, the man promises well; yes, and at the time *means* well: but things go badly with him, and he cannot make good his word. Thus a hardly-earned sum, which has been scraped together with excessive difficulty, is sunk, and can never be recovered.

Put *something* into the Savings' Bank every month, if you possibly can. You know, they will take the smallest sums—even sixpence at a time. And is not many a sixpence wasted,

which *might* go there? Remember too, it is not only safe in the Bank, but if left long enough it is added to. You get interest for it—so much for every pound. You may have it out too, when you please, and how you please. And everybody has his own separate account set down in a little book which they give him; so that there can be no mistakes. And, as I said before, if left long enough, the money increases. You need give yourself no anxiety about your little fund: there it lies in the Bank quite safe; and every month that it remains there, it grows larger and larger. In fact, while you are sleeping, it is gaining interest.

And then, suppose you chance to be out of work, what a comfort to have something to fall back upon! You will feel that you need not starve, or run to the Relieving Officer for help. Thank God, you can help yourself. You can take a little money out of the Savings' Bank; and then perhaps put it back again, when things go a trifle better with you.

"When I fall in," says Old Humphrey, "with young people, who keep up a good

character, acting uprightly to all, I am pretty sure to put the question, ‘Tell me now, have you any money in the Savings’ Bank?’ And very seldom am I disappointed in hearing the answer, ‘Oh yes, Sir,’ to my inquiry.

“When I observe pleasure-takers, fond of attending fairs, and wakes, and nightly exhibitions, spending more money in one day than they can get during the rest of the week, I say to myself, ‘Among these very few, if any, have money in the Savings’ Bank.’

“When I see, through the half-opened door of a Gin Shop, the squalid throng assembled therein—men in ragged clothes, unwashed, uncombed, and unshaven, with dirty faces, and torn and greasy garments—I suspect them of many things, but I never suspect that they have anything in the Savings’ Bank.

“What was it that kept old John and Sarah Andrews from the parish all last winter, when they were laid up with rheumatism, and could hardly stir a limb? Why, their son Robert, a hard-working young fellow, supplied their wants by his money from the Savings’ Bank.

“What enabled Mary Meadows to clothe

her sister, when she went to her first place of service ; to make her brother a present of a Bible, when he sailed as a cabin-boy to the Indies ? Mary had been a prudent young woman, and she had laid up a little money in the Savings' Bank.

"I have met with hundreds who regretted they had *not* money there : I never met with one who regretted that he *had*."

But though we talk about saving money, and laying it by, we must remember that the poorest man need not be niggardly. God's blessing will never rest on such. John Wesley, in his Sermon on the Use of Money, says, "*Make* all you can ; *save* all you can ; *give* all you can." And a wiser than Wesley says, "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth ; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty. The liberal soul shall be made fat ; and he that watereth shall be watered also himself."

And what a mistake to think that only the Rich can *exercise charity*—that it is only a privilege which belongs to the wealthy. If you are poor, it is true you cannot spare

much—perhaps you cannot spare *anything*—to relieve the necessities of those who are in want. But still you may be very helpful to one another. For instance, if a neighbour is laid by, and you see that his garden is likely to suffer, you may offer to do an hour's work in it, and so keep it from going to ruin. This would be a kind act, and he would feel it to be so. Or another perhaps is in some trouble or difficulty: you can go and visit him, offering him a little friendly advice, or Christian consolation. Now, these are the truest works of charity; and these are what every one, who has the will, may practise.

But, in our intercourse with the world, is not something more needed than just keeping ourselves straight, and avoiding what is positively wrong? We should try to do some actual good. And all of us *may* do good, and be useful in our way. The poorest, the lowest, the humblest, may do his part towards the well-being of his Parish and Neighbourhood. The smallest pebble on the seashore helps to keep back the encroaching wave. Every single

tooth in the harrow does its part towards breaking up the soil. The little glow-worm contributes its measure of light on a starless night. And so too we may *all of us* be useful. We may be a blessing to those about us. We may do something, though it be but little, to stop the progress of sin, to soften some rough wayward heart, to shed a little light around us in this dark world. Let no one among us imagine then that to do good is beyond his reach.

“What if the little rain should plead,
 ‘So small a drop as I
 Can ne’er refresh the thirsty mead :
 I’ll tarry in the sky’?

“Does not each rain-drop help to form
 The cool refreshing shower?
 And every ray of light to warm
 And beautify the flower?”

I have read of a person who once had the following dream :—He was travelling in America, and in passing over a rough country he every now and then met a number of tiny streams, so small and insignificant that he could easily step over them. And all of them were running

the same way. At length he asked one where it was going. "Why," replied the little rill, "I am going to New Orleans. I heard that the people there want a great canal, a thousand miles long and fifteen hundred feet wide; and I'm going to help to make it." And, so saying, it hurried on. He came presently to another, and asked the same question, and received the same answer. All were hurrying on to make the grand canal. None knew *what* they could do; but all were determined to do *something*. He passed on, and at length arrived at the mighty Mississippi; and then he found the canal was made!

Thus do the little rills make the stream, and the stream the river; till the united waters of the whole flow on their way rejoicing to the glorious ocean. And thus each man, however weak and lowly he may be, *can do something* in making up the mighty stream of human events as it rolls towards the ocean of eternity.

If you really have a desire to be of use, and to do good, many paths are open to you. In a quiet, humble way you may have many opportunities of drawing others towards what

is right. For instance, you may perhaps check bad language, by speaking against it in a kind and good-natured manner. Or, if you see that a neighbour does not go to the House of God, you may put in a word now and then, not as a Teacher, but as a Friend. And most assuredly, if you are walking with God yourself, the desire of your heart will be to draw others into the same happy path.

What a blessing, if in ever so small a degree the world is any the better for our being in it ! And how much may a humble Cottager do to increase the happiness, and to raise the religious feeling, of those among whom he is thrown ! A little leaven may leaven the whole lump.* The quiet, consistent, Christian conduct of a poor man or woman may indeed do much towards spreading peace and happiness around him.

Try then, my Friend, to honour God in your station ; to pass through the world unhurt by its defilements, and untouched by its temptations. Try not only to get a blessing for yourself, but also to be a blessing to others—to do some good to your fellow-men.

This is living for some purpose. This is making our lives useful. This is the secret of being happy. This is doing as we shall wish to have done when we come to die. This is labouring for God, whilst we labour faithfully for our earthly Master. And this *should* be, and *may* be, the life of every man, though he be but a humble Labourer.

CHAPTER VII.

THE LABOURER AND HIS CHURCH.

IF Sunday is a day of Rest for all, it is especially so to the man who has been labouring hard during the other days of the week. As the Sabbath comes round, he is eased of his week-day burden, and may enjoy a sweet repose.

But this is not all. It is not mere rest for his *limbs* that God thus provides for him. That alone would be a great blessing ; for without it he would soon be exhausted. But it is his *soul* that his heavenly Father is especially concerned for. And on this day He calls him aside, as it were, from his ordinary occupations, and bids him think of that better world which is before him.

This day should indeed be to all, both rich

and poor, a most happy day—a day of much calm enjoyment and spiritual profit. We should take a bright and joyous view of our Sundays; and as we put on our best dress, we should try to put on also the ornament of a contented, holy, and happy spirit.

I have often thought that there are a great many persons, who really wish to keep the Lord's-day holy; but they seem to want some plain directions, as to how they may best do so. I will now give you a few simple rules, which I hope may help you.

1. Look upon *Saturday Evening* as a Preparation-time for the Sabbath. If a great Feast were to be held in your village, a portion of the day before would certainly be spent in preparing for it. Now, Sunday is the Christian's Feast-day; and surely some preparation is necessary, if we wish to keep it properly.

For instance, all our actual labour, and all our worldly business, should be completely finished, so that there may be nothing left to be done on God's Day. Again, let all your buyings be done on Friday or Saturday; so that there may be no going to the shop, and

no purchases made on the Lord's-day. If you look at the tenth and thirteenth chapters of Nehemiah, you will see how the Jews were cautioned against this.

We know that there are certain household matters, which must be attended to even on Sunday. Let these occupations be *as few as possible*. And, with a little arrangement, this may easily be managed. There need be no chairs to be dusted, no wood to be cut, no mendings to be done, on the Sabbath morning. On Saturday evening there should be a busy making-ready for the morrow in every English cottage. There should be "a washing of little faces, combing and brushing of flaxen heads, laying out of clean frocks and pinafores, jet black shoes set ready for little feet—that without hurry or confusion they may be ready on the Sabbath morning to accompany Father or Mother, or, if possible, *both*, to the place

“ ‘Where Christians meet to praise and pray,
To hear of heaven, and learn the way.’

