Samily Reading.

Farmer John.

"If I'd nothing to do," said Farmer John,

"To fret or bother me-Were I but rid of this mountain of work What a good man I could be !

"The pigs get out and the cows get in, Where they have no right to be; And the weeds in the garden and the

Why they fairly frighten me.

"It worries me out of temper quite, And well-nigh out of my head. What a curse it is that a man must toil Like this for his daily bread!"

But Farmer John he broke his leg And was kept for many a week, A helpless man and an idle man-Was he therefore mild and meek?

Nay; what with the pain, and what with the fret

Of sitting with nothing to do, And the farm work botched with a shiftless hand, He got very cross and blue.

He scolded the children and cuffed the

That fawned about his knee; And snarled at his wife, though she was

And patient as wife could be.

He grumbled, and whined, and fretted, The whole of the long day through,

"Twill ruin me quite," cried Farmer "To sit here with nothing to do!"

His hurt got well, and he went to work, And a busier man than he.

A happier man, or a pleasanter man, You never would wish to see.

The pigs got out and he drove them

Whistling right merrily; He mended the fence, and kept the

Just where they ought to be.

184

Weeding the garden was jolly fun, And ditto hoeing the corn. "I'm happier far," said Farmer John, "Than I've been since I was born."

He learned a lesson that lasts him well. 'Twill last him his whole life through. He frets but seldom, and never because He has plenty of work to do.

"I tell you what," says Farmer John, "They are either knaves or fools Who long to be idle, for idle hands Are the devil's chosen tools."

Select Serial. THE KING'S SERVANTS.

BY HESBA STRETTON.

CHAPTER XIII.

A CRUEL BONDAGE.

Well! then I learned what a cruel bondage the love of money is. It was a bondage, not only to our old master, but to Rebecca and me. To get a shilling from him was as painful to him as giving a drop of his life's blood. He grudged himself every morsel he ate; and he could not bear to see the fire with them, and a little handful of live embers on the top. That spring time he would have no fire kindled in the kitchen, because of the extra expense my living was to him; and we sat with him in his parlor, and did what little cooking was done there. He was the poor-

est man I ever knew. But it was at night that the bondage pressed upon him most cruelly. As soon as it grew dark, he was tormented with fears of robbers, which prevented him from falling asleep, until he was quite worn out with weariness. He never knew what it is to lay his head down on his pillow and sleep soundly and peacefully, like Transome, when he was not racked with rheumatism. His money kept him waking worse than rheumatism ever kept poor Transome. He would not hear of Rebecca and me both going to bed, but one of us must sit up in the spare room, joining his, within call of him. Dreary hours of darkness Never a night passed by out in his troubled sleep that thieves were breaking in to steal his treasure. Many a time I found him crying and wringing his hands as he sat up in bed, between waking and sleeping; and it was harder to pacify him | not trust God.

than a frightened child who has been awaked by some terrifying dream. Yet as soon as he could recover himself he would vow and declare he had not as much as ten shillings in the house, and thieves would be finely disappointed if they came. I never knew what to be-

'Tell me,' I said to him one day when we were alone, 'why you are so full of fear. If there is no money in the house, how is it you cannot sleep for terror ?"

"I cannot tell,' he answered, with troubled face, 'but as soon as I fall asleep it seems as if all my money, all I ever had, was hoarded up in my room. There's gold under my ptllow, and in all the boxes, and all the drawers, and hidden under the flooring, gold everywhere; and thieves are always trying to break in to steal it. hear them whispering and creeping about, and boring stealthily at the door to get in, till I cry out; and that awakes me, and you or Rebecca come in and tell me I've been dreaming. But it is not a dream. I wish the night would never come, for it is always the same thing.'

'Every night?' I said.

' Every night,' he repeated, with his wavering, trembling voice.

' But you should ask God to deliver you from these terrors,' I said, for I felt grieved for the miserable old man. · He is ready to help all those who cry to Him. He brought me out of all my troubles, and He can save you. You're a more learned man than me, sir, and you used to be regular at church and the sacraments: surely you know God will hear you if you cry to Him.'

'I dare not,' he answered, his shaking head falling lower on his breast, 'if I ask Him for anything, He will require me to give up my money. I knew it: I tried it years ago, I wished to be safe, and be a Christian, but I could not give up my money. It is too late now. I cannot part with it.'

