

BV

4571

.C3

A TALK WITH MY CLASS



O. M.



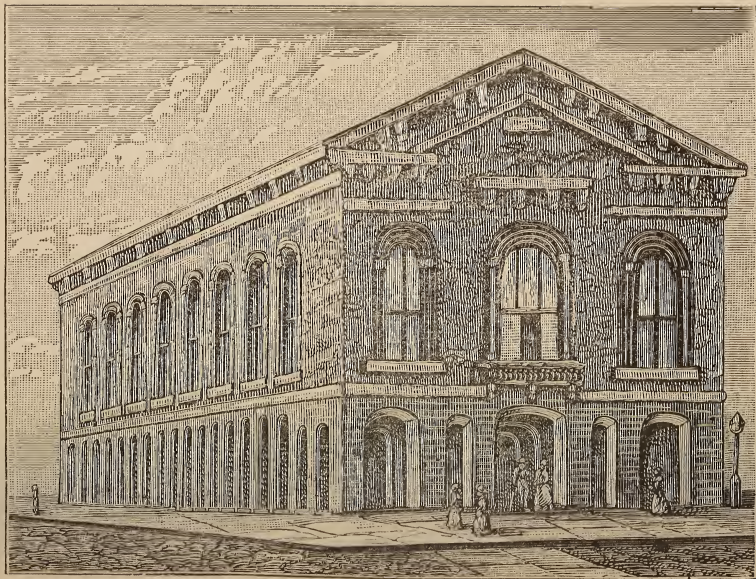
LIBRARY OF CONGRESS.

BV 4571

Chap. Copyright No. C 3

Shelf

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.



OLD MARKET HALL, RICHMOND, VA.

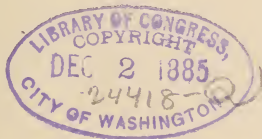
A TALK

WITH MY CLASS.

*Mrs. Agnes A. Lebell
or Mrs. J. S. Lebell
of Richmond, Va.*

BY A TEACHER

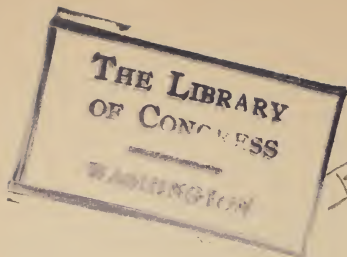
AT THE OLD MARKET HALL SUNDAY SCHOOL.



RICHMOND, VA.:

WHITTET & SHEPPERSON, COR. TENTH, & MAIN STREETS.

1885.



BV4571
C3

THIS was written for a Class, during the necessary suspension of the Sunday School for repairs needed at the Old Market Hall.

LC Control Number



tmp96 031681

P R E F A C E.

THIS little "TALK WITH MY CLASS" was intended for private circulation. In deciding to send it out for a wider sphere among children, it may not be inappropriate to mention the origin and conduct of the religious services with which the Sunday-school, referred to, was connected.

About February 1, 1885, Rev. Dr. Moses D. Hoge, the well known Presbyterian divine of the city of Richmond, commenced regular sermons, of particular missionary interest and effect, in the large hall of the Old Market building, on Main street. This enterprise, soon combining the organization of a large Sunday-school, constantly gained influence for good from the beginning; with increased commendation by the press, and the grateful appreciation of all classes of our people. It was in a short association with the Sunday-school mission work at this point, un-

influenced by denominational preference, that the writer adopted a firm faith in the necessity for such work, as the strongest reformatory agency in our hour of need.

A distinguished orator has said that communism is a foe more to be apprehended here, than in any European society. It is the ever-recurring, impending, threatening tendency, resulting from disruption of law and order in every revolutionized country; then surely to be dreaded here; but only as a mass can the evil of moral chaos crush and destroy. The entering wedge of honest, earnest effort, here and there, tending to the elevation of religion, morality and refinement, must scatter this control of matter over mind into helpless fragments.

It needs no foresight to know that the habit of a century is not to be set aside. Those who have been with us in a state of servitude, must, as our paid laborers, continue to be influenced—as they find that we are their best friends—by their contact with the white race. We must, therefore, sustain the indirect motive power, in the prevailing standard for rectitude of character in our own

race. Two elements will in this way be controlled. Every thinking mind must see in the Sunday-school mission work, an effective lever for the whole system of advance, and for this, the best material is to be found among our most educated and refined people. A plodding, unremunerated, struggling, and in some respects, disheartening labor, it is not without its attractions; and combined Christian effort, moving as a phalanx, steadily, onward and upward in reform, must, even on earth, meet with acknowledgment and reward.

