

house. Would it be convenient to settle our little account this afternoon?

Our account! was the surprised reply. Surely the term has not yet expired.

Only half of it; but my present rule is to collect my money at that time. It is a plan which many teachers have adopted of late.

I was not aware that there had been any change in your rules, and I have made arrangements to meet your bill at the usual time. I fear it will not be in my power to do so sooner.

The countenance of the teacher showed great disappointment, and as she passed on in a different direction, she muttered to herself—

Just as I expected. I never shall see a cent. Everybody says they are going down hill. I must get rid of the children in some way. Perhaps I may get a pair of shoes or two for payment for the half quarter, if I manage right; but it will never do to go on in this way!

A little discomposed by her interview with the teacher, Mrs. Thompson stepped into a neighbouring grocery to purchase some trifling article of family stores.

I have a little account against you. Will it be convenient for Mr. Thompson to settle it this evening? asked the polite shopkeeper as he produced the desired article.

Is it his usual time for settling? was again the surprised inquiry.

Well, not exactly; but money is very tight just now, and I am anxious to get all that is due me. In future I intend to keep short accounts.—There is a little bill, if you would like to look at it. I will call around this evening. It is but a small affair.

Thirty dollars is no small sum to us just now, thought Mrs. Thompson, as she thoughtfully pursued her way toward home.

It seems strange that all the payments must be met just now, while we are struggling to recover from the heavy expenses of the winter. I cannot understand it.

Her perplexity was increased by finding her husband with two bills in his hand and a countenance expressive of anxiety and concern.

Look Mary, he said, as she entered. Here are two unexpected calls for money; one from the doctor, and the other from the dealer in leather from whom I purchased my last stock. They are both very urgent for immediate payment, although they have always been willing to wait a few months until I could make arrangements to meet their claims. But misfortunes never come single, and if a man gets a little behind hand, troubles seem to pour in upon him.

Just so, replied the wife. The neighbours think we are going down hill, and every one is ready to give us a push. Here are two more bills for you—one from the grocer, and the other from the teacher.

Reply was prevented by a knock at the door, and the appearance of a lad, who presented a neatly folded paper, and disappeared.

The butcher's account, as I live! exclaimed the astonished shoemaker. What is to be done Mary? So much money to be paid out and very little coming in; for some of my best customers have left me, although my work has always given satisfaction. If I could only have as much employment as usual, and the usual credit allowed me, I could soon satisfy all these claims; but to meet them now is impossible, and the acknowledgment of my inability would send us still on the downward path.

We must do our best and trust in Providence, was the consoling remark of his wife, as a second knock at the door aroused the fear that another claimant was about to appear.

But the benevolent countenance of Uncle Joshua, a rare but ever welcome visitor, presented itself. Seating himself in the comfortable chair that Mary hastened to hand him, he said, in his eccentric, but friendly manner:

Well, good folks, I understand the world does not go as well with you as formerly. What is the trouble?

There need be no trouble, was the reply, if men would not try to add to the afflictions which the Almighty sees to be necessary for us. The winter was a trying one. We met with sickness and misfortunes, which we endeavoured to bear with patience. All would now go well if those around me were not determined to push me in the downward path.

But there lies the difficulty, friend Thompson. This is a selfish world. Everybody, or at least, a great majority, care only for number one. If they see a poor neighbour going down hill, their first thought is whether it will affect their own interests, and provided they can secure themselves, they care not how soon he goes to the bottom. The only way is to keep up appearances. Show no signs of going behindhand, and all will go well with you.

Very true, Uncle Joshua, how is this to be done? Bills which I did not expect to be called upon to meet for the next three months are pouring upon me. My best customers are leaving me for a more fortunate rival. In short, I am on the brink of ruin, and nought but a miracle can save me.

A miracle which is very easily wrought then, I imagine, my good friend. What is the amount of your debts, which press so heavily upon you, and how soon in the common course of events, could you discharge them?

They do not exceed one hundred dollars, replied the shoemaker; and with my usual run of work, I could make all right in three or four months.

We will say six, was the answer. I will advance you one hundred and fifty dollars for six months. Pay every cent you owe, and with the remainder of the money make some slight addition or improvement in your shop or house, and put everything about the grounds in their usual neat order. Try this plan for a few weeks, and we will see what effect it has upon our worthy neighbors. No, no, never mind thanking me. I am only trying a little experiment on human nature. I know you of old, and have no doubt that my money is safe in your hands.

Weeks passed by. The advice of Uncle Joshua had been strictly followed, and the change in the shoemaker's prospects was indeed wonderful. He was now spoken of as one of the most thriving men in the village, and many marvellous stories were told to account for the sudden alteration in his affairs.

It was generally agreed that a distant relative had bequeathed him a legacy, which had entirely relieved him of his pecuniary difficulties. They had never before realized the beauty and durability of his work. The polite butcher selected the best pieces of meat for his inspection, as he entered, and was totally indifferent as to the time of payment. The teacher accompanied the children home to tea, and spoke in high terms of their improvement, pronouncing them among her best scholars. The dress-maker suddenly found herself free from the great press for work, and in a friendly note expressed her desire to oblige Mrs. Thompson in any way in her power.

