Samily Reading.

For the Christian Messenger. "The Time is Short."

"The time is short," rise up my soul, And walk no more in sadness Now let the burden from thee roll-And wake my heart to gladness!

"The time is short," thou must not stay Amid the shadows fretting; But cast all gloomy fears away, Ere yet life's sun is setting.

"The time is short," too much, alas! Is gone past the recalling, So quickly do the moments pass! The evening shades are falling.

"The time is short," then take thou up, With purpose true and willing, The heavy cross, thou fain would'st pass Thine onward pathway filling.

"The time is short," and thou my sou Hast long with sorrow striven. Lay down thy weapons, trust alone; For strength shall yet be given.

"The time is short," ah! much too short To spend in idle seeming ; Rise up! and take thy Father's hand, Strength, talents, all redeeming. S. B. E.

Seleck Serial.

THE KING'S SERVANTS.

CHAPTER IX,

HOME AGAIN.

Well, I cannot tell you any more You have heard enough to know how Transome was faithful unto death. May be if I had been like him I should have been with him now in the presence of the Lord. But he has placed us here like children at school, who must stay till their tasks are learned by heart before they are let free into the holiday and the sunshine. I'd learned my lessons so as I might have forgotten them in the holiday time; and when Transome was called home from school the Lord left me here to get them better by heart.

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All I saw of his funeral was the little plain hearse belonging to the union, with four of the workhouse men riding outside it, ready to carry his coffin to the grave. After that I was like one dazed and bewildered, doing nothing of my own will and choice; but getting up and going to bed, eating and drinking only when I was bid. Once I went to prayers seeking for Transome; but I never went again. The four bare white walls of the ward seemed nothing but a big grave, and I like one dead and buried in it; only it was a sort of living death, so dreadful that none but those who have felt it can know it. Nothing would ever charge again. Summer and winter would be alike to me. was there without pity, and without help; my heart dead within me. It seemed as if death itself had forgotten me, or would not have compassion on

It was one day in the spring that Transome had spoken of, 'I' th' spring, Ally-i' th' spring time!' was lying in my bed late on in the morning, for no one had bid me rise, though the sun was shining through the high windows, when the door near me was opened, and the matron and two gentlemen came through it. I had ceased to care to take any notice of visitors, for if they tried to comfort me, it was plain they knew nothing of my sorrow. So I closed my eyes wearily as they came in. But they stopped at the foot of my bed; and I thought may be if I seem to be asleep they will pass on: for it troubled me for other folks to talk to me about Transome. But a voice, a strange voice, yet with a tone in it that somehow made me think of my little school, said loud enough for me to hear :-

'Surely this cannot be Mrs. Transome!'

'It's Alice Transome,' answered the · Her husband died four months ago, and she's never been herself since. She takes no notice of anybody, sir.

same strange, clear, pleasant voice. must make her know me; for I am come to pay a debt I owe her. Mrs. Transome, you have never forgotten our little scholar, Pippin?'

hand take mine into its firm clasp; as i firm as Transome's was when we were węd.

It's Pippin!' said the voice, close to my ear. I made a great effort then to shake off the weight that had been crushing me down all these long months. I felt myself trembling all through me: and the warm hand clasped me more closely.

'Look at me!' said Pippin.

So I opened my eyes, and saw him standing beside my bed, a young, sunburnt man now, but with the same sunny hair and bright eyes that my little scholar had. I broke out into sobbing and weeping, so as I had never wept since Transome died.

'I am come to take you away from this place,' he said, soothingly; 'but you must not talk to me now. After dinner you shall get up, and dress, and come away with father and me. Father is come home at last, Mrs. Transome!'

Then I looked, and saw behind him a man of middle age, whose hair was just growing gray, and whose grave face bore the marks of bitter sufferings. But he looked kindly upon me as Pippin spoke, and said, 'You were my boy's best friend when he had no one to care for him: and we will not leave you here.' So they went away: and I lay quiet again, but feeling that the sun was shining still upon the world, and there was love and kindness in it yet, even for me.

That evening I had tea with them in a grand parlor in an inn in the town, and was waited upon as if I were a born lady. Pippin told me all his story, which is too long to tell here. How, like a child, the memory of me had died away from his mind, amid the many changes of his life. How when lie was a boy of sixteen, just leaving school, there came a rumor to him of his father's ship having been wrecked upon the coast of Africa nine years before, and how a white man was living among the black tribes there. It was no more than a rumor, but he could not rest until he had adventured himself to take help to that white man; and behold! it was his own father, Captain John Champion, who might never have escaped from that place, if his boy had not rescued him. They had only come back to England a little while ago, and now the memory of me having grown strong again, they had returned to our town to repay me for what I had done for him when a little child. Ah! if Transome had only lived to know it!