Or that they may trip joyously to their beloved Sabbath-school, there to sing of that happy

land, where every eye is bright, but which 'nothing that defileth' can enter, 'neither whatsoever loveth or maketh a lie.' " *

But our preparation should be *inward*, as well as *outward*. The heart must be prepared by prayer, or we shall not rightly value or enjoy the Lord's-day. When you lay by your week-day clothes on Saturday evening, pray that you may be able to put by for a time your worldly employments, and your worldly cares. Thus your mind will be free for God's delightful service.

2. We now come to *the Sabbath Morning*. And what should be your feelings as you rise from your bed on that happy morning? It is a good plan to say to yourself, the moment you wake, "This is God's day; not my day; not my earthly Master's day, to do his work; but *God's own day*. This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it." Then kneel down, and thank God for His mercy in having spared you to see one more Sabbath. Ask Him to grant you a Sabbath

* "The Pearl of Days."

blessing; to give you Sabbath feelings; and to enable you to spend the day to His glory.

“O sweetest day of all the seven,
 Emblem and earnest of that heaven
 Where saints have peace and rest!
 For thee I thirst, for thee I sigh,
 And count the hours till thou art nigh,
 Sweet day of sacred rest.

“O let my heart thus sigh and glow,
 My song no interruption know,
 Till death shall seal my tongue.
 In heaven a holier strain I'll raise,
 And rest from everything but praise;
 My heaven one endless song.”

Everything in your cottage should have a Sunday look. The little room should wear a smiling appearance. The children should be nicely and neatly dressed. The morning meal should have something inviting about it, to mark this best of days. There should be an atmosphere of peace about the whole house. And then, when the church bells ring, you should feel as David felt, when he exclaimed, “I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord.”

“ I love with Christian souls to meet,
 Where hymns of praise are given,
 And earthly music rises sweet,
 An offering to heaven.

“ For angels seem to linger nigh,
 And God, our God, is there ;
 Who from the glories of His sky
 Bends to His creatures’ prayer.”

3. Let us now pass on to the Christian’s happiest hour—the *hour of Public Worship*. Before going, kneel down and ask God to prepare your heart. Tell Him that you are going into His presence, and ask Him to be with you and to bless you. “ Keep thy foot,” says Solomon, “ when thou goest into the house of God ” (that is, Go there in a watchful, reverential frame) ; for “ the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.” Remember, it is God’s house you are going to. He Himself is there. You are going to speak to Him.

When the Prayers begin, try and lift up your heart to God. It is not enough that the Minister should pray : *you* must pray too. Yes, it is not enough to sit quietly and listen whilst prayer is offered : you should pray the

prayers yourself. Join, not with your voice only, but with your whole heart also.

I hope you *kneel* in prayer; for a sitting worshipper can hardly be called a worshipper at all. Why, if you were to go and present a petition to the Queen, you would not think of sitting down before her; and can such a posture be pleasing to God? It may perhaps be the custom in your church to sit; but it is a bad custom. Those around you may do it; but this is one of those things in which a Christian man or woman must be singular, rather than dishonour God.

And then, when your Minister goes into the pulpit, and offers up a silent prayer for God's blessing, pray for him that he may be strengthened by help from above. Ask God to be with him, and to enable him to speak a word in season to you. And do not think it a small matter to listen to him. It is for life or for death that you hear. Feel as if every word was spoken expressly to *you*—as if the Preacher said, "I have a message from God unto *thee*." Receive the word *in faith*; for it is God's Word. Receive it *carefully*; for it is able to

save your soul. Drink it in, as a thirsty man *eagerly* drains the cup that is held out to him. *Welcome it*, as the condemned criminal does the pardon which is sent him, or as the dying man does the remedy which can restore him.

Bear in mind too, that when the Sermon is finished, your work is not over. No, the most difficult part still remains—I mean the *acting upon what you have heard*. Bishop Hall mentions an anecdote of one, who, meeting his neighbour coming out of church, said to him, “What! is the sermon done?” “Done!” said the other, “no, it is *ended*, but it is not so soon *done*.” And how is it with us? We have a good store of sermons *heard*, but perhaps we have only a few that are *done*. One sermon *done* is worth a thousand *said* and *heard*. And therefore our Lord declared, “If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye *do* them.” And St. James says, “Be ye *doers* of the word, and not hearers only.”

When you go away from God’s house, be watchful. If you have got any good, guard your treasure. It is too precious to lose. Satan will try to rob you; and if he sees that

your heart is touched, he will try all the harder.

I hope you are not *a once-a-day church-goer*. I do not call that making the most of Sunday; for it is losing one-half of the blessing which you *might* have. Suppose some rich man was to come into your village—suppose he was to stand once a-week at a particular spot with a basket full of gold, and was to scatter it right and left amongst the bystanders—would you not take care to be one of the party, and not miss a single opportunity? Would you stretch out *one* hand only, and not *both*? Now, God scatters blessings every Sabbath by means of His Ministers. All are welcome. There are precious gifts for every one. Oh then, what folly not to be there—to miss a single opportunity! Go, whenever the house of God is open. Be not content to be filled and enriched *once* a-day; but *go twice*. Stretch out, not *one* hand only, but *both*. And if you go in a right spirit, I am sure you will not be sent empty away.

And what shall we say about the Lord's Table? I hope you are a Communicant. You

can hardly be a real Christian, and yet live without this ordinance. You can hardly love your Saviour, and yet disobey Him. You can hardly be pressing on your road to heaven, and yet put aside this important means of obtaining strength to help you on your way. Yes, I hope you are a Communicant — a humble, earnest, devout, and loving frequenter of this heavenly Feast.

4. But let me say a few words about *the after-part of the Lord's-day*. We will suppose that the Services are now over. But there are many hours still remaining. And how should these hours be spent? Some, I fear, spend them in idleness. They seem to feel, that so long as they are 'doing *nothing*, they can be doing no harm. Others look over their accounts, or read the newspaper. Some again pass the remainder of the day in pleasure and amusement. But I hope better things of *you*.

Perhaps you are *spending the evening alone*. Then, place yourself before God, and speak to Him. Tell Him of all your coldness during the day, your wanderings, and dulness of heart. Entreat Him to pour out upon you,

and those who have been worshipping with you, the dew of his Holy Spirit. It is well too to open your Bible for a little while, and try to call to mind what you have heard. It is well to find out the text, and to read the chapter from which it is taken, and also to turn to any passages of Scripture which may have been mentioned by the Preacher. This will greatly improve your knowledge of God's Word, and make what you hear really profitable to you.

Or perhaps *some Christian Brother is with you*. Seek then to warm *his* heart also. Religious conversation is oftentimes a great help and blessing to our souls; for "as iron sharpeneth iron, so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend."

Or you are a family man, and your children are around you. Now is a happy opportunity for speaking to them a few words of kindness and affection. Find out what they have learnt during the day. Talk to them simply about their souls; about their heavenly Father; about their loving Saviour; about that joyous Home which is prepared for them in heaven. Do not speak to them in a stern, dull manner;

but try and interest them, and give them, if you can, a bright and happy view of religion, so that they may be *drawn to it*, and not *driven from it*. Remember that they are but children; and, whatever you do, be careful not to make religion a weariness to them.

I have spoken about your *church*—that house of God which belongs to the Poor man as well as to the Rich—that place where you are always welcome, where God meets you, where you may join your fellow-sinners in prayer, and in hearing the precious gospel of your Saviour. Truly there is something pleasant in the very look of the *Building*. Even *that* is dear to us. We have a kind of reverence and affection for the very bricks and mortar. The old Structure, with its spire pointing towards heaven, is loved by us, and its Graveyard filled with the graves of those who were once dear to us.

You may often turn your eye with real pleasure to the hallowed spot. “There,” you may say within yourself—“there is the house of my God. There was I taken, when an *infant*, and dedicated to Christ. There have

I spent many sweet and peaceful moments. There I have often heard of that Saviour, who loved me, and gave himself for me. There, sometimes, when my heart has been weighed down with earthly cares and sorrows, it has found a peace which it could not find elsewhere. There my marriage knot was tied. And there, when the journey of my life is ended, will my poor body be brought, as if to bid farewell to that dear spot, before it is committed to its last earthly resting-place."

But when we speak of *the Church*, we mean something more than the mere Building. Dear as that building is, there is something else which you will prize, if you are an honest and hearty Churchman. You will feel thankful that you belong to a Body of Christians, who hold the simple, plain truth of the Gospel. You will feel thankful for that sound and scriptural Prayer-book, which we use in Public Worship, and for those Thirty-nine Articles at the end of it, which set forth in a few words all the main truths which you and your Brother-Churchmen hold.

"My Church!" There is many a Labour-

ing Man who feels this to be one of his dearest treasures. He loves it as he loves his Parent, his Friend, his Comforter. He is much of the same mind as Jeremiah was, when he said, "Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls." He feels that, whilst many are tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine, he has something solid to cling to, something that will not deceive him.