Historic Truth, bending low on her pathway, to gather, and to clasp as her own, gems of humble effort, but ever living light, these luminous rays of self-sacrifice will be transmitted in letters of gold, for example to nations yet to be regenerated; and this will be the record: "Such the battle for the strong, such the real heroes, the real conquest, in Virginia's salvation!"

This hand of sympathy and appreciation is now held out to the faithful Sunday-school teachers throughout our State, by one who has learned in a short and imperfect experience, vaguely to estimate their sublime aims and results.

The writer of this little "talk" for Virginia boys and girls, will, outside of its defined charity, feel compensated, if its earnestness, as its only recommendation, puts "one thought of prayer" into the heart of boy or girl, with pulses throbbing for the welfare of Old Virginia.

RICHMOND, *August 6, 1885.*

TO MY BOYS.

I HAVE written something to try to interest "good men and women" in going among Virginia boys and girls who may need them as teachers, and now a few more words to you.

What is made by the sale of this little book will be used for charitable objects. You must feel that this is your gift, for at first your teacher's "talk" was only intended for you. You must take pleasure in this, and trying to "remember" what I have said, you must, as far as you can, make the texts from the Bible I have given here, the texts to guide your life and conduct.

YOUR SUNDAY-SCHOOL TEACHER.

A TALK WITH MY CLASS.

CHAPTER I.

I. "THOU shalt have no other gods before me."

II. "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them; for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me, and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments."

III. "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain."

IV. "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work,

thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it."

YOU must remember, my boys, how much I have wanted you to learn the ten commandments. I have had the first four commandments printed for you at the head of this chapter, to have the words before you, whenever you take up this little book. The story I give you, is to explain these four commandments, as they show you your duty towards God, from which all good must come.

It was a town, not a day's journey from Richmond, as we travel west, towards the mountains. Not where you would see mountains, and nothing else, but fields for boys to play in, like those near Richmond, and green lanes leading off, with houses here and there, with vines and flowers, and children rolling on

the grass; and one side, would be a well-worn path under a row of trees, through turf, covered with buttercups and daisies; and beyond, fields of corn and wheat, —just such lanes as the one to Oakwood cemetery, where you have been so often. It was a small place, this town I speak of, and had no big cemetery, but only graves round the old churches, like those in St. John's Church-yard on Church Hill, so these pretty lanes for the children, led off only to the blue mountains, which seemed a wall next to the sky to hold up the old town and the bright fields around it. Off at one end, were factories, like some you have seen in Richmond, where some of the clothes you wear may be woven; and a smaller river than James River (as you see it) made its way by the town to look lost in the mountains. The rivers in this part of the country are so clear you can see every stone at the bottom, and the ground is so rocky, the water tosses over in first one little waterfall and then another; and as this

river, except where dammed up to work a large mill, is shallow and entirely without danger, the boys who are not working for their living wade about in it most of the long summer days.

In a cottage just out of this town, on one of the green lanes, a lady sat one evening, with ten or twelve children around her. She had been sick for a long while; and, afraid she had not time to do much more good, she had called her own boys, with other children, from their play in the lane to tell them about God and how to serve Him. She sat still, for how could she show the wild boys that loved play so much that they could not play always, but that God would be with them in play, in work, in joy and sorrow, and that it would make them only happier to serve Him and to praise Him, simply by loving Him,—out of love coming service and praise, and love coming from faith! I shall tell you, “my boys,” how she taught them that faith and love.

As she waited, with prayer in her heart, the light from the setting sun gave an answer sent from heaven. My own boys—those who went with me once to Hollywood—must remember when we stood just below the James River falls, the red light of the setting sun made the green fields on the Manchester side look deeper green, the foam of the falls whiter still, and the trees of Hollywood more beautiful and green. You saw the houses, on down to Rockets, and below, with their windows flaming as from a great fire about to burst forth; like the fire you have heard of, all through that part of Richmond, the last year of the war,—then all this light seemed to sink into the river, which was like golden glass. I remind you, because I want you to see before you the sunset I tell you of now,—the smaller town, with its windows flaming, as you saw the windows that evening from Hollywood, the green fields and the blue mountains deeper green and blue, from the sunset light, and the

river, not one unbroken glass of shining gold, but with its clear water and tiny waterfalls, as if thousands of bright stones had been showered out of the sun—you know when the rain comes down in showers, and you will know what I mean.

I forgot to tell you about the church-tower. You have, most of you, been high up on Main street, in Richmond. Have you seen the Presbyterian church, near Main, on Fifth street? It has a tower, different from any tower or steeple in Richmond. Well, this tower I speak of now is very much like it, and, being higher than any church in the little town, seemed to rest in a stronger and yet softer light, as if blessing and peace must be there. You must stop and think if you ever fail to understand my words. Blessing means what is good in every hour we live; and peace, when you are quiet and happy; and I mean that this church looked like a place where people prayed and were glad to pray.