Yes, they repaid me nobly. Cap-John Champion had brought home with him stores of gold and ivory, not enough to make him rich, but ample and to spare for starting himself and wealth. But first, they said, they were bound to provide for me; though I told them again and again I had done nothing to deserve it.

Well, by some means or other they prevailed upon our old landlord, who was Philip's uncle you remember, to let there alone, how dreary it seemed at He was more friendly with them now they had no need of any triendship from him. They bought furniture for me, as far as possible like that which Pippin could remember; though we could not have the old loom back, nor Willie's chair. And because I told them, and made them believe it, that I could not be happy to be idle and burdensome upon them, they set me up again with benches and books, and went themselves to the people living in the dingle to ask them to send their lads and lasses to my school. Some of them knew me well for a schoolmistress, and promised gladly; and before May came round again, one year only from

There was only one great change. But ah! that one change was almost 'She'll take notice of me,' said the more than I could bear. Never to have Transome sitting opposite to me in it. in the chimney-nook all through the long, lonely evenings; never to hear him move about in the room overhead, or see him pass by the window! there, the spring day would have made much poorer I was by the loss of a

that terrible day when we had notice to

quit, I was in my own home again,

with my little troop of scholars coming

up from the town for their schooling.

No, I had never torgotten him; yet i When Pippin and Captain John Cham- me young again. But there is always home for twelve months, or by the did not lift up my eyes all at once. I pion were gone, then I felt how desolate an if stealing in between us and perfect death of Transome: nor how I might tried to recall his bonny face; but it it was. There were the flowers, and happiness, and always will be, till we was so mixed up with Willie's face, I the spring sunshine, and the fresh air stand before the throne of God, could not. Then I felt a warm, strong blowing over the brow of the hill, but Transome was not there with me to enjoy them. He was dead. I could not get it out of my mind, and he had safely there already; while I was died in the workhouse.

Then one night I dreamed a dream in which I saw him standing among a great crowd of folks, very rich and very learned, and very grand; and I thought he looked lonely and strange among them; and I called to him to come back to me, who loved him, though he couldn't read a word out of a printed book. And directly a great company of plain, simple men like himself came into my sight, and I seemed to know who they were. There was Enoch who walked with God, and Noah who pleased God, and Abraham the friend of God, and many another; and Transome seemed quite at home with them. And I could hear them talking I thought, about God, as if they had seen His face, and knew Him for a friend; not like the learned men who were talking of Him in hard and difficult words.

All at once a solemn trumpet sounded, and I saw a glorious throne, and One upon it who was too bright for me to look upon, only I could hear His voice speaking; and after my ear was used to the sound of it, I heard Him say, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.

And I looked to see who it was standing in the light of the throne, with a crown of life upon his head; and it was Transome.

CHAPTER X.

A HARD MAN.

I went back to my old cottage in May, having been away a whole year and part of that time in the workhouse, where Transome died; and where I should have died likewise, if it had not been for good friends who took me out, and set me up in my old home, and gathered scholars again for me. The cottage, with its half timber walls, and high pitched roof, and lattice windows, had a very different look from all the new houses about it, built of red bricks, with sash windows, and six rooms in each dwelling. When I was young two rooms in a cottage were thought enough for a laborer's family. I recollect going once to the squire's hall, before I was married, and seeing the grand drawingroom, where there was every kind of costly furniture; but what everybody looked at first and longest was an oldfashioned carved oak chair, which had stood in that room over two hundred years. You could not help thinking of the children who had been nursed in it, and the old folks who had rested Philip again in a way of getting more their weary limbs in it. The squire said he would not part with that old chair for the finest furniture in all London town; and I would not have newest of their six-roomed houses.

> But now Transome was dead, and I times! The wind sighed and wailed against the windows, and the rain beat, and the summer thunder-storms rolled over it, as they never used to do when he and I were young together; nor, for the matter of that, when we were old together, and sat in the chimney nooks, looking across the hearth at each other, and said, 'Hark! what a crash!' and smiled at our own comfort and safety.

When the first rent-day came, and Transome was not there to take it. than I felt keener than ever that he had nothing more to do with the old place, where he and I had dwelt so long. I gave my little school half holiday, and the lads and lasses ran away shouting for joy, for it was a sweet bright day in June, with not a cloud in the sky, and the wind that had been moaning and fretting from the east all through the month of May was at peace again, and a soft breath, as quiet as a child's breathing when it is asleep, came up from the west with a touch of fresh sea-breeze

down the steep street which led to the town, that if Transome had only been

where the light is never dim, and where the very air we breathe is the breath of life. Transome was still in the world with a rent to pay, and a poor, aching body, getting on for sixty years of age, which could never be made young again by June sunshine, and westerly winds.