It is true, there are many poor, feeble, half-hearted Churchmen belonging to our Body—many who are a disgrace to the name they bear. But, dear Reader, I hope you are a Churchman at heart—a Churchman from conviction—a spiritual, earnest, devoted member of the Church. Poor though you may be—a plain, simple, unpretending man or woman—may you shine as a bright light where God has placed you; and may you strive to honour Him by a holy and useful life!

If you wish to glorify God, and if you value your own soul, *make much of your Sundays*. If you would live happily and die peacefully,

make much of your Sundays. If you would set a good example to others, and have a blessing on your labours during the week, *make much of your Sundays.* They are precious days. "I have found," said Sir Matthew Hale, "by a strict and diligent observation, that a due observance of this day hath ever joined to it a blessing upon the rest of my time." The Poet says, and I am sure there is truth in his words—

"A Sunday well spent
Brings a week of content,
And health for the toils of the morrow;
But a Sabbath profaned,
Whatsoever be gained,
Is a certain forerunner of sorrow."

Let not yours, however, be a mere Sunday religion—not merely a religion which shows itself in church, but which shows itself in your home, and in every place, and at all times. May it not be like the cloak which you sometimes put on, and at other times throw off; but, like the leaven which mixes itself with every part of the loaf, may it leaven your whole conduct and character!

CHAPTER VIII.

THE LABOURER IN SICKNESS.

No occupation is more healthful than that of the out-of-door Labourer. Whilst he drinks in the fresh air all the day long, he generally enjoys more of health and strength than most of his fellow-men.

But even *he* is subject to Sickness. There are times when the strongest man is laid by. Bear this in mind, and prepare for it. We cannot with all our care lay up a store of health for days to come. But we may do *this*—we may put by to-day that which shall provide for us to-morrow, if sickness should come upon us.

The very animals do so. The Dog goes off with his bone, and buries it against the time of hunger. The Bee stores up honey in her little

cell, knowing that she will have need of it by-and-by. The Ant "provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest;" for instinct tells her that days are coming when she can no longer work. And shall *we* be less wise than they?

I have already advised you to begin early to put by a little money from your weekly pay, and place it in the Savings' Bank. Some day you will be right glad of it; and instead of suffering from actual want, you will have a snug little fund to fall back upon.

But besides this, every Labouring Man should be a member of some Club—not of *any* Club, but of some *good* Club, on which he can place thorough reliance. This relieves a man of many a care, when he is thrown out of work by illness. But I say, don't be satisfied with *any* Club. Sometimes the nearest Club is far from being the best. Again, the Club which promises the largest pay in sickness, and holds out the greatest enticements, is not always the surest and the most likely to last. Ask the opinion of some one who can guide you in this matter, and follow his advice, or you will

very likely be thrown over, when you most need something to support you.

But you may perhaps say, "Is there not parish pay for us in any case?" Yes, this is true. But no high-spirited man will like to have recourse to the Relieving Officer, if he can possibly avoid it. Not that there is any disgrace in so doing, *when any one is compelled by distress or misfortune*. But there is a feeling of honest independence, which will make every right-minded man shrink from adopting such a measure, unless he is actually forced. He would far rather help himself than lean upon the aid of others. I am thankful to think that this is the feeling of most of our English peasantry; and it is just this, and other feelings of the kind, which make us stand so high amongst the nations of the earth.

In a worldly point of view then, the Labourer will be best prepared for illness by being a member of a Friendly Club. Then, when sickness comes, he will be freed from much of that anxiety, which would otherwise almost overwhelm him.

But we must not look at Sickness merely as

regards the Body, or only as bearing upon this world. Why is it that your strength is for a while taken from you? Why is it that those hands, which lately were so busily employed, now hang down? Why do the limbs, which were so robust and active, become feeble? Oh, look up, and be quite sure that it is God who sends you your illness, and that He sends it in love: "Even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight."

Yes, dear Friend, if you are laid by, be sure of this—it is God's appointment, and it is for some great good. It is perhaps to humble you, and to make you feel that you are but a poor, weak, helpless worm in His hands. Or perhaps it is to teach you a lesson of submission to His blessed will. Or it may be to show you the great value of health, which you did not prize enough when you had it. Or very likely it is to awaken your soul from its spiritual slumber.

If you are put aside from active work, and laid on the shelf for a while, and confined either to your house or bed, do not murmur at it. Be sure there is some hidden blessing in this

visitation. You may not see it at the time; but depend upon it, it is there. Try, then, and thank your heavenly Father for His present dealings with you. Look well into your own heart, and see how you stand with God. Stop, and ask yourself solemnly, if all is right with you. And pray earnestly that your affliction, whatever it is, may prove a real blessing to your soul.

It is good to have a little time to think, and to take a searching glance within. If you are wrong, surely it is well to discover it, that you may get right. Or if you have reason humbly to believe that all is well with you, even then there will doubtless be many a lesson, which a season of sickness has to teach you.

How have you been living? It may be that, like many of your neighbours, you have been living a careless life. Perhaps, though not so bad as some, you have been forgetful of God. Perhaps it has been your habit to go to bed at night, and to get up in the morning, without ever kneeling down to ask for God's blessing. You have worked hard, it may be; but you looked not up to the Lord to prosper

your work. Your chief thoughts have been about this world; and it has been only now and then that you have turned your mind towards that eternal world, to which you are daily hastening.

If so, what a mercy it is that God has stopped you short, and brought this sickness upon you! Would He have been more kind, if He had given you health and strength, and had allowed you to go on *happily in your sins*? If you were to see one of your children sauntering heedlessly along a footpath, and you knew that there was some dangerous pitfall in the way, should you be acting rightly towards him, if you let him run on without checking him? Would it not be an act of real kindness to call loudly to him, and beg him to stop? And if this had no effect, would you not seize him by the arm, and by every means in your power turn him from the path of danger? Now, this is just what your gracious Father is doing with you. Yes, He has sent this illness to you, because He cares for your happiness, and loves your soul.

But this little Book may find its way to the

sick-bed of some *real Christian*. My Brother, have you been giving your best and healthiest days to God? Well is it, if you have done so. Still, your illness may bear an important message to you. Accept it then from God. Say, "Welcome sickness, welcome trials, welcome the most smarting pain. I need them all. Oh, that my affliction may lead me still nearer and closer to my Saviour!"

But in whatever state Sickness finds you, I will offer you a few hints for making it a time of profit.

1. Let your sick-chamber be a place for *Self-examination*. Oh, there are depths in your heart, which perhaps you have never reached! There are turnings and windings, which you have never probed. You probably do not half know yourself—your ignorance, your weakness, your sinfulness. Now is the time to take a good searching look within. And if you do this, your illness will indeed prove a benefit to you.

2. Let your chamber of sickness also be a place for *Prayer*. I'm not speaking of *long*

prayers: but I want you to put up *earnest* prayers, *heartfelt* prayers. God will hear these, though they may be short, and poorly spoken. Ask God to forgive all you have left undone, and all that you have done amiss; to pardon you for having cared for your body more than for your soul; for having been too eager about this or that pursuit, and for having loved your Saviour far too coldly. And, oh, if you feel any good desires springing up in your mind—if you feel determined to lead a holier and more Christian life—remember that your strength is but weakness, that you have no power of your own, and that God must give you His heavenly grace, or you will never become a really established Christian.*

3. Let this be a time, too, for a more earnest *Reading of God's Word*. That Book is given to you to guide you on the way to heaven. It is God's own message to your soul. It can make you wise and happy. It is like a chest full of most precious treasures; and though

* Two Prayers, which may be used in sickness, are given at the end of this Book.

this chest is closed and shut to many, there is a golden key by which it may be unlocked, and that key is prayer. Go to God as a little child, and say to Him, "O my Father, give me thy Holy Spirit. Open to me the treasures of thy Word. I am blind and ignorant; do Thou instruct me. Remove the darkness, and enable me to see clearly. What I know not, teach Thou me."

I dare say you are weak now, and cannot read much. Never mind. Take up your Bible, and read, if it be only a verse or two, seriously and thoughtfully. God can, and will, bless it to you. He can give you comfort from it; and He can enlighten you by its precious truths.

4. When your Minister comes to see you, *hail his visits with joy*. He comes to you in his Master's name—as an Ambassador for Christ—as a Friend who cares for you, and will do you all the good he can. Try to learn something from him. Endeavour to profit by his visits. Pray that they may be a blessing to you.

5. Be quite sure that this Sickness *will not*

leave you where it found you. It will either soften you or harden you. It will either be a knock listened to, or a knock unheeded. Oh, beseech God that He may make it a means of good to your soul, and that you may be able one day heartily to thank Him for this season of chastisement.

Who can tell what may be the effect of an illness? It may be with you the turning-point from sin to holiness. It may be the beginning of a decidedly Christian course. It may prove to be like one of those days, which looks dark and cloudy at first, but afterwards breaks out into sunshine over our heads, and closes with a calm, bright, and peaceful evening.