He spoke slowly, and as it were unwillingly, in a low tone, as though he were thinking, aloud, not talking to me. So awful the words sounded to me that I trembled and shivered, and could scarcely find voice to answer him.

'Oh, try !' I cried, 'try to give it up, even it you feel as though it would kill you. Christ will help you; He who gave up all heaven for our sake, He will help you to give up this poor money of yours, that's destroying all your peace, and keeping you away from God. Christ will help you; for He's helped me to give up Transome 'No,' he said 'no! it is too late.'

He was silent for a few minutes. Then a cunning look come over his wrinkled face, and he looked at me sharply with his small, sunken eyes. 'I've been talking nonsense,' he said.

'I've no money to give up. I'm a poor, penniless old man, with nothing before me but to die in the workhouse.

He began to groan over his poverty, and mutter about the workhouse. But I could bear it no longer, and I rose up and left him to groan and mutter to himself. The dark, gloomy house seemed like a prison to me, and the air burning bright, and clear from ashes, in it stifled me. I went out into the but he must have the grate choked up wilderness of a garden, and walked up and down its grass grown walks, thinking of the wretched man who was tossed from one delusion to another; at night tormented with fears for his riches, by day burdened with dread of the workhouse. Truly, he had pierced himself through with many sorrows.

How dree were the long nights of the next winter! Before it was dusk in the afternoon our master would begin to worry about the doors being locked, and the shutters fast; and there was no rest until Rebecca and me had been all around the house to see if every place was safe. Even then he would send us again and again during the night, to make sure that no fastenings had been forgotten; and sometimes when he was well enough he would go round to satisfy himself. I can see him now-his poor, bent body, hardly strong enough to bear its own weight, and his shaking head, and his searching eyes peering into the darkest corners, where he fancied some robber may be lurking. I begged him often and often to have some honest, decent man to sleep in the house for our protection, for what could I do or Rebecca if his fears came true? But he would not give ear to my words. He could trust no man he said. I knew that he could

CHAPTER XIV,

"THOU FOOL."

Philip Champion had been once in England since I had left my cottage to dwell with his uncle; but he had not had time to visit me, and I did not tell him what I was doing for his sake. My landlord had told me that his will was altered, and all was right for Philip. Without that I think I could not have

I was beginning to be a little timor. ous myself; though I had never known what fear meant when Transome and me lived in our little home, even when it stood quite close at the head of a clough that had no very good name. The poor food, and bad nights and the prison-like feeling of the place, began to tell upon me almost as much as the workhouse did. It seemed as if there was nothing in the world to be thought of, or talked about, or cared for but money. Rebecca was constantly telling me of her expectations from her old master, and what she meant to do with her thousand pounds. So both in the parlor or kitchen, whenever I was alone with either of them, all the talk and all hung behind the door, she stole silently the thought was money. Nay, my down the staircase. I followed and saw mind began to dwell upon it, though it her tarry for a moment or two, peering was for Philip's sake; and I seemed in through the open doors, through to forget the sunshine, and the fresh air which the light was shinning brightly and the singing of birds, and the love and then very swiftly but very steadily, one of another, even God's love. Yet she sped on her way; and presently the the least of those is better than thousands of gold and silver.

Whether I should have grown like Rebecca and our master, I cannot tell. But after Christmas was past-a Christmas with no good-will or gladness in it-and while the nights were still long and dreary, the end came. It was almost as if a voice had come from God, "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee?"

I had fallen asleep for very weariness one night in the large, old chair, where I kept watch in my turn for our master. It was more of a doze than a sleep; for he had been quiet only for a little while, after crying out once or twice that he could hear thieves trying all the doors and shutters in the house. It was so old an alarm, like the boy's cry of 'Wolf!' that it had not disturbed me The back of it was toward the door, a there stood an old cracked looking-glass in a tarnished gilt frame, where, when shadow of death. I looked up, I could see dimily the light in my master's bedroom. For of late his terrors had so much increased, the sun beyond. To those who go down he had been forced to keep a candle burning in his chamber, -a thin, farthing rush-light, which only served to make the corners look darker. Suddenly, as I was dozing, a bright gleam from the looking-glass shone across my face, aud I woke up, broad awake, as though some voice had called me; but there was no sound. Only in the dim glass I could see a fuller light than ever was given by a farthing rush-light, and it was moving about in the room bedoing at this hour in the room beyond!