As Mrs. Gray saw all this beauty,—more beautiful perhaps than what we saw from Hollywood,—her large dark eyes bright, and her pale face lighted up with joy, one poor, thin hand held out to point to the setting sun, she looked to the children as if sent from heaven; but she was not from heaven; she was only ready for heaven, with prayer and love for God in her heart. She points and says: “See, my children, God made all that! and he tells us ‘Thou shalt have none other gods before me.’ It means this, that you must say in your hearts *this is my God*, and you must ask Him to show you how to serve Him. You must pray to Him, and to no one else; and in loving Him, you must love to pray to Him, and you must love all things as *given* by this God!”

“My children, do you understand?”

Six of the boys said “yes;” and the one little girl, with long, yellow hair pushed back, and her big eyes fixed on the light, said, “I know I understands!” Her real name was

Susy, but she was called "Joy" by the neighbors, for she was so merry in her ways—always out in the light, as if she was a piece of sunshine herself—always happy, and ready to help with her little hands. Strange, her other name was "Hope," and no names could have suited her better.

One little boy named "Jim" sat quiet, looking too at the light, as so beautiful, but looking as if he "understands" just a little.

Not seeing this, Mrs. Gray silently watched the shadows gather, in a look of rest everywhere. Don't you know, when the sun has set, how a mantle seems to be let down in shelter, as if God said from heaven, "I will be with you through the night!"

I want you, my boys,—and when I say "my boys," I mean the real boys I learned to care for so much,—to notice these changes through the day, in the evening, and at night; for there is a lesson in every one, to show us about God. If you feel that, as you are so much in the

open air, you must all the time be learning something to make you better boys.

Mrs. Gray says, "The first four commandments are intended to show you your duty to God. I have given you the first commandment." She then repeats the second commandment, as printed for you at the head of this chapter. "This commands us to pray to God, to love Him, and to serve Him in every way, as the Bible teaches us we must do. Many ignorant races have made figures, called images, to worship, because they cannot see God, and we are commanded to worship from faith. We are to feel that the God who made us, and all things, is too great to be brought nearer to us by any work of man's hands; that He is everywhere, to hear us, and to help us, in answer to real prayer." Now, my dear children, you have only to believe this.

The third commandment, I fear, I can easily remind you of, through a very sinful habit. I fear you sometimes curse, or speak God's name

lightly ; that is, without thinking what it means. Several hang their heads, and say nothing ; one or two speak up, and say, "no indeed!"—another was heard to say, "I would'nt think of doing so." Little Joy just looks out of her sweet, honest, true eyes, and says nothing ; but "Jim"—little Jim Lawson—who didn't understand, stammers out, almost sobbing, "I cusses sometimes, and I tells stories too." It seems to me I remember hearing a boy named "Robert Hope" say the same ; and I say of Jim and Robert, a boy who is brave in telling the truth will be apt to do well.

Mrs. Gray thought so too, and bending to pat Jim's head, she said, "Try not to do so again, my child ; but I am glad you told the truth."

Now, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy." You can read me the rest, William. Her oldest son reads the fourth commandment, and after thinking, she says, feebly, for she is now very tired : "I cannot better explain this

command than by a very beautiful answer given in a catechism you may all learn some day: 'Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him for ever.' Now, this fully takes in the meaning, not only of this commandment, but the first four commandments. To glorify God is to give thanks to Him; to ask all things from Him as the giver of every good, showing this knowledge by our whole life. To enjoy is to enjoy praising Him; to enjoy the sweetness of going to Him in prayer; to enjoy the things from His hand; that is, clothing, food, and every pleasure and employment we have in this beautiful world. The more He is so enjoyed, the more He is glorified. Sunday we must only glorify and enjoy Him more than on the other days, because we have more time in this day, of rest from the work of the week—work which must be well done as a duty."

One boy asks, "Can't we do anything but go to church and pray on Sundays?"

"We can pray, my child, in the fields and

woods. A prayer may be a thought, a word. You can do anything Sunday which will not keep you from a prayerful heart. Now, can't you judge by that? Sunday is giving to you this greatest happiness, and Sunday may be the happiest day in the week. We must do only necessary work on the Sabbath, but children can't stay in the house all day. You must love to go to church, as God's house of worship; you must do your best to learn at the Sunday-school, and you can take the same prayerful happy heart to the open fields, where every piece of grass, every tree and flower, can make you think of God.

And now, my children, I have told you about the commandments which speak of man's duty to God, and I tell you here, that loving and serving God, you will learn the charity commanded to your fellow-man in the last six commandments—next to your duty to God, being your duty to your father and mother.