Happy the man who is brought by sickness, or by any other means, to know the state of his own sinful heart, and earnestly to seek Jesus, the only Saviour, the sinner's Friend, and the sinner's Hope! He will look back upon it with a feeling of unmixed thankfulness. He will point to it as a season of no small mercy to his soul.

I have visited many a man in sickness, but never have met with more simple, humble,

trusting faith, and more of that true "joy and peace in believing," than I have sometimes seen whilst sitting by the bedside of a pious Labourer, or some member of his family. I have been led at such times to feel how true those words of the Apostle are, "Not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called; but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty."

My Friend, if you are visited by the hand of God, may your visitation be a rich blessing to you! May you learn from it many a precious lesson! May you rise from your sick-bed a better and more Christian man! And may you be able to look back upon those hours of pain and suffering, and say, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted!"

CHAPTER IX.

THE LABOURER IN OLD AGE.

THE Evening of Life ! Yes, life has its youthful *Morning*, its *Day* of toil, and its *Closing Hours* of old age. We have spoken of the two first ; and now let us turn our thoughts to the last—to *Life's Evening*.

Your work is done. Your labouring days are over. Your limbs, which a few years back were so strong and supple, are now stiff and infirm. You are not what you once were. Old age has crept upon you.

What then ? There are some advantages and blessings connected with this, as well as with the other stages of life.

You have, I hope, saved a little money, and have now something you can fall back upon, instead of depending on Parish support. You

can sit by your cottage fire, and feel that you are now enjoying the well-earned fruits of your honest toil. You have your Club, or your Savings Bank, to depend upon. And now too I hope that your Children, who once leant upon you for help, are ready in their turn to lessen the trials of your declining years. It is their pleasure and delight to do all they can for your comfort, feeling that in such a case "it is more blessed to give than to receive."

But perhaps you are not so favoured. It may be, that old age has come upon you, and found you destitute; and, much against your will, you have been forced to be a pensioner on the Poor's-rate. If necessity has fairly driven you to this, you need not blame yourself, or be unhappy. But rather be thankful that your lot has been cast in this happy Christian Country, where old age is neither despised nor forsaken.

Endeavour, in any case, to be happy and contented. You have your trials, I know; but there is a way of bearing them with patience, and even with cheerfulness. You

have perhaps many blessings, which others do not enjoy. You are drawing near to the grave; but there is a Home beyond, a happy Home, prepared by the Saviour for those who love Him.

Now, what a great difference there is among Old People! Some are the very picture of peace and blessedness, whilst others are altogether miserable and dissatisfied. With some the Evening of life closes in calmly, placidly, hopefully. With others the sky looks dark and angry—foreboding a storm to come.

An old man, tottering under the weight of years—bent with toil—his brow wrinkled with many a care—tired of this life, and yet having no hope beyond it—murmuring at his scanty means—his heart hard and unthankful—this is indeed one of the saddest pictures we can behold.

But it does one good to see an aged son of the soil, grown ripe like the corn which he has sown and reaped, and now quietly waiting God's own time to gather him into the heavenly garner—humble, patient, contented, and thank-

ful—praising God for that goodness and mercy which have followed him during a long life, and believing that the same gracious hand will lead and support him still—without a murmur as regards the past, or an anxious care as regards the future—resting on his Saviour's love, and like a little Child leaning upon His strong arm—oh, this is a happy old age. May such be yours and mine!

Now, my aged Friend, which description seems to fit you best? Is my Reader some worldly old man or woman, or is he a true servant of God?

If the former, then I look upon you with a feeling of the deepest sorrow. The world, to which you have hitherto given your heart, what *has* it done for you? or what *can* it do for you now? You have loved it. You have lived for it. And you still cling to it as tightly as ever. Your only treasure is here. And yet this world is slipping from under you. Your “earthly house of this tabernacle” is crumbling. And you have no better home beyond. Ah, sad and mournful is the prospect. Where are your sins—the follies of

your youth—the God-forgetting worldliness of your manhood—the hardness of your old age? They are written, as it were, with an iron pen, in God's Book. There they are—a long, sad list, for which you must very soon give an account—and no Saviour to plead for you, for you rejected Him; no blotting out by His blood, for you scorned it, flattering yourself that you did not need it. And what remains, but to meet a holy God, **ALONE, UNBEFRIENDED, AND UNSAVED?**

You will say perhaps, “Can you not speak one word of comfort to *me*? Can you utter no language but that of sorrow and reproach? Must you only tell me of the wrath to come? Is there no ray of light, no door of hope, for an aged sinner?” Yes, there is mercy with God: and *you* are still within reach of it, I trust. God has not yet called you to your account. It is still Evening with you: the Night is not come. The hour of your departure has not yet struck, though the sure hand is pointing towards it.

Oh, there is mercy for you, if you will only seek it *at once*. God loves you. Jesus has

bled for you. The gate of heaven is not yet locked against you. The key has not yet been turned. Now, as you are reading these lines, fall down upon your knees before that gracious Father, from whom you have wandered and strayed. Tell Him of your sins, and how much you have loved them. Say to him, as the Prodigal did, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son." Go to your Saviour, and ask Him to bear your weary load for you. He was wounded for your transgressions, and bruised for your sins: ask Him to wash your guilty soul, and to cleanse you with His atoning blood.

You may yet be happy. You may yet find peace. You cannot undo the guilty past. You cannot call back wicked words, unholy thoughts, and wasted days. But there is a Saviour who has died for such as you, and whose blood can purge away even *your* sins. "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." Now,

late as it is, at the eleventh hour, you may obtain mercy. May God bless these few words which I have been speaking to you! And may He carry them home by His Holy Spirit to your heart!

But perhaps the eye that is reading these pages, though it may have grown dim with age, is one that has been enlightened by God's grace. An Aged Believer, it may be, is my Reader. And to you, my Brother, a word or two of advice and encouragement will not, I think, be unwelcome.

Look back, and be thankful. See how God has led you these years past. How mercifully has He often spared you, when danger threatened! How graciously has He kept you from this and that evil! You have, I daresay, passed through many and sore trials; but they were good for you; they were blessings in disguise. You thought them misfortunes at the time; but they were really mercies. Like old Jacob, you may have exclaimed, "All these things are *against me*," when all the while they were *for you*.

And if you are now God's servant, think

how lovingly He drew you to Himself, and won you over to His happy service. Once, perhaps, you were thoughtless, like many others; but grace opened your eyes, showed you your sinfulness, and led you to the Saviour. Oh, think of all this—sparing mercy—long-suffering mercy—pardoning mercy—loving mercy—abounding mercy: and does not the thought make your heart glow with thankfulness? Say with David, “Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless His holy name—who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies.” A thankful old age is sure to be a happy one.

Look within, and be humbled. How many wrong things have you done, and how many right things have you left undone! Your own heart tells you how many sins have lurked within it, and are still lurking there. Though you may have been kept from *open* sin, there are many *secret* sins, for which you may well mourn. There are sins, which you have committed long ago, in the time of your ignorance. And there are sins, too, which you have committed even since you have taken Christ for

your Master. You have loved your Saviour : but how poor and cold has been your love to Him who has loved you so much ! How many things have been allowed to chill your heart towards Him ! Ah, you have much reason (have you not ?) to be humbled in the dust before your Lord, and say, “ God be merciful to me a sinner ! ” The Lord has, I trust, accepted you ; He has forgiven you all your iniquities ; but you cannot—you never can—forgive yourself.

Look forward, and be hopeful. God has provided for you hitherto, and He will provide for you in days to come. Your pilgrimage is closing. Your working time is over. Your resting day is near—a long, bright, blessed day—when your sun shall no more go down. You have had a long and weary journey, it may be ; but you are now near your home. Sometimes Satan perhaps tempts you to think it is better for you to die at once, than to live any longer. You are weary of the world. You feel that you are a trouble to those about you. But, oh, let not such thoughts for a moment lodge within your heart. Try and

take a happy, contented, trusting view of your present state. Be thankful for what you have, and commit your body and soul to God's gracious care. Ask Him to keep you here just so long as He sees fit—neither more nor less. And when your time comes, may you be willing to depart, and to be with Christ for ever! May St. Paul's language be yours, "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand; I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: and now there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day, and not to me only, but to all them that love his appearing!"

Be much in prayer. Draw near to your kind and loving Father continually. *Speak to Him often:* every day carry your troubles, and your joys, to Him. *Speak to Him alone,* when no eye sees you but His. *Speak to Him, as one who is near you,* who knows your infirmities, and who will stretch out His everlasting arms to support you. *Speak to Him, as you sit in your chair, or as you walk about.*

There is no need to speak aloud, so that others should hear you: your *heart* can speak, and God loves to hear that.