I could not get rid of a bit of fear in going to see my landlord, though I had my rent tied up in my pockethandkerchief; and I had no thought that he would wish to disturb me again, like he had done before, in the hope of building more houses where our old cottage stood. But I had never had speech with him while Transome was alive; and I knew him to be a hard man, though he went regularly to church, and the sacrament, and was often chairman at the misdoor I was forced to wait a minute or two, for the tears would gather in my eyes, as I thought how often Transome had been there before me, carrying the rent to the same hard landlord.

again, and a servant woman opened the you've left, people say.' door for me, She was a little under close-handed suspicious master; and I lord took it very quietly. smiled, and spoke as pleasantly as I could. 'I am come to pay my rent,' smoldering fire, 'I recollect the lad I said; I'm Transome's wife! You re- coming to me one morning: how member him?' 'Oh! ay! I remember Rebecca came to let him in, I don't him,' she said coldly, ' so he died in the know to this day! He was a pretty workhouse at last!' There she hurt boy about seven, I think. 'Uncle,' he me. If he had only passed away said, as bold as brass, 'please to pay peacefully in his own bed, under the for me to go to school.' I thought for old roof, I could have parted with him a minute or two I'd take to the boy: in years, and racked with rheumatism. have been! I should have had to But to think of him driven to the alter my way of life completely: and workhouse in his old age and dying his mother had been so utterly selfish there, was almost more than I could to leave me and get married, with no

again as tenant. Come this way; master never leaves me to take a penny for him.'

She led the way along a dark bare; and everything seemed comfort- only this once, Mrs. Transome.' less. It was getting toward evening, and touch in the air, which old folks felt, in spite of calling the weather summer.

At the far end from the door sat my landlord, cowering over a little morsel of fire, which was burning in a large grate. I could scarcely see him at the distance he was; but when he spoke, his voice was the piping, quavering voice of an old man.

"Mrs. Transome!' he repeated, when There's no need for you to stay, Re-

something under her breath, which money like him and on the brink of the even I could not catch. But she bang, that made the old man half jump meant to do, and bade me go nearer.

When I was close enough to see him, I noticed a great change in him since I saw him last in church, more than a year ago. He had been stout enough then, and slooked well nourished and comfortable; but now his cheeks had fallen in, and all his body seemed shrunken and smaller. keenly at me through his small, twinkling eyes; and his thin fingers clutched the few shillings I gave him, as tightly as if I might wish to have them back again.

'That's right,' he said, after counting them twice over, "ten shillings month! I should have been six pounds richer if I'd let you and Transome It seemed to me as I went slowly alone last year. But times are bad! times are bad!'

He never seemed to think of how

have been nothing but a pauper still, dying a slow death among other paupers, but for those dear friends, who had found me out, and set me up again with my little school.

'Times are bad, sir,' I said, 'and likely to be badder.'

'Ah! ah!' he moaned.

'They do say,' I went on, 'that cotton will never be cheap again; and the mills will only work half time. But we must hope for the best.'

'Ay!' he answered, 'and Philip Champion is surety for your rent, you

'God helping me,' I said, 'I'll win my own rent, sir. I could have won it all this year, if you'd not turned us out of our cottage.'

'It was a mistake,' he answered, 'a sad mistake; and I've lost six pounds by it. Philip Champion told me you taught him for nothing when sionary meetings. When I reached his he was a boy; is that true, Mrs.

'It cost me nothing,' I said, 'and he was the quickest scholar I ever had in my school; and see how he is paying me now, by setting me up again! He's I knocked as soon as I was myself your own nephew, sir, the only relation

I was almost afraid to say that, for he forty years of age : and looked weary had been very bitter against his sister, and peevish. But Transome had told Philip's mother, who had left him to me what a life she had led for many a marry a poor man such as Captain year, with no one about her but a John Champion was. But my land-

'Ah!' he said, looking into the more willingly, seeing he was well on but what an expense and upset it would one to look after my interests, that I 'Ab, well!' she said, 'master got no did not feel called upon to do anything good out of it, that's one comfort. The for him. So I just bade him go about house never let, and it vexed him sadly! his business, for I had nothing to say to He was glad enough to have you back him. And he tells me you taught him for nothing.'

'For love,' I said, 'he loved me dearly, and me him.'

'Well,' he went on, fumbling at the passage into a large, gloomy room, that money, 'I should not mind returning looked as if no sunshine or fresh air you sixpence out of the rent this once, could ever find their way, into it. The as times are bad, and you gave my curtains and carpet were worn thread- nephew schooling for nothing. But

'No, no,' I said, as he pushed a sixthough it was June, there was a sharp pence back toward me, 'thank you kindly, sir; but I have no need of it. I have enough and to spare; it's other folks as times are bad with.'

'Enough!' he repeated, 'why, woman! I have not enough; and now there's the six pounds to save that I have lost by your cottage. Rebecca Mrs. Transome says she has enough money.