These ten commandments were given to men

in the Old Testament; but people were still so sinful, that Jesus Christ came to suffer for them; and giving them the same commandments, he showed them, by his words and works, how to be better men. Owing all to Him, we pray to God in His name, and the Holy Spirit, left with us, a 'Comforter,' to put good thoughts in our hearts; we ought surely to feel that we have only to believe, to ask, and to receive such offered mercy. Some of you *can* understand; and when the others are larger, they may think of what I have said."

"I cannot talk more now," and her voice is very weak. "I cannot tell you more to-night," and she silently touches each little head. She never talked to them on earth after that night. We shall see how her last words were remembered.

They turned, as they heard her speak again, and heard the whisper, "To glorify and to enjoy for ever!"

CHAPTER II.

THE FIRST PRAYER.

THE only children under ten years old, in the little band who met in Mrs. Gray's porch, were Joy Hope, who lived with her old grandmother not far off, and Jim Lawson, about seven years old, and nearly a year younger than "our Joy," as she was called.

Little Jim lived, too, on the same lane, and minded cows for the near neighbors, day after day, all the summer time. His earnings helped somewhere, he reckoned; but Jim had a poor sort of life, with his father often too drunk to go to *his* work, and ready to abuse the hard-working mother, and to slam away at the poor boy, who always had a stupid, sullen look, as if he didn't know and he didn't care. This was just because Jim didn't know exactly what he was made *for*, and whether anybody really

cared *for him*; for after Jim spent that evening with Mrs. Gray, the neighbors began to say, "Well, Jim Lawson is coming to some good after all."

He didn't "understand" at first; but hope was put into his heart by kind words, and you will see how this led him to understand better than many boys who have been used to kind words, without the prayer with them, that brought the Holy Spirit as his teacher, and this is what I want to tell you about.

Jim loved his cows very much, and they loved him. As he was one day driving them gently down the lane, so that they would not be too much heated, a bird flew by, dropping a piece of paper. It rested on his head a moment, and then fluttered down at his feet. You have often, boys, seen nests made of grass, bits of paper, and old rags. This bird had picked up a scrap of paper to carry it to her nest. Jim was about to pass it by, but he saw writing, and said, "Well, the bird brought

it to me, and I'll take it home, and, if mother has done washing, maybe she'll tell me." Jim slipped it into his pants' pocket, and went on with his cows. He might have forgotten it was there. Presently, though—for he had a hole in his pants' pocket—down came the paper, right on his foot this time. You know, boys, when you have a hole in your pants' pocket, everything must go straight through. Well, there it was, and the plain side up. Jim gave it a kick, but, as it blew away, there was the writing again, and Jim saw it and stepped back, and again it was away. Now he would have it, wind or not, and he had a rare chase to catch it once more. Jim pinned it this time to his coat-lining, and somehow he cared to keep it now, for he felt for it several times, and, when he had put the cows up at the different houses, he ran home as hard as he could.

"Mother," he says, all out of breath, "just read this letter!"

The mother's hands were full of soap-suds, but she bent over.

"Well, I guess I can, as it's that little; then you run along, and don't bother me with the last rinsing of my best pieces."

She spelled out the words: "Ask, and ye shall receive." And underneath: "Those were God's words!"

The father came home very drunk, and struck his boy several times; but Jim was thinking too much to mind—of the words on the paper, of the gentle lady who told him of God, and how he had never prayed a single prayer! Perhaps, if he should ask God for all he wanted, he would have the good things other people have. He thought of it often that night.

Now Jim's uncle was a kind-hearted man, and felt sorry for him. He had made him a large paper kite, and Jim was as proud of it as he could be. The next morning he jumped up early, to get back in time for his cows, and running as fast as he could to his uncle's

house, he waked him up, and asked him "just to write down all he wanted."

"Going shopping, my boy? why, that's something new."

Jim said not a word, but ran even faster than he came, to get up his cows; and before the sun was high, there was Jim, knee-high in the grass the cows loved, the kite in one hand, and the paper, with his top, his wheelbarrow, a suit of clothes, and many other things he wanted,—some for his mother,—and all written very plain. He went to his old seat under a tree, on a little hill, so he could watch his cows. There he tied his paper to the kite, and soon the kite rose up in the air, and, with its long string, seemed to touch the sky. Little Jim didn't know any better, and he thought it would get nearer to God that way; he screamed aloud, too, so that God might hear: "O God, take my prayer?"

Now, this seems a poor way of praying, to you who know better; but it was prayer, and

while it was not answered in Jim's way, and he didn't know it was answered at all, you will see it was answered in God's way, for it led on to other thoughts of prayer, with answer at last, that Jim could feel and know to be from his God.