know, watching the flitting of the light | behind the door, praying that Rebecca in the dim glass above me. But all in an instant a shrill, wavering, terrified cry ran through the house, and I saw a man's figure cross hastily to my

master's bedside. old creature like me! I had strength to contend with a child; and how could I defend my master and his so long undisturbed, and they were too money from a thief? I did not stir for a moment or two, thinking. I had not been seen, that was plain. The door was open, and the passage free to escape. But ought I to leave him alone with this villain? There were but two courses open to me. I might either go into the chamber, and do whatever I could to protect the poor old man, and so put myself also in the power of the thief, or I could steal quietly away, and wake Rebecca, and try to get help from my neighbors. I was not long in deciding. the Ring Theatre fire.

Before the thief turned away from the master's bedside I crept noiselessly, quaking with fear, across the floor, and made my way up stairs to Rebecca's

She was sleeping soundly, for though her room was above the master's, she was too much used to hear him cry for help, to be disturbed by that last cry of his. But when I put my hand on her she awoke in a moment, and looked at me with eager eyes.

'Is anything the matter with him?' she asked,

'Hush!' I whispered, 'the thieves are here at last. Be quiet, Rebecca. Steal out of the back door, and call for help. You will be quicker than me.

'Thieves!' she said in a scornful tone. "Are you out of your mind

'No,' I said, 'it's true this time. Get help, Rebecca, quickly. They may murder him. Hark! he is as quiet

as death now.' For in the room below, our master's cries had ceased entirely, and all was still. That frightened Rebecca. She sprang up, and throwing on a cloak that click of a latch down stairs told me that she was fairly out of the house. I was alone with the thieves!

But those were terrible minutes Never shall I forget them. I hid myseff in a dark corner of the staircase, listening and watching with all my might. The house was so still I could hear their footsteps moving about the room, and the hurried opening and shutting to of boxes and drawers. There were more boxes in that chamber than anywhere else in the house, but nobody had seen the contents of them except the master. There was also an old-fashioned desk, full of little drawers, and secret recesses, which I have often and often seen since, that gave the thieves a world of trouble. They were not so quiet now, and I could hear two voices speaking, but the master's voice at all; and when he went quiet, I fell I could not her, though I hearkened for off into an uneasy doze in my chair. it anxiously. A great dread came over me, lest he should have been murdered; high back, which kept my head free he, an aged man of eighty years, who from draughts, and hid me from the ought to have passed away in peace sight of anybody in the master's room. and quietness, with some one beside him Just before me, over the mantle-shelf, to speak a last kind word as he went down alone into the dark valley of the

But it is only the shadow of death to those who can see the bright shining of into it in utter darkness, it is the valley of death itself. In all my terror I thought of Transome dying in the workhouse, with a smile upon his face, as if he had a foretaste of the joy of his Lord, into which he was entering. There are worse deaths in the world than dying in the workhouse.

Still I could hear the thieves at work with their tools, just as the master had described it to me, sawing and boring. and breaking open locks, with very little yond. I could see, too, still in the precaution against noise new. It seemed glass, that the door behind me was so long that I began to think Rebecca open, and the long, dark passage lead- must have fled away in her fright, and ing to the other part of the house looked left me and her poor old master to their black in the reflection. What did the mercy. To be sure I might have folopen door and the brighter light mean? lowed her; the way was free and the Could Rebecca have stolen through the house door open. But I could not make room silently? And what was she up my mind to go, and leave the old man quite alone, even though I could Yet I kept still, why I scarcely give him no help, save to stand there might come back soon.

At length-but oh! how long i seemed. I heard footsteps treading eautiously along the gravel walk toward the house; and I held my breath to What was I to do? A poor, feeble listen, and trembled the more, lest the thieves might catch the sound. But they had grown too secure, having been busy with the tools to hear so slight a noise as that. Nearer and nearer, into the hall below, and quietly up the dark staircase came three or four of our near neighbors, with Rebecca leading them; and so, quietly, without wavering, they broke in upon the thieves, and caught them almost before the knew they were in danger.