The servant had just come into the the servant shouted out my name, 'old room; and I saw him hide away the exchanged my cottage for the best and Transome's widow? Well! well! ten shillings quickly out of her sight, pretending to laugh all the while at what I had said. I bid him good eve-Rebecca scowled at him, sure that | ning, and went my way, wondering how he could not see her, and muttered strange it was, that a man rolling in grave, where he could not take a slammed the door after her with a farthing of it, should feel so much poorer than me, who had not been out up from his chair, and cry, 'Noisy of the workhouse three months. Surehuzzy!' But he sat down again with- ly, there is none but God, whose blessing out calling her back, as I thought he can make rich, and he addeth no sorrow

I pondered it much that evening, as my fire burned briskly and cheerfully. The flames played and leaped as they had not done in the rich man's smoldering fire; and my mind was full of the difference betwixt him and us.

'Why, Transome,' I said, 'he's ten times poorer than us. All our riches are on the far side of the grave, where Jesus is preparing a place for us. It doesn't matter what we have here for such a little while.'

But when I remembered, and lifted up my eyes, and saw the other chimneynook empty, then I found how poor this life can be, even though we know the Lord is laying up treasure for us in

(To be Continued.)

A straight line is the shortest in morals as well as in geometry.

Bouths' Department.

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Scripture Enigma.

No. 158.

A WORD OF TWO SYLLABLES. My first, though great and wide. A rod did once divide ; 'Tis where God bath his way: And, where, in Moses' day, All Israel were baptized, While Pharaoh stood surprised; And things of curious kind, Who search therein may find.

2. My next, since time began. Is just—a little man. By many a father claimed. By many a mother named: Diverse and infinite-Who can its names recite? Yet still, wherever known. 'Tis clearly one alone.

My whole-a point sublime, Is man's appointed time; The time when all events. All works, and all intents-Whatever man can do. Transpire in order due : 'Twas when, in days of old, Of Herod's crimes they told, Who did their altars stain With blood of offerers slain: And when the prisoner Paul Came at proud Felix' call.

> While my young friends are fain My riddle to explain, Let me devoutly pray That their "convenience" may Agree with God's-to-day"!

> > CURIOUS QUESTIONS.

305. Subject-LIGHT. 1. Find passages of Scripture in which Jesus is spoken of as the Light of this dark world.

2. Find where God's people are (a) called children of light; (b) bidden to walk in the light; and (c) commanded to show light to others? 3. What has God given us to be our

light on our way through the darkness of this world? 4. Where shall we no longer need a

light, and why? A QUEER DREAM. There is a word from the vegetable

kingdom hidden in each line. Beneath the trees I sleep in ease, And dream, a pleasant dream: see a knight, with helmet bright,

Beside a dashing stream.

And through the glade appears a maid-A figure small and slight; 'Art thou a fav or angel, say ?" Exclaimed the plumed knight.

I am no fay, but peasant gay," She scornfully replied. Oh turn, I pray," the knight did say, "And be a noble's bride."

She at his word awhile demured, " Now master, you provoke me,"-Uprose, and frowned; but here a sound, A robin's call, awoke me. -Home Circle.

307. Form a square of words: 1. A small island from which comes Parian marble.

2. A notice of danger. 3. A Jewish teacher.

4. The path of the earth. 5. One who works in metals. Find answers to the above-write them

down-and see how they agree with the answers to be given next week.

Answer to Scripture Enigma.

No. 157.

1. Archelaus. 2. Bethlehem. 3. Herod. 4-5. Orpha and Ruth. 6. Tarsus. . Hebrew. 8. Areopagus. 9. Tertul-10. Wilderness. 11. Heaven. 12. Idumea. 13. Canaan. 14. Hebron. 15. Isaac. 16. Sarah. 17-18. Esther and Vashti. 19-20. Issachar and Levi. "ABHOR THAT WHICH IS EVIL." Rom. xii. 9.

ANSWERS TO CURIOUS QUESTIONS.

300. Regal, glare, lager. 301. Water from the well of Bethle-

302. The three great captains in David's army. 303. He poured the water out before the Lord.

304. Changed words: Line, pine, lane, lime, ling.

Stretch it a Little.

A little girl and her brother were on their way to the ragged school on a cold winter morning. The roofs of the houses and the grass on the common were white with frost, the wind very sharp. They were poorly dressed, but the little girl had a sort of cloak over her which she seemed to have out-

As they walked briskly along she drew her little companion up to her,

· Come under my coat Johnny.' 'It isn't big enough for both,' he re-

O, but I can stretch it a little,' she said; and they soon got as close together and as warm as two birds in the

How many shivering bodies and heavy hearts and sweeping eyes there are in the world, just because people do not stretch their comfort a little be-

yond themselves.