Jim's father worked at one of the factories when he worked at all. As he was an "extra-good hand," they said, when sober, they put up with his times of drunkenness,—often for days. During that winter, when Jim's cows were all fed at their own stalls, and he staid about home, he used to be sent often, with his father's supper to the factory, when the hands were kept there for a press of work. As he did not know the way after dark, in that part of the town, he would be made to wait.

One Saturday night, poor Jim was dragged by a drinking house, and kept there for hours, while his father drank up most of his week's wages. They were turned out at last, and stumbled up the dark street.

“Not there, father,” he says, as his father steps on an old cellar door. They wander against a brick wall; “Not there! Oh! father, you will kill yourself!” And on to the river, just here very deep, where the child hears, though he cannot see, the roar of the mill-dam. “Not there, father,” his face white and streaming with tears of agony.

His father turns, and passing down a narrow alley, they enter the wide fields, for the man seems to want to get away from men, who might harm him still more.

“Oh! father, we are lost!” And they stood in an open plain outside of the town, silver-paved in the moonlight—for you know how the paved street will look like one block of stone, and this was like a lake of silver. The wind is heard through the long grass; not with the harsh sound when it rustles through fields of wheat and corn, but with the sigh of some one in pain; the mountains looked dark in the

night, instead of their day-time blue, and the town seemed a shadow behind them.

“Not here, father!”—and a thought came to him of that other prayer. “God will hear me now, for I have nobody to help me;” then, in a little while, “Father, let us pray!”—and he kneels, and, raising his eyes to the moonlit sky, he says, with his whole heart and strength, but this time, in a low tone, for all at once, he felt that God was near, “God help me to take care of father, for Jesus Christ’s sake.”

He “remembered” then; for he remembered Christ!

My boys, mountains rising very high are called grand; the statue of Washington, in our capitol square, is called grand, and splendid houses are called grand; but the child’s prayer, rising higher than the bright plain, the quiet town, the beautiful river; higher and yet higher, to meet the listening waiting God, was grander than all of these; and better still, this child’s prayer could pass onward to God, as

surely as any offered by the wisest minister who has preached in any church; for it was a faithful, believing prayer!

When a man is so drunk that he loses the use of his body, then he must sleep until he rouses up, as you see men sleeping out their drunkenness on the streets; and how terrible it is! But when a man can move his limbs in walking, the mind can be waked up, and he can be brought to think, to know, and to see again, what is around him, by some sudden, strong feeling sent to him, of happiness or grief.

The father looks down at his child, and then up, as if trying to find God; and he hears again, words from his boy, "O God, help us now, or we are lost!"

He drops too on his knees; and in all that shining field, only those dark, kneeling figures; in all the silence—for the wind even, has stopped its sighing through the long grass—only prayer there; and above, the Hearer of prayer! So they knelt; and in a moment, the father says,

“I know the way now, my boy,” and little Jim, trusting God with a new trust, and trusting the father, God had given him, with a new trust, clasps his hand, and together they walk quietly to their home.

“Wife!” he calls to the pale tired wife, waiting for them to come, “my boy has saved me! He prayed for his father, and God heard him; and I think I can pray too now, and be a better man to you and to Jim.”

Soon after, he moved far away, and we only heard that he *was* a better man.

“Ask, and ye shall receive.” Now, boys, my dear boys, you see how any prayer to God, with faith in Christ, must be answered, in some way, some time in life, and for your good. In this need of prayer, we find the best meaning, the best teaching, from the first three commandments.

CHAPTER III.

BREAKING THE SABBATH.

WILLIAM GRAY was now fourteen years old; a fine, stout, brave-looking boy. The mother died a few weeks after her talk with the children that sunset evening; and William's aunt came to their cottage to take care of the two boys. William had heard that mother's gentle voice so often, and had heard her read the Bible so often, and talk to them of its promises, that perhaps he had listened less, and remembered less, than the others who had just heard and seen her now and then.

So, one bright Sunday afternoon, we find him with some of the older boys, who listened, too, to that good mother, and there were other boys—a large party—with their poles for fishing, and a frying-pan, with a little lard, for their own fish-fry. Did you ever fry your own fish,

boys, on the banks of James River, or over on one of the islands? Well, these boys thought it fine fun. You have seen trout, and know what a nice fish it is? There were a great many trout in this river, as in most mountain streams, and they filled their basket; then they made a little fire, and had their fish sputtering away, so that they looked as if they were alive. When the fish were done, a boy took them round in his hat, and the boys all shouted with laughter, and thought it very smart. You know some boys don't mind eating and drinking out of their hats—a bad plan, I think.

A happy time it was. They had no thought of the church-bells, no memory for that other sunset, or the sweet solemn tones which said, "My children, God made that!"

Perhaps Edgar Gray "remembered," for he was a gentle, true hearted boy, and loved his mother; but he was not firm enough to say to the older boys, "It is Sunday, and this is wrong."