Just as I expected, exclaimed Uncle Joshua, rubbing his hands exultingly, as the grateful shoemaker called upon him at the expiration of six months, with the money which had been loaned in the hour of need. Just as I expected. A strange world! They are ready to push a man up hill if he seems to be ascending, and just as ready to push him down, if they find that his face is turned that way. In future, neighbor Thompson, let everything round you wear an air of prosperity, and you will be sure to prosper. And with a satisfied air, Uncle Joshua placed his money in his pocket book, ready to meet some other claim upon his benevolence, whilst he, whom he had thus befriended, with cheerful countenance, returned to his happy home.

#### An Affecting Story.

The following affecting story was related by Mr. Dudley, an agent of the British and Foreign Bible Society, at the anniversary of the Birmingham Sunday School Union:

In the county of Kent lives or lived a clergyman and his lady, who took a very active part in the Sunday school connected with his church. They had in the school a boy, the only son of a widow, who was notoriously wicked, despising all the earnest prayers and admonitions of the clergyman, who, out of pity for his poor widowed mother, kept him in the school eighteen months; at length he found it absolutely necessary to dismiss the lad as a warning to others. He soon after enlisted as a soldier in a regiment that was soon ordered to America, it being during the last American war. Sometime after, the poor widow called upon the clergyman to beg a Bible of the smallest size. Surprised at such a request from an individual who was on the verge of eternity, and who he knew had one or two Bibles of large print, which she had long used to good purpose, he inquired what she wanted it for. She answered, "A regiment is going out to America, and I want to send it to my poor boy; and O! sir, who knows what it may do?"

She sent the Bible which the clergyman gave her, by a pious soldier, who, upon his arrival at their destination, found the widow's son the very ring-leader of the regiment in every description of vice. After the soldier had made himself known, he said, "James your mother has sent you her last present."

"Ah!" he replied in a careless manner, is she gone at last? I hope she sent me some cash."

The pious soldier told him he believed the poor widow was dead; "but," said he, "she has sent you something of more value than gold or silver, (presenting him with the Bible) and, James it was her dying request that you would read one verse, at least, of this book every day; and can you refuse her dying charge?"

"Well," said James, "it is not too much to ask, (opened the Bible) so here goes."

He opened the Bible at the words, "Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

"Well," said he; "this is very odd. I have opened to the only verse in the Bible that I could ever learn by heart, when I was in the Sunday school; I never could for the life of me commit another. It is very strange;—but who is this me that is mentioned in the verse?"

The pious soldier asked if he did not know. He replied that he did not.

The good man then explained it to him; spoke to him of Jesus, and exhibited the truth and invitations of the Gospel. They walked to the house of the chaplain, where they had further conversation; the result was, that from that hour he became a changed man, and was as noted for exemplary conduct, as before he had been for his wickedness.

Some time after this conversation, the regiment in which he was, engaged the enemy:—at the close of which the pious soldier, in walking through the field of blood, behold, under a large spreading oak, the dead body of James, his head reclining on his Bible, which was opened at the passage, "Come unto me all ye that are weary," &c. Poor James had gone to his eternal rest.

Mr. Dudley said he had frequently held the Bible in his hand; there was no less than fifty pages stained with the blood of poor James. How encouraging, said Mr. Dudley, is this for Sabbath school teachers to persevere; for should there be but one seed sown, it might, as in case of the widow's son, produce a plentiful harvest. The only verse he ever committed to memory was the means, in the hands of the Holy Spirit, of bringing him out of darkness into marvellous light; and James is now, we trust, joining the song of the redeemed in heaven.

#### LITERARY MEN IN LONDON.

In a charming mansion in St. James's place lives the venerable poet of the "Pleasures of Memory," ninety years having rolled over his bald, ripe forehead. Mr. Rogers sat in Westminster Hall when Burke and Sheridan poured out their invectives against Warren Hastings. In a fine large house in Tavistock-place sits Charles Dickens, busy as a bee over Bleak House and Household Words. On an afternoon, the loiterer in that vicinity may catch a glimpse of his thin hair, now sprinkled with grey, as it is tossed by the summer wind which visits his desk as he sits writing in his ample library room. Thackeray has, ere this, got home again, and any fine day he may be found at the Garrick Club, in King-street, Covent Garden. Barry Cornwall lives in Harley-street, Cavendish-square, where he is spending the happy evening of his life. Walter Savage Landor is at home in Bath, having been expelled from Italy on account of his "dangerous liberty doctrines." In Twickenham, in a modest, brick-house, by the road side, muses Alfred Tennyson, the poet laureate of England. The Brownings are like swallows, flitting from clime to clime, but London is often in their way. Thomas Carlyle lives in Chelsea, and often comes to town. Macaulay is a club man and when he is not among his idols (the books of the British Museum), he may be met with in the brilliant rooms of the "Athenæum" or the "Reform." Dear, kind, old Leigh Hunt, toddling over the pavement, in the Strand, towards his son's newspaper office, is a common occurrence. Is he the Skimpole of Bleak House? The knowing ones of London say he is. On the left, as you go up to Piccadilly, stands a bookshop, with "Chapman and Hall" over the door. The tall gentleman with the nose and the waistcoat, and the elegant cravat, is Sir Edward Litton, or Bulwer, as you may happen to call him. He is telling Mr. Chapman, who has his ear close to the baronet's bosom, that the engraving just brought in for his inspection is not quite right in the direction of the whiskers and the shirt collar.