Read your Bible daily: or, if you cannot read it yourself, get some one to read it to you. Prize God's blessed Book. Feed your soul with His Word; and get all the nourishment you can from it. And remember, God himself must be your Teacher. It is His book, and He alone can open your understanding and your heart to receive it. Whenever you sit down to read your Bible, use in secret some such petition as this—"O God, give me thy Holy Spirit, to teach me, and to make me love thy Word." In this way you will soon find that your reading is made a real blessing to you.

Go to the House of God, and to His Table as long, and as often, as your limbs will carry you. It is good to be there. God will accept your humble prayers. He will pour down a blessing upon you. David felt more and more love for God's House, as he grew in years. Good old Eli loved to be there. Anna too in her declining years "departed not from the temple," we are told. And it was there

that the aged and venerable Simeon uttered those joyful words, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation." Speak to all who come near you about those things which are dearest to your heart. Let not your conversation be much of this world, but chiefly of heaven. Try and lead others to Christ. Tell them of Him, whose love is so sweet to you. The words of an aged Christian are often heeded. And who can tell but that your poor and humble efforts may be blest by God?

I know there are many trials for an old man. Your limbs may often ache through weariness. Your appetite, and your eyesight may fail you. Your memory may lose its power of recollection. You may feel "like a bowing wall, and like a tottering fence." But if God is with you—if your Saviour's arms are round you—if you have the unspeakable comfort of feeling that you are accepted in Christ, and saved through Him—then all is well, and you will enjoy a peace which passeth all understanding.

Be assured, God will not leave you. Has He not promised, "Even to your old age I am he; and even to hoar hairs will I carry thee"? "I have been young (said David), and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread."

You are now like "Christian" in the "Pilgrim's Progress." You have nearly reached "the Celestial City." You are close to the River's brink. Fear not; for God is willing to help you through. His rod and His staff will support you. In His strength you shall "enter in through the gates into the city."

CHAPTER X.

THE LABOURER IN HEAVEN.

HAVE you ever been at one of our English seaports? If so, you may perhaps have stood upon the beach, and watched some sturdy merchant-ship, peeping up with its white sails in the far-off distance. And then, as it comes closer, you see that it is making for the harbour. The sails, which looked so fair in the distance, have many a patch in them. The masts, and spars, and ropes, which were so trim, have been battered and rent by the winds. In short, you can plainly discover that the vessel has taken a long and trying voyage, and has weathered many a storm. But now it enters the harbour, and its weather-beaten crew feel that their dangers

are over, and that they have reached "the haven where they would be."

And so I have sometimes seen a true Believer—an honest Christian Labourer it may be, who has passed years of honourable toil, and been tossed upon the world's rough waves—just entering that calm and peaceful resting-place, where he shall be for ever with his Lord. He may be lying upon a hard bed. Coarse sheets and blankets may be his covering. His words may be few and simple. But there may be an earnest, living faith about him—a bright and joyful hope within. He may be resting on the sure foundation of a Saviour's merits, and a Saviour's love.

Dear Brother, there is a Home for you above—a house not made with hands—a heaven purchased for you, and prepared for your reception. There your labours shall have an end; for there the weary shall for ever rest.

Are you steering towards that Harbour? Are you looking for that rest? Is your face set Zionwards? Are you taking the right course to reach it? The Rich Man cannot get to heaven by his riches, nor the Poor Man

by his poverty. But the way there is open to both—to the one, as well as to the other. Christ has died upon the cross to save us, and He tells us that He himself is the way, by which every penitent and earnest Believer may find acceptance. Many a Rich Man and many a Poor Man have found that way, and are now enjoying “the rest which remaineth to the people of God.”

Perhaps you are an old man. Your strength is nearly gone. “The silver cord” is worn so fine, that it is ready to snap. “The bucket” can take but a few more journeys to the well. The last grains are trickling from the hour-glass. Soon you will pass away from this world. And where is your Home? Not in the grave; that will only hold your bones; only the earthly part of you will find a resting-place there. But there is a far more blessed home prepared for your soul. And happy are you, if you are ripening for it. Happy are you, if you have a joyful hope, that when your “earthly house of this tabernacle” is dissolved, you have “a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.”

Or, it may be, you have been lying for weeks or months upon a sick-bed. Your poor body has been worn away by disease. And death seems now to be coming as a welcome visitor to release you. Ah, he cannot come too soon for us, if we are Christ's redeemed ones. We may then say, with humble, holy triumph, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ."

But perhaps neither of these cases is yours. You are in the midst of life and strength. God would have you stay a little longer in this toiling world. You are now employed, may be, in the service of your earthly master. From the first dawn of morning to the last shades of evening, you are mostly at your labour. From the beginning of the week to the end, you are earning your daily bread. Bear in mind, however, your course will *very soon* be run; and there is another life after this. Then live and labour now, as one who has a God to serve, and a soul to save. Your God sent you here to glorify Him, and to do

His will. He did not place you here, merely to get a living for yourself and your family during the few years of your stay on earth, but to prepare for heaven, and also to be useful during your sojourn here.

Yes, God has a work for us all to do. I have my own work allotted to me, and you have yours,—a work which no one can do for us, but which we must do ourselves. God has duties for us all to discharge. Happy he, who can from his heart say, “My meat is to do the will of him that sent me.” Happy he, whose life on earth is a daily ripening for heaven—who, amidst all his work and labour, is looking for and hastening towards a better Home! Happy he, whose great desire is to live every day to God; and, whether he eats or drinks, labours or rests, does all to his Master’s glory!

Oh, what a little span this life-time of ours is, when we look back upon it! Childhood and youth pass somewhat slowly perhaps; but manhood and middle age steal by at a sharp rate, and we grow old almost before we are aware of it. Hear what the Christian Poet says—and how true are his words!

"Time's an Hand's breadth ; 'tis a Tale ;
'Tis a Vessel under sail ;
'Tis an Eagle on his way,
Darting down upon its prey ;
'Tis an Arrow in its flight,
Mocking the pursuing sight ;
'Tis a short-lived fading Flower ;
'Tis a Rainbow on a shower ;
'Tis a momentary Ray,
Smiling in a winter's day ;
'Tis a Torrent's rapid stream ;
'Tis a Shadow ; 'tis a Dream ;
'Tis the Closing Watch of night,
Dying at the rising light ;
'Tis a Bubble ; 'tis a Sigh.
Be prepared, O man, to die !"

Oh then, is he not a wise man, who "lives whilst he lives"—who, during the little day of life, sets himself in earnest to work for God and for eternity ?

Sometimes, when things seem to be going a little against you, and you feel rather out of sorts, you think perhaps that your lot is a hard one. You see many a one passing by your cottage door better off than yourself, and your heart whispers within you, "Why did God so order it, that I should be all my life long a

poor cottager, whilst many of my neighbours have enough and to spare ? ”

Stop, my Friend, “ Who art thou that repliest against God ? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, *Why* hast thou made me thus ? ” Those are not always the happiest, who have most of this world’s goods. A well-dressed, and well-fed, body does not always contain a peaceful heart within. A wiser than we are has said, “ Better is little with the fear of the Lord, than great treasure and trouble therewith.” The outer shell may be somewhat coarse, and yet it may contain a pearl inside. Which was the happiest man, Herod on his throne, or Peter in his rough fishing-boat—the Rich Man in his purple and fine linen, or poor Lazarus covered with ulcers, and without a shelter ? Who had the truest peace then, and who is most truly blessed now ? Ask yourself these questions ; and then go and thank God for making you just what you are ; for depend upon it, that is what He sees to be best for you.

In a few years it will matter very little whether we have been among the great ones,

or the little ones, of the earth—whether we have dwelt in a cottage or in a palace. Have we lived to God? Have we served our Master in heaven? Have we given ourselves to Him? Have we rested in simple, humble faith on Christ as our great Redeemer? Oh, if we have, then shall we be numbered among God's great ones, who are "arrayed in white robes, and palms in their hands." And when the question is asked, "Whence came they?" it shall be said of us, "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

That is a blessed word, by which heaven is described in Scripture—REST. "My chief

conception of heaven (said Robert Hall, who was a constant sufferer from pain) is *rest*." And how many there are who have felt as he felt. They have had so much toil and suffering—they have seen so much misery and sorrow around them—they have had so many difficulties in life—that the sigh of the Psalmist is often heard from their lips, "Oh that I had wings like a dove; for then would I fly away, and be at *rest*!"

Rest—why, this is just what a Labouring Man wants. He has earned his bread by the sweat of his brow. He has probably worked hard for years past. And now, what he most longs for is a resting-time. It is true, he has had his Sabbaths; and they are peaceful pauses in the midst of the busy week. But what he longs for is *perfect* rest—a Sabbath which shall *never end*—a rest for body and soul in heaven. And if you are a true Christian, you will find this; for there "the weary are at rest."