My boys, you must be firm if you would

grow up good men—not only in doing the right thing at the right time, but in telling others when they are wrong, how to do right.

When it was nearly time to go home, William said, “I have some matches; suppose we start up a little flame there at Mr. Lynch’s hay-stack; it will frighten him out of his wits?”

“But it will burn up;” and another ventured to say, “And it’s so near Mrs. Hope’s house.”

“Nonsense,” answered William, “it will go right out.”

So they all followed “just to see.” William tried one match, and then another, and they went right out; then he threw the whole box in. All at once the flame mounted up; higher and higher it rose, and in a few minutes the whole large stack was burning.

Mr. Lynch came, and, as he was fond of money, he just ran about—too grieved to think of anything else. No one thought of Mrs. Hope’s cottage, and that, too, had caught. Before help came—for the neighbors, too, just

ran here and there, and did very little—the smoke was pouring from the roof. The alarm was then given in the town, but they had not the number of good fire-engines and firemen, with trained horses, that we have in Richmond.

Where was Joy? Just a little while before, she ran out, leaving her grandmother asleep; safe, as she knew, with the good people around her. Her yellow hair was flying, her cheeks rosy, her eyes brighter; like “Joy Hope” indeed, as she ran to the grove for brush to make her grandmother’s tea, and to toast her slice of bread.

Now, when she sees the smoke, no joy in the dear face, as she flies back to the cottage. She don’t wait to ask for help, but goes with her own strong little arms to pull and lead her grandmother from the flaming house. Her grandmother was already awake, and when she saw Joy safe, she was so glad, she walked stronger than she had done for years. Then

“our Joy,” when she had propped the feeble grandmother against a tree, ran back.

“Grandmother’s clothes!” she says.

But the choking flame and heat made her fall, and when the startled people, wild with fear as they were, brought her out—certain she was dead—the fair face lay untouched; even the long yellow curls had not burned; but she had fallen on some hot iron, and the muscles of her poor limbs were scorched and drawn—perhaps a cripple for life.

As they carried her in sad procession, the dear Joy they loved—some of them helping the poor grandmother—her beautiful hair waving as a yellow flag over the rough coat of a rough man, who gently held her pale face to his breast, his tears rained on that face, drawn in its great agony—but for the quivering of the muscles, like the face of one dead—and he tottered as he walked, even with his light weight.

The next morning William Gray was taken

before the court. The boy who had broken one commandment could break another, and he swore that he had not set fire to the haystack; but Mr. Lynch swore that he had seen him do it, and it was proved by others.

When Joy's name was mentioned, he broke out into such a passion of sobs—that is, boys, a great burst of crying that you can't stop—they sentenced him only to three months in the county jail. And this was a very light sentence, when we think of all the trouble he had caused. They could just punish him for being mischievous with what another owned, for he had not intended so much harm; but they made that sentence lighter than it might have been, because of his grief for Joy.

Poor Joy! When it was known through the town that they had lost and suffered so much, money was raised to buy them a home; not so good as their own little cottage, but it was a shelter; and they had a small sum given to them to live on. This would not be

done often, you know, boys; but Mrs. Hope had been kind to many herself, and she, as well as Joy, deserved to be kindly treated. Did you ever, my boys, hear a text like this? "Cast thy bread upon the waters" (that is, give to others, without thought of yourselves, as to the effect on the world), "for thou shalt find it after many days" Now, if you will hunt for it, you will find this text in your Bible. You see, boys, I need to think of all this myself, and it helps me, to try to think for you.

CHAPTER IV.

THE LILIES.

“**P**OOOR Joy,” indeed! For a while she couldn’t move in bed, and she would scream out aloud, in her great pain. At last, she could be propped up in bed. One day the grandmother said, “You and me had better die, Joy!”

“No, Granny, dear, God is not ready yet. This is such a beautiful world!”—and Joy was looking out of their only window at the green hills and the river. “Let us wait to enjoy it, Granny, for we might not have our eyes opened to see how pretty heaven is, if God were to take us as soon as we say we are ready. And, Granny, I have been thinking of the dear lady who talked to us children. She never talked to us, all together, again; but once I went up

to her porch, and she put her hand on my head, and said, 'Take no thought, for see the lilies;' and as she said lilies, she pressed my head more, and looked so tender out of her dark eyes.

"I think, Granny, she would mean that *we* are not to be afraid, for God will take care of us, as He makes the lilies grow. You know she gave me a little book full of verses from the Bible; it was in my pocket at the fire; and maybe, Granny, darling, I have been made such a lame girl to have nothing to do, but to tell people about her texts."