(To be Continued.)

A grave 150 feet long and 14 feet wide in the Vienna cemetry contains the hundreds of unrecognizable victims of

The Christian Messenger.

Bible Lessons for 1882. FIRST QUARTER.

Lesson X .- MARCH 5, 1882. CHRIST STILLING THE TEMPEST Mark iv. 35-41.

COMMIT TO MEMORY: Vss. 37-41.

GOLDEN TEXT .- "He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still."-Psa. cvii. 29.

DAILY HOME READINGS. Mark iv. 35-41. M. The Lesson,

T. Prayer in the Storm, Psa. cvii. 23-32. W. Christ in the Vessel, Acts xxvii. 14-44

T. Christ sharing our Lot,

F. Christ, Lord of the Universe, Rev. ch. i. God our Refuge, Psa. 46 S. Longing for the Coming Glory, Rom. viii. 15-30.

NATURE AND THE SAVIOUR'S WORK.

LESSON OUTLINE. - I. Christ Asleep in the Storm, Vss. 35-38. II. Christ still-Fear, Vss. 40, 41.

QUESTIONS .- Vss. 35-38. - Why did Christ wish to cross the lake? Where was Jesus? What does his deep sleep show? How did the disciples feel? What did they do?

What was the instant result? What power did this show? What do we learn of the safety of Christ's church? Vss. 40, 41.—How did Jesus reprove his disciples? What is meant by "no faith?" How did they show some faith? (vs. 38). How show their lack of faith?

Notes from Dr. W. N. Clarke's Com-

Can we expect answers to prayer?

Parallel Scriptures, Matt. viii. 23-27

Luke viii. 22-25. Verses 35, 36 .- The same day, when the even was come-i. e. the day of the parables. Matthew and Luke differ from Mark and from each other as to the time and connection of this event but their notes of time are not so definite as Mark's. The other side. The eastern side of the lake, the startingpoint being somewhere near Capernaum, -"Leaving the multitude" is a better sense than having sent the multitude away. The purpose was to find rest. How great was the need of it, a backward glance will show. The first words of Matt. xiii. 1, distinctly connect the ministry of parables by the lakeside with the coming of his mother and brethren, and with the bitter charge of the scribes from Jerusalem, as all occurring on the same day. Thus, to find the events of the morning, we are carried back to Mark iii. 20 or Matt xii. 22. Within the day now ending he had been so thronged at home as to have no time to eat; he had healed a demoniac; he had been accused of being in league with the evil one, and so of being the worst of demoniacs and the most wicked of men; he had thus met with the most violent rejection of his mission and his goodness; he had been sought by his own kindred as a man beside himself, and had been obliged to repel them, even though his mother was among them; he had changed the method of his teaching, had taken up the use of parables, and had delivered many (verse 33) to a thronging multitude; he had afterward explained these to his disciples, who were eager and yet not swift to understand him: and all the day the parable of the Sower, with its three fruitless classes to one fruitful, had been illustrated before him. Such a day's work as this could not fail to bring a terrible strain upon him in mind and heart. We must not forget how intensely living his own truth was to him, or how deeply he cared for the destinies of his hearers. That day was enough to give him full sympathy with his servants in the experience of mental weariness. Far deeper and mere consoling is this weari-

ness than that of John iv. 6, when he was merely "wearied with his journey;" now he was wearied with his work .-They took him, even as he was in the ship (or boat)-peculiar to Mark-i. e., probably, because he was utterly weary and would have them spend no time in preparation. He was " in the boat," as at verse 1 .- That there were also with him other little ships is peculiar to Mark -the vivid remembrance of an eye-witness how they set out upon the lake amid a little fleet of boats, filled, no doubt, with friends.