You will rest from your *toil*. Your hands will no longer have to procure bread for the support of life. Your limbs will no longer

ache with labour. You will have no more care, to make you anxious. You shall "hunger no more, neither thirst any more."

You will rest from *pain*. It is written, "There will be no more pain; for the former things are passed away." The inhabitant of that heavenly city shall not say, "I am sick." An aged Christian woman, who had been for many years afflicted with a painful disease, said to a friend, shortly before her death, "I shall soon be at home now, and then all suffering will be over. I hope I am not impatient. I am willing to bear whatever God sends, and as long as He sends it. I know He is love. But it is very sweet sometimes, when my poor body is racked with pain, and I cannot get a moment's relief, to think that I am every day getting nearer heaven, and to feel that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed. What a change it will be!"

You will rest from *sorrow*. It is said of God's people in the Book of Revelation, "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and

there shall be no more death, *neither sorrow, nor crying.*" Yes, the days of their mourning will be for ever ended. Poverty, want, disappointment, unkindness, trials, are unknown in heaven. No waves of grief can dash against that shore. No clouds of sadness can come over you in that bright world. All will be sunshine. The voice of lamentation and weeping can never mingle with the songs of the redeemed.*

You will rest from *sin*. It is a blessed thing to know that there will be an end of sin. What is it that brings so many griefs and troubles upon us here? It is *sin*. What is it that makes the true Christian oftentimes sad? It is *sin*. What is it that brings many a cloud between God and his soul? It is *sin*. Christ has come to put away sin; but oh how it lingers in the Believer's heart! How it chills his love, weakens his faith, and spoils his prayers! But soon, if you are one of God's children, you will bid a long farewell to sin.

* See "Life's Evening," pp. 148, 149. Religious Tract Society.

You will throw off its yoke for ever. You will have done with temptation. "God shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly." When Christ shall appear, the true Believer will be "*like Him*"—holy as He is holy, pure as He is pure, perfect as He is perfect. This is the thought, the glorious thought, which makes heaven so precious to the Christian. He longs to rest from sin, and to be pure and holy.

We shall rest in heaven, but *we shall not be idle*. Thank God, there will be employment for us there. There will be no idlers in those blessed courts. I have often found Labourers, when they are laid by, complaining that the very rest is irksome to them. They long to be at work again. They long to be once more employed. Now, in heaven God has work for us all to do,—not labour, but employment,—not wearisome toil, but delightful service. "His servants shall serve Him." It will be no eye-service—no grudging surrender—no constrained exercise—but the hearty, willing, cheerful, sinless service of the heart.

Dear Reader, such is the happy prospect for us. Take God then for your God. Take Christ

for your Friend. Look upon Heaven as your promised Home—the Home which you yourself have forfeited, but which Jesus has regained for you, and for which He alone can fit you—the Home towards which your longing eyes are daily turned.

You may have been little thought of during your stay here. Perhaps you may have been looked down upon, and passed by. But if you are God's child, one of His adopted family, then shall you have a place in his heavenly kingdom. You are but a humble Cottager now; but a Palace may soon be your dwelling-place. Your lot may be a little hard now; but what of that, if shortly you are to enjoy His presence, "where there is fulness of joy, and at His right hand pleasures for evermore"?

"When the world my heart is rending
With its heaviest storm of care,
My glad thoughts, to God ascending,
Find a refuge from despair.

"There's a land of mercy near me,
Though the waves of trouble roar;
There's an hour of rest to cheer me,
When the toils of life are o'er.

“Happy hour! when saints are gaining
That bright crown they long’d to wear;
Not one spot of sin remaining,
Not one pang of earthly care.

“Oh, to rest in peace for ever,
Join’d with happy souls above;
Where no foe my heart can sever
From the Saviour whom I love!

“This the hope that shall sustain me
Till life’s pilgrimage is past:
Fears may vex, and troubles pain me;
I shall reach my Home at last.”

CHAPTER XI.

PRAYERS.

IN this Book I have more than once spoken of Prayer as the Christian's duty, and the Christian's strength. I shall now give you in this Chapter a few Prayers, both for Family use, and also for Private use, which you may perhaps find acceptable.

To those who may use them, a word or two of direction may not be out of place.

1. As regards *Family Prayer*—Let your little Household assemble in a quiet and serious manner. The Head of the Family should begin by saying, "*Let us Pray.*" Then all should kneel; and he should read the prayer slowly and reverently. At the close he should use the Lord's Prayer, all repeating it after him. And then he should end with one of the following Benedictions, or Blessings:—

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with us all evermore.

Or this ;

The blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be amongst us, and remain with us always. Amen.

Or this ;

The Lord bless us, and keep us ; the Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon us, and give us peace now and for evermore. Amen.

2. As regards *Private Prayer*—I would say, always think for a moment what you are going to do. You are going to speak to the God of heaven and earth : therefore be serious. Never say your prayers in bed. It is an idle habit, and not pleasing to God. Always kneel down ; and remember that God sees you, and hears you. Your *heart* should speak as well as your *lips*. If you have any particular sins, or any particular wants, try to tell them to God, though they may not be mentioned in these prayers. Pray for others, as well as for yourself. May He who hears and answers prayer hearken to you for Christ's sake !

Family Prayers.

SUNDAY MORNING.

O LORD, look down from heaven, and hearken to us, who are now kneeling before thee. We thank thee for all thy blessings, and especially that we are spared to enjoy another Sabbath. Pardon the manner in which we have spent those that are past; and make this a profitable day to each of us. Keep us, not only from doing our daily work, but also from idle words, and from foolish thoughts. Prepare us for thy house. When we go there, enable us to set a watch upon our minds, and to keep them from wandering. Teach us to pray, not with our *lips* only, but with our *hearts* also. And when thy word is preached, bring it home to us by the power of thy Holy Spirit.

Bless all thy Ministers, especially him whom thou hast appointed to watch over *our* souls. Stand by him, and strengthen him. Give him thy grace, and help him in his sacred work. Be with all thy worshipping people to-day. May many hard hearts be softened, and many sinners be led to the Saviour. Let thy glorious gospel be spread over the whole earth; and may all people learn to love and obey thee. O heavenly Father, hear these our prayers, and accept our poor imperfect services, for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Lord. *Amen.*

Our Father, &c. The grace, &c.

SUNDAY EVENING.

O HEAVENLY Father, we wish to close this holy day, by coming before thee once more, to ask thee for thy blessing. We thank thee for all the mercies we have enjoyed, and for all the good we have received. We thank thee that we have a Bible to read, and a Church to go to, and a Minister to teach us. But, O Lord, thou knowest how much there has been wrong in us this day. Our minds have been too much set on things below. Our hearts have been cold, and dull, and lifeless. Oh pardon our many sins, for Christ's sake.

Bless the word which we have heard to-day, to us, and to all that heard it. Oh that it may prove to be a savour of life unto our souls. Harken to our prayers, and accept our praises. Bless our dear Brethren, who have been worshipping with us: fill us with kindness, and love towards them. Make us more holy and heavenly-minded, more watchful over ourselves, and more in earnest about our salvation. And may our Sabbaths on earth prepare us for that everlasting Sabbath, which we hope to spend with thee in heaven. Lord, thou knowest our wants better than we can tell thee. Oh give us then all that we need, both for our souls and bodies, for the sake of thy dear Son, Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

Our Father, &c. The Lord bless us, &c.

MONDAY MORNING.

O LORD GOD, look down from heaven upon us, who are now upon our knees before thee. We would not enter upon the labours of another week, without asking thy blessing upon them. Give health and safety to our bodies, and grace to our souls. Keep us, we pray thee, from every thing sinful, and lead us to do what is right in thy sight. Make us contented and happy in our employment. And may we constantly feel that thine eye is ever upon us.

Oh, bring often to our remembrance what we heard on thy holy day. Grant that the good seed, which was sown in our hearts, may not be choked with the cares and business of this life. Make us Christians, not merely in name, but in heart and life.

Lord, pity those poor Heathen, who have never heard of a Saviour. Send thy Ministers to teach them, and to do them good. Convert the blinded Jews. Enlighten their eyes, and make them to see that Jesus is indeed their Saviour. Hasten the time, when the name of Christ shall be preached in every land. And make us truly thankful for the many spiritual blessings, which *we* enjoy. We ask all in the name of thy dear Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. *Amen.*

Our Father, &c. The blessing of God, &c.

MONDAY EVENING.

O GRACIOUS God, we thank thee for all the goodness and mercy, which have followed us through this day. Thou hast preserved us from all dangers. We have had food to eat, and clothes to cover us, whilst many have been starving with hunger and nakedness. We thank thee that we have a house to shelter us, and kind friends around us. But, O Lord, thou hast given us even greater mercies than these. Thou hast given us a Saviour. Make that Saviour more and more precious to our souls. May we love him with all our hearts, and follow his blessed steps in all we do.