You see how Joy "remembered," with patience, faith, and love! When she was still stronger, a lady made her a large cushion, and they would put her in front of the door to look out at the sunshine she loved. With the cottage so dark at her back, she looked very white and pure. The children, boys and girls, loved to gaze at her; and after a little while, as she seemed so glad to see them, they loved

to come in to hear Joy talk "like herself;" and they would go away with something from the Bible to learn "for Joy." The boys heard her speak so often of her "lily" text, they would bring first one jar, with a lily blooming, and then another, to set by her on the floor; and people passing, would say, "Which is the fairest lily?"

With "patience, faith, and love," shining in her sweet face, we may say that Joy was a lily of heaven; and surely, boys, fairer than the lily of earth!

This is a very little chapter, and just about lilies; but are not lilies always kept apart? Do we ever plant them, with other flowers in our gardens? And we have only to look at them to know why this is so, as they stand in their white clusters, among the roses and the rows of princess-feathers on the Oakwood road; for have you not seen them there?

Is it not the same way with good boys and

girls? Don't they go together, and grow together? And the same way with good "grown people." Don't they go together, and get stronger and better together?—more like the lilies—more like heaven!

CHAPTER V.

THE SON OF A GOOD MOTHER.

WILLIAM GRAY was kindly treated, for so many loved his mother. Flowers were sent to him, and better food than the jail fare; and he heard from all around him, gentle words to cheer him, but he always looked cross, as if he did not care; and when he was left alone, they would hear dreadful curses, to come from a boy's lips! He never asked about Joy.

As the time passed, he grew so despairing and unhappy, he scarcely spoke a word. As he thought he had nothing else to care for, and no one left here to care for him, a great need came of his mother, and her words of love. One night, when all alone, he threw himself on the hard floor; his sorrow too great to bear. In a month he must meet his old friends, and take up life again, and he thought he would

rather stay in jail. How could he live and be called "jail-bird,"—with no one to own him or love him any more?

"O mother, mother!" he cries; that mother could not come, could not answer; but the mother's prayers had brought an answer to the motherless child.

As he turned his head, he saw through the narrow window one bright star, and he "remembered" how his mother had often pointed to a star, as so pure and soft in its brightness, it reminded her of God's love. "Perhaps it is mother's star," he says, and in a little while, "I remember she told me so much of Jesus; how he said, 'Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden.' I am down low; I am weary; perhaps He would hear me now. O Jesus Christ, hear me; show me how to live!" And over and over, in that night, came the words of prayer to the Saviour, who says, "Ask and ye shall receive," until at last he slept, still on the hard floor.

The morning came and found him sleeping there; the star was gone, but a sun of yet brighter hope had risen; and, my boys, his first words were prayer! Through that last month, text after text from his mother's lips was "remembered," to teach him better, how to pray, how to hope, until, from prayer to prayer—stronger and stronger in his faith in God—he came out of jail ready to teach others to pray and to trust. The very boys who listened with him that sunset evening, were brought by him to "remember;" and though he afterwards stood in pulpits, to lead many to the way his mother had taught so well by her sweet life, Joy and her grandmother ever found him a son and brother; and as Joy was able to limp about on crutches—after long waiting and suffering—it was her delight to help him.

And now, my dear boys, because I feel that I have been such a poor teacher to you, even as my own, I would talk to you now. I have wanted, by these stories, to show you the value

of attention, for I found it hard to make boys, who play ball on the hills, stop to listen and think. Try to listen to whatever may make you better and firmer in the right, and try to remember.

I have wanted to show you, how an effort to do good to others, may bring happiness and good, by ways you know not of. One evening's talk, it has been shown to you, may bring good to all who listen, but it will be in God's way; every nature perhaps demanding some way different from another. I have wanted to show you what prayer is. Never think that prayer will not be answered; but remember that it must be in God's way. In all the play and work of the day—not only praying in the morning and in the evening—you may offer Jim's little prayer. When you go to Sunday-school, remember that the teacher is not only sent there for you by God; but you are sent by God to the teacher, with your duty to her, or to him, and to the whole school; and

you must try to send up a little prayer to God, to help you, the teacher, and all who teach in the school. You must try to come, every time, to lead others to come; you must listen and “remember” that God is *there*, in answer to your prayer.

I say this, not only to Addy, to little Willy Miller, to Peyton and Alexander Baughan, and others, who seemed to care most for me, but with the same interest for every boy who came, though only for a day, to the class, “sent by God.”

I gave one of the boys a text, and I want now to give the same text to all. The meaning of this text is, that prayer—with faith in the Father and the Son—will be answered by the “presence” of the Holy Spirit, “the Comforter,” to lead us right, to bring us final “rest,” from the assurance that God is with us through every trouble of life!

“My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest.” (Ex. xxxiii. 14.)