PROPOSED ERECTION OF AN ENGLISH CHURCH IN PARIS.—Several meetings have been lately held in Paris of lay members of the united church of Great Britain and Ireland resident in Paris, with the object of obtaining the erection of a church in some measure commensurate with the requirements of the English resorting there in such numbers, and creditable to the British nation. The amount of church accommodation provided in two small chapels and a room at the embassy is utterly inadequate to the very large number attached to her communion who are at all times resident in or passing through the metropolis of France, so that many hundreds are every Sunday prevented from joining in public worship who would otherwise attend. Both the small chapels above alluded to are private property, and unconsecrated; and while the English constantly resident number 10,000, and the English visitors are seldom fewer than 10,000 more, and sometimes reach 20,000, the accommodation in such chapels, and in the room in which divine service is performed at the embassy does not exceed 2,000, a considerable portion of which is occupied by American residents, who are very numerous, and have no place of worship whatever in Paris. The promoters of the work wish to obtain from government a contribution equal to about one-third of the outlay required to erect a church capable of accommodating not fewer than 1,500 people, 500 of the sittings to remain for ever free; and on condition that this assistance is given, the church is solely to be the property of the crown.

#### THE LITTLE BOY WITH A STRAW HAT.

A crippled beggar in a large city was striving to pick up some old clothes that had been thrown him from a window, when a crowd of rude boys gathered around him, mimicking

his awkward movements, and hooting at his helplessness and rags. Presently another noble little fellow came up, and hastily pushing through the crowd, helped the poor crippled man to pick up his gifts, and fasten them in a bundle. Then, slipping a piece of silver into his hand, he was running away, when a voice far up above him said, "Little boy with the straw hat, look up."

He did so, and a lady, leaning from an upper window, said earnestly, "God will bless you my little fellow. God will bless you for that." That lady was the wife of a man so distinguished among the great men of this world, that every one of those boys would have been proud to obtain her approbation: and when she wrote down his name as one she wished to remember, he felt more than paid for all he had done.

As he walked along, he thought how glad he had made his own heart by doing good.—He thought of the poor beggar's grateful look, then of the lady's smile and words of approval; and last, and better than all, he could almost hear his heavenly father whispering, "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy."

Little reader, when you have an opportunity to do good, and feel tempted to neglect it, remember "the little boy with the straw hat."

#### Education of Farmers.

That education is not necessary to successful farming has long been a prevailing sentiment. It has been considered important for the professional man, but as useless, or a luxury at most, to the agriculturist. Industry—plodding, patient industry—qualified for success in carrying on a farm; but that boy whose aversion to work and love of mischief, made his parents at a loss how to employ his energies, must study some profession. Did one seem rather dull and stupid, he could never be qualified for anything but farming. Another, who seemed unusually bright—who thirsted for knowledge—must be a minister, physician or lawyer; the life of a farmer could furnish no facilities for improvement or the gratification of his desires.

Now, this is all wrong—for no good reason can be shown why every farmer should not be liberally educated—why he should not find use for a good education in carrying on the operations of his farm. If his knowledge need be of a different quality, it should not be less in quantity than that of the professional man.

The great object of toil is not to wear away the weary hours, but to secure the greatest possible useful product. Knowledge enables a man to bestow his labor where it will be best rewarded. The farmer should know the nature of the soil he cultivates, what crops are best adapted to it, what succession of the same will yield most profit, what kind and quantity of manure it needs to keep it in proper condition; and this requires knowledge of Agricultural Chemistry. And to understand Chemistry, other general knowledge is indispensable. How much labor is lost by this want of adaptation of crops to the soil on which they are attempted to be cultivated!

The facilities for improvement are constantly increasing, and educated enterprise already making use of Nature's powers and machinery to save labor. That millennium will never come, when the soil will yield abundant harvests without labor, but the improvements of the age will aid continually to diminish the amount required. And yet we need never fear we shall be out of employment—and enough of it too.

Some indeed protest against the introduction of the improvements referred to, simply because they interfere with manual labor.—When Railroads first began to take the place of the old stage routes, some men who never see but an inch ahead, cried out, "This will spoil our market for horses and oats,"—and yet horses and oats have been rising in value ever since. An amusing story is told of the first introduction of fanning mills into Scotland. A preacher denounced the new invention in no gentle terms. "We used to trust to Providence," said he, "for wind to fan our grain, and it is but wicked presumption thus to interfere with the Divine prerogatives and manufacture wind for ourselves!"—*Rural New Yorker.*

NOT FAR OUT.—A cynical old Cockney of our acquaintance says he considers the moustache movement to be only a new way the young fellows have got into of giving themselves airs.—*Punch.*