Our hearts, O Lord, are very sinful; and thou knowest all that we have thought, and said, and done, amiss this day. Make us to feel our exceeding sinfulness. And oh, pardon not only our *outward* sins, but also our *inward* and *secret* transgressions. We pray thee, for Christ's sake, blot them out; and give us strength from above to enable us to serve thee more faithfully, and to obey thee in all things.

Take each one of us under thy care this night. Protect and guard us during the hours of darkness. And, in the morning, raise us up again in health, for Jesus Christ's sake. *Amen.*

Our Father, &c. The Lord bless us, &c.

TUESDAY MORNING.

ALMIGHTY GOD, thou art very kind and gracious to us. We thank thee for the quiet sleep of the past night, and that we are spared to meet together this morning. We thank thee too for our family mercies and comforts, and for all our religious blessings. Keep us through the day. There are dangers on every side ; but Thou art able to preserve our bodies, and our souls, in safety. Oh keep us, and watch over us, every moment of our lives. As thou hast been about our bed during the night, so be thou about our path during the day.

Lord, make us to hate sin, and to love thee. May we do thy will, and walk in that narrow path, which leads to heaven. Give us a meek and humble spirit. Teach us to be kind to one another, and gentle towards all. Enable us to love our enemies, and always to return good for evil.

Bless, O Lord, every one belonging to this family. Teach us to love one another ; and may peace and happiness be found in this house. O thou Holy Spirit, dwell in each of our hearts. Take up thy abode within us. Fill us with love to Christ ; and make us daily more fit for heaven. Grant this, for Jesus Christ's sake. *Amen.*

Our Father, &c.

The grace, &c.

TUESDAY EVENING.

O HEAVENLY Father, we feel ourselves unworthy to kneel before thee. This very day we have sinned against thee. Thou art full of love to us; but how cold and feeble is our love to thee. We thank thee for all thy many blessings, which we so little deserve, but especially for giving us a Saviour. May his precious blood cleanse our souls; and may we endeavour to follow his holy example.

O blessed Jesus, save us from our sins; and give us grace to lead a more holy life. Take away our stony hearts, and give us hearts to feel our sinfulness, and to love thee. We are weak; do thou strengthen us. We are poor; do thou give us the true riches. We can do nothing of ourselves; but thy grace is sufficient for us. Oh supply all our wants, both of soul and body. And make us each day to grow wiser and better.

Lord, we place ourselves in thy hands for the night. Shelter us under thy wings, and keep us safely, so that no harm shall happen to us. Be with all our dear friends and neighbours. Prosper them in their bodies; and we more especially ask thee to bless their *souls*. Hear, we beseech thee, these our poor imperfect prayers, which we offer up in the name of Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

Our Father, &c. The blessing of God, &c.

WEDNESDAY MORNING.

O ALMIGHTY God, we praise thee for the blessings of another morning; for protecting us through the night; and for the health and strength, which we now enjoy. But, most of all, we thank thee for the blessings of the gospel. Oh that our hearts may be filled with thankfulness, and our tongues with praise.

Be with us this day, that whatever we do may prosper. Thou knowest how much we have to do with worldly things, and how often we are forced to think about our bodies. Oh that we may never forget our precious souls! Whilst our hands are busy at work, may our hearts be constantly lifted up to Thee.

We ask a blessing on our beloved Country. We have indeed many mercies; but how little gratitude do we show thee for them! O God, pardon our sins, and make us a godly and a happy people. Bless our Queen. Give her a long and prosperous reign. Give wisdom to our Rulers; and may they have the fear of God before their eyes. Bless the Church to which we belong. Set over it true and faithful Ministers; and may an abundant blessing attend their labours. And now, O Lord, be with us, even us also, for Jesus Christ's sake. *Amen.*

Our Father, &c. The Lord bless us, &c.

WEDNESDAY EVENING.

O LORD, Jesus Christ, we kneel down to confess to thee our sins; and we ask thee to pardon them, and especially the sins of the past day. Blessed Saviour, make us to love thee more, and so serve thee better, than we have done. Put thy Spirit we beseech thee into our hearts, and make us new creatures.

Prosper us, O God, in all our doings. We ask not for earthly riches, but we pray for contented and thankful minds. Make us rich towards God. Give us health, if it is good for us. But if thou seest fit to send us sickness, Lord, thy will be done. May all the troubles which we suffer, wean us from the world, and bring us nearer to thee.

Teach us, O God, to love our Bible; and open our hearts to understand it. What we know not, teach thou us. Make us, day by day, more fit to leave this world, and more ripe for heaven. Oh help us to overcome our besetting sins, and to curb our evil passions. Give us grace to strengthen us against our many temptations. Make us thy servants, whilst we remain here. And, when we die, take us to heaven, to dwell with thee for ever, and with thy Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.
Amen.

Our Father, &c.

The grace, &c.

THURSDAY MORNING.

O most gracious and loving Father, we are unworthy to approach thee, for we are miserable sinners. But we come to thee in the name of Jesus Christ; and we ask thee to hear us for his sake. Thou knowest all that is before us this day. When we go out, and when we come in, be thou with us to keep us and defend us. Preserve us from the power of Satan. Preserve us from sin. Preserve us from our own evil hearts. Enable us to love thee, and to love our neighbour also. May we be kind, and gentle, and forgiving towards all.

Have pity, Lord, on those who are in ignorance and darkness. Enlighten their minds, and convert their hearts, by the teaching of thy Holy Spirit; and show them their need of a Saviour. Heal the sick; relieve those who are in distress; and comfort the sorrowful. Be gracious to our family. Make us, every one of us, thy servants. May all who belong to us, belong to Christ. May we remember, that this is not our rest; but may we be travelling towards that heavenly home, which thou hast prepared for them that love thee. Grant this, for thy dear Son's sake, Jesus Christ, our Lord. *Amen.*

Our Father, &c.

The blessing of God Almighty, &c.

THURSDAY EVENING.

BLESSED Lord God, we desire to praise and thank thee for all thy mercies to us, during the past day. How great and how many they are; and how little do we deserve them. Take us, we pray thee, and all belonging to us, under thy care for the coming night. Watch over us with thy all-seeing eye. Let no harm happen to us. But do thou keep us in peace and safety.

We acknowledge, O Lord, that we are poor, and weak, and sinful. Oh give us new hearts; and deliver us from all unholy thoughts. Send thy Holy Spirit into our souls. Fill us with heavenly desires, and give us grace to do what is pleasing in thy sight. Help us rightly to understand the Bible. May it be a blessed book to us. We thank thee for giving us so great a treasure. Pity those who have no thought about their souls. Oh show them their danger, and lead them into the right way. May we love our Saviour more and more, and endeavour to lead others to love him also. Teach us to be kind and affectionate one towards another, and always to act as becomes thy servants, for Jesus Christ's sake. *Amen.*

Our Father, &c.

The Lord bless us, and keep us, &c.

FRIDAY MORNING.

O God, our Father and our Friend, we are now come into thy presence. Teach us how to pray. Make us to feel our many wants, and do thou in mercy supply them. Be pleased to take care of us in all our doings this day. Keep us from all dangers which may hurt our bodies, and from all evils which may injure our souls. Bless us in all our worldly employments, and let us not be too much taken up with them. Wean us from the world, and make us to feel its emptiness. Oh let not its pleasures, or its cares, draw away our hearts from thee. May we fix our affections on things above, and lay up our treasure there.

O Lord, thou art the good Shepherd. Make us thy true sheep, and may we know thy voice, and follow thee. Enable us to walk in that happy path, which leads to heaven. Make us more holy, more obedient, and more humble. Bless our neighbours. Comfort all who are at this time in sorrow. Be with the sick and dying. Bless our family. If any of us love thee not, change our hearts, and make us thine—thine now, and thine for ever—for Jesus Christ's sake. *Amen.*

Our Father, &c.

The grace, &c.

FRIDAY EVENING.

ALMIGHTY God, give us holy and solemn feelings, now that we are on our knees before thee. We thank thee for our daily food, and for the shelter which is over our heads. We thank thee for our many kind friends; and, above all, that we have a Friend and Saviour in heaven. Make him more and more precious to our souls. Lord, give us thankful hearts for all thy mercies. We do not love thee as we ought. Oh! enable us to love thee more, and to give up our whole hearts to thee.

Pardon all that has been wrong in us to-day. Open our eyes, that we may see the evil of sin. May we hate it, because it is so hateful to thee. Blessed Jesus, cleanse us from all our guilt; and give us the Holy Spirit, to make us holy in our lives. May we be just and honest towards all. May we be careful to speak the truth. May we be watchful over our tempers. Let no harsh or unkind words come from our lips, and no sinful thoughts dwell in our hearts.

But, O God, we feel that we can do nothing of ourselves. Do thou strengthen us with thy grace; and supply all our wants, for the sake of thy dear Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.
Amen.