Verses 37, 38.-A great storm e) wind Such storms are frequent on all inland seas, but especially there. The level of the lake is six hundred teet below that of the ocean, yet the altitudes of the surrounding hills are very considerable. Hence the streams that cut their way down to the lake gain ex-

tracrdinary velocity, especially when the snows are melting and wear for themselves deep water-courses, which serve as gigantic funnels, through which the winds rush down upon the lake and make such sudden and violent disturbances as occur scarcely anywhere else--So that it—the boat—was now filling, not full. Matthew says "covered with the waves," and Luke adds that "they were in danger;" but the most graphic of all the touches is Mark's when literally translated, "The waves beat into the boat, so that it was now filling."-The pillow, or "cushion," not unlike. ly, the steersman's cushion. Mark alone mentions it, and tells the part of the boat in which Jesus lay asleep-asleep so profoundly in his utter exhaustion as to know nothing of the tempest. How perfectly natural a sequence to such a day as has been described! Yet nothing has been directly said in the narrative of his weariness; we see it rather than read it. Not only the weariness do we see, but the calmness, the trust, as of a little child; the tempest does not awaken him. But the secret of his calmness has not yet taken possession of his friends. The petulant, Carest thou not that we perrish? is found in Mark alone; it is a foolish word of dising the Storm, Vs. 39. III. Faith and trust, yet matched-how often !-by the complaints of later disciples when they are tempted to fancy that "the Lord hath forsaken the earth." It indicates, too, a degree, or rather a kind, of familiarity that ill accords with true reverence. Not yet did they fully know Vs. 39.-When awaked, what did with whom they had to do. But did Christ do? Meaning of "rebuked"? they really suppose that the boat would perish, with all on board, when the Christ of God was there? They were not yet fully convinced that he was the Christ, or such a fear could never have overcome them. [It is worthy of notice that Mark alone, whose narrative is believed to have been derived from Peter, gives the appeal to Jesus the form of a "petulant" or reproachful question. Compare Matthew (viii. 26): "Save, Lord, we perish;" and Luke (viii. 24): "Master, Master, we perish." And what is more likely than that Peter alone used the words recorded by Marke Who else of the disciples was so likely to give such a turn to his appeal for help? No one of the twelve save Peter appears to have reproved the Lord on any other occasion. But he, in his honest arrogance and impetuosity, did this more than once. And if he alone used the words preserved by Mark, what more natural than that he alone was wont to repeat them? For they were words which he might well remember, and which, in the excitement of that moment on the lake, in the storm, was probably observed by no one of his associates. This little question, therefore, "Carest thou not that we perish?" con-

> Verse 39.—It is not he arose, but "he awoke," or, still stronger, "he was aroused. He rebuked the wind. Matthew, "the winds;" Luke, "the wind and the raging of the water." But the word of address was to the sea; Mark alone gives it. Peace, be still. " Be reduced to silence." Note the simplicity of this narrative: no attempt to make the style correspond to the sublimity of the act. Just so of the effect: how could it be more simply described? The wind ceased. Literally, "grew weary"-an expressive word for the sudden lull and resting of the raging wind. It was not a gradual dying away of the wind, followed by a long swell of the waters, but a quick cessation, followed almost immediately by a great calm. The testimony of Meyer is of value here: "It is to be held historically as a miracle, an event that sprang from the divine power that dwelt in Jesus, on account of which it is no more difficult to ascribe to him a mighty work upon the elements than

firms the early tradition that Mark's

Gospel is at the same time Peter's .-

an influence upon the bodily organism." Verses 40, 41.- In Matthew (not in Luke) the question of verse 40 precedes the rebuke to the winds and address to the sea, the "Why are ye so fearful, O ye of little faith?" being uttered while the storm is still raging. In Mark the remonstrance follows the deliverance. Carest thou not that we perish? Their experience of him ought to have made their trust unfailing; and perhaps also faith in God's paternal watchfulness and protection, which enabled him to sleep amid the tempest, while they were half crazed with fear. What manner of man (or, more accurately, "who, then") is this? Even the apostles had not learned to know him as one from whom such control of nature could be expected, and now they were awe struck in his presence. (Compare Luke v. 8, 9.) We may picture the amazement of other persons who may have been upon the lake at the sudden cessation of the wind, for which they knew no reason, and of the astonishment and incredulity with which the true story of it might be received; yet not then, and in that land, with any such incredulity as now, and in the West. The miracles, like other means that God uses, were used at the right time and place. It is the highest evidence of their divine source that they were so perfectly adapted to the age in which they were employed.

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Where di people the The evening ing to the he asked his the Sea of Read verse he soon fell part of the that belong quite dark, middle of wind began were fisher on the wat that they their boat and stron great wave boat, and drown. 1 He must disciples " Master, perish?"

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