This text is, as you see, from the Old Testament, and it passes onward, with many beautiful promises in the Bible, until in the New Testament it stands side by side with the promise of Christ, "Ask, and ye shall receive;" and again, "I will not leave you comfortless."

I must tell you one thing more, and I am done. In riding out from Richmond, I used to pass an old hollow, filled with tangled growth. I could not bear to pass it, for I thought only of slimy earth, and of lizards, snakes, and all the creeping things that might be there. A great storm came, and when I went again, some of the trees had been broken by the storm, and there were patches of sunlight, where all had been so dark. I saw a beautiful stream of water far below, with green ferns and green grass and vines.

Many weeks passed, and when I rode by my old hollow once more, all the rough growth had been cleared away, and only the finest trees had been left there to bring shelter and shade.

While some thorny bushes and poisonous weeds were there, beautiful flowers and other plants had sprung up to meet the light, for the sunlight was everywhere—around, above, with a new strength and blessing.

Now, boys, can't this remind you of the human soul? Remember William Gray, and how dark and comfortless his heart was, until, thought after thought of prayer, turned to meet the light of God's love!

The poisonous weeds of sin could not choke out the beautiful flowers of faith and hope reaching out to that light and love.

Now one of you, "my boys," may pass by what was my old hollow on the turnpike road, and perhaps he may think of this; and I trust he may say, "It was like my soul, for light is there at last!"

CHAPTER VI.

I FIND it must be a long time before I meet any of you again, and I want to talk to you a little more. We can take up now the six commandments which show our duty to our neighbor,—that is, to all men.

It seems to me, as Mrs. Gray said, that we have only to understand and keep in our hearts the duty to God taught in the first four commandments, and our duty to man must be made plain. Don't it seem so to you?

The story I am going to tell you is about the fifth commandment.

THE LAST EVENING AT HOME.

Boys, don't you know how bright it looks when you run in, a cold evening, from your play on Libby Hill? The father and mother there, the little sisters,—perhaps the lamp not

lighted yet, but a fire to warm your cold hands, and make your cheeks redder still.

With gas-lights, fine furniture, and many rooms, it is only, after all, a real home, as it may be made happy by love and kindness; and with the few rooms, or the one room, one lamp, and perhaps not quite enough fire for the mother, father, and all the children, it is as the hearts, glad and thankful to be together, make it a real home.

The room I show you now looked very snug, as if for a happy family; but happiness is often not where it ought to be, and where it might be. A little table drawn up before the fire for supper; three plates ready there; the tea-kettle steaming away, as if it cannot wait much longer; the lamp turned down very low; but the red light from the fire shines on the bright tins and china in the cupboard, on the old, high clock in the corner, the few Bible pictures on the wall, and there, over the mantle, the ten commandments. There is comfort,

cheer and welcome in the old room, as you can see, for some one yet to come.

Then the light seems to rest with blessing, on two figures sitting there, waiting, with anxious faces, for the "some one" dear to their hearts. The white hair parts over the gentle mother's face,—hair whitened by care; for she looks strong enough still, to bear trouble, and the face is a face of trust and hope, because prayer is in the mother's heart for her only child. The father, with his gray hair combed straight back, is older than the white-haired mother, and he looks older than he is,—too old to work in the machine-shop near by, as he tries to do, day after day. Jerry Hooper has had a life to break him down, for Silas, his only boy, for years, spent all his old father could make, and he has had to struggle very hard; the little help the son gives now, given with many a curse for the patient father and mother waiting there, with love to the last, and prayer to the last, for their boy.

A step is heard, and the mother turns up the lamp, and listens,—her face full of light, not from the fire-light, or the lamp-light, but from the mother's joy! for is not this son coming to his home, the only child of her love?

A great, strong, well-dressed, red-faced man comes in. He would have been handsome, if he had not had a hard, cruel, selfish look,—the look, boys, that makes a man look like a wild beast, instead of a man.

“Well, old coves, how is it with you? Something to give a man to eat?”

“O Silas, only say that you are glad to see us, after being away so long!” and the mother's arms are around his neck, and her dear face asks just one kind word from the son coming home.

“No whining! that white head ought to teach you better. You ought to have learned, by this time, that I don't want any nonsense.”

“Silas, do you dare to speak so to your mother?”

But that mother gives one pleading touch to

the old man's hand, as she passes, and he says not another word. She falls out of sight a moment, to hide her tears, and quietly brings the supper, kept waiting so long.

They eat,—or the son eats, and as he had talked—like a brute, rather than a man.

After the plates and cups had been moved, and the table set back, Jerry Hooper looks long at his son, his good old face full of sorrow.

“Silas, are you always to be like this?”

“No, I expect to be going down, about as fast as you say you are going up.”

With low, trembling voice, the poor father says, “Silas, you