Our Father, &c.

The blessing, &c.

SATURDAY MORNING.

O ALMIGHTY FATHER, we thy poor helpless creatures kneel before thee. Hear us for Jesus Christ's sake. Thou knowest what is before us to-day. Oh guard us from evil ; strengthen us against temptation ; and lead us to do what is right in thy sight. Be thou our Guide, and our Protector, and then all will be well. Be with us in our going out, and our coming in ; and may we endeavour to do everything to thy glory.

Bless the labour of our hands. Prosper all our undertakings. Lord, we ask not for riches ; but we ask thee to supply our need, and at the same time to give us cheerful and contented minds. We beseech thee also to give us largely of thy Holy Spirit, to guide us, to comfort us, and to make us holy.

Make us to know ourselves. Convince us of our guilt ; and lead us to the cross for pardon. May we strive against sin, and forsake it. Give us grace to break off every evil habit which clings to us ; and make us more like our blessed Lord. May we not only avoid all *outward* sin, but guard against those *secret* sins, which are seen only by thee.

And now, O Lord, take us under thy fatherly care ; and guard both our souls and bodies. We ask all for the sake of thy dear Son, Jesus Christ our Saviour. *Amen.*

Our Father, &c. The Lord bless, &c.

SATURDAY EVENING.

Most gracious God, accept our thanks for the many blessings which we have enjoyed during the past week. Oh, how many and how great they have been! Lord, forgive the sins of the week. They have been many and great also. May they be pardoned and washed away by the blood of Christ.

We implore thy blessing on the coming Sabbath. Prepare our hearts for it. When we wake in the morning, give us devout and peaceful thoughts. Be with thy Ministers. Fit them for their solemn duties. Let thy Spirit be poured down upon them, and upon their people. May to-morrow be a blessed day to us, and to all our brethren. May many sinners be awakened, many hearts touched, and many souls saved. And may it be a day of special blessing to *us*. May we hear the word of God, and keep it.

Bless our Parish, and our Neighbours. We pray for all our Relations and Friends. May all, who are dear to us, be dear to Thee. May we all meet in that happy place, where there shall be no more sin, and where all tears shall be wiped from our eyes. Hearken, O heavenly Father, to these our unworthy prayers, for Jesus Christ's sake. *Amen.*

Our Father, &c.

The blessing, &c.

Private Prayers.

A MORNING PRAYER.

O LORD GOD, thou art my Father and my Friend. Though I am sinful and undeserving, yet thou dost invite me to come to thee in the name of thy dear Son. Hear me for his sake, I beseech Thee. I thank thee for having kept me so safely during the past night. May I spend the day in thy service.

LORD, preserve my body, and keep it in health. Help me to discharge my duty both towards thee, and towards man. Make me watchful over my temper, careful of what I say, and kind and gentle to all. Keep me from sin. I am very weak, do thou strengthen me; and very ignorant, do thou teach me. May I often think of my Saviour. Teach me to know him, and to love him. May I each day become better, and more fit to be with thee for ever.

Bless all who are near and dear to me, both in their souls and bodies, for Jesus Christ's sake. *Amen.*

AN EVENING PRAYER.

O MY GOD, I come to thee this night, to praise thee for the many blessings of the past day. I thank thee for all thy goodness to me; for health and strength; for food and raiment; and for the safety in which I have been kept. Above all, I thank thee for my many spiritual mercies; for giving me a Saviour, and allowing me so many religious advantages.

O LORD, enable me to serve thee as I ought. If I have offended thee to-day, pardon me for Christ's sake. Thou knowest how many and great my sins are. Blot them out, I beseech thee, in my Saviour's precious blood. And give me grace to live a holy life. May it be my chief desire to serve thee, and my delight to do thy blessed will. Oh take away this cold hard heart of mine, and give me a heart to love thee.

Take charge of me and mine this night; and keep us safely under the shadow of thy wings, for Jesus Christ's sake. *Amen.*

FOR SUNDAY MORNING.

GRACIOUS LORD, I desire to begin this day with worshipping thee. This is thy own day. Oh make it a blessed and happy day to me. Enable me now to put away all worldly thoughts, and to draw near to thee. Let me think much about my precious soul, and much about eternity.

Thou hast invited me, O Lord, to thy house. May I thankfully go there; and may I pray to thee not with my lips only, but with my heart also. Prepare me for thy service, and give me solemn feelings.

Pour down thy Holy Spirit upon thy Ministers, especially on him who is set over this parish. Stand by him this day, and help him to preach thy word; and grant that his message may be suited to my case. And may every earthly Sabbath fit and prepare me more and more for thy Sabbath in Heaven. Grant this for Jesus Christ's sake. *Amen.*

FOR SUNDAY EVENING.

O HEAVENLY FATHER, blessed be thy name for all the goodness thou hast shown me on this Sabbath-day. I thank thee that I have had a Church to go to, a Minister to teach me, and a Bible to read. Oh that I may be the better for all these mercies. May I become wiser and holier, growing daily in grace, and in the knowledge and love of Christ.

But, O God, how much there has been wrong in me to-day! My heart has been cold; my thoughts have wandered; my faith has been weak; and my prayers have been feeble. Be pleased to forgive all my Sabbath sins for Christ's sake.

Bless the word which has been preached to-day. May it come home to me, and to all who heard it. May many souls be awakened, and many sinners saved. Hasten, O Lord, the time when all, in every land, shall know thee and love thee. Grant this for thy dear Son's sake. *Amen.*

A PRAYER FOR A SICK PERSON TO USE.

O HEAVENLY FATHER, thou knowest what is good for me; and thou has sent me this sickness. I know that I am too fond of the world, and cling to it too closely. I have thought too much of my body, and too little of my soul. Grant that this may be a time of thoughtfulness to me. May this sickness be much blest to the good of my soul.

O MY GOD, am I prepared to die? Am I fit to appear in thy presence? If not, be pleased to make me fit. Do thou awaken my slumbering soul. Put thy Holy Spirit within me. Show me all my sins. And lead me to that Saviour, who died for me on the cross.

O GOD, if it is thy will, restore me to health; and enable me to give myself more entirely to thee. But, if it is thy will to call me away, O pardon my sins, and save my soul, through the merits of my Redeemer, Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

A PRAYER TO USE *WITH* A SICK PERSON.

O ALMIGHTY FATHER, hearken to the cry of thy children. We ask thee to have mercy upon this Sick Person. Thou hast seen fit to bring him low; and thou art able to raise him up again. Restore his body to health, if such be thy good pleasure. But, above all, bless his soul. Open his eyes by thy Holy Spirit, that he may feel deeply concerned for his salvation. Give him real sorrow and contrition of heart; and may he flee in earnest to Christ, as his only refuge. Strengthen his faith. Grant him that peace which the world cannot give. And may he humbly submit to thy blessed will.

LORD, be thou with him at this time. Make him to feel thy presence. And do thou carry on a work of grace in his soul.

Oh take him not out of this world till he has found pardon for his sins, and salvation for his soul, through the atoning blood of thy dear Son, Jesus Christ, our Saviour. *Amen.*

By the same Author.

I.

In small 8vo., Thirty-second Thousand, 2s. 6d. cloth,

THE PATHWAY OF SAFETY;

OR,

COUNSEL TO THE AWAKENED.

II.

In small 8vo., Second Edition, 3s. 6d. cloth,

THE PASTORAL OFFICE:

ITS DUTIES, DIFFICULTIES, PRIVILEGES, AND PROSPECTS.

III.

In 18mo., Eighteenth Thousand, price 1s.; morocco, 2s. 6d.,

THE EARNEST COMMUNICANT:

A COURSE OF PREPARATION FOR THE LORD'S TABLE.

IV.

In small 8vo., price 2s. 6d. cloth, each Series,

COTTAGE SERMONS;

OR,

PLAIN WORDS TO THE POOR.

FIRST AND SECOND SERIES.

V.

THE BARHAM TRACTS.

IN PLAIN LANGUAGE AND LARGE TYPE.

Complete in 49 Numbers. In packet, 3s. In One Vol., cloth, 3s. 6d.
In Tracts, 1d. each, or 25 for 1s. 4d.

VI.

THE PLUCKLEY TRACTS.

A SERIES OF TRACTS ON SCRIPTURE CHARACTERS.

Nos. 1 to 25. 25 for 1s. 4d. (*To be continued.*)

* * * The "BARHAM TRACTS" and the "PLUCKLEY TRACTS" may be ASSORTED at the reduced rate of 25 for 1s. 4d.

VII.

CONFIRMATION;

OR,

ARE YOU READY TO SERVE CHRIST?

3d.; 2s. 6d. per dozen.

LONDON: WERTHEIM, MACINTOSH, AND HUNT,
24, Paternoster-row, and 23, Holles-street, Cavendish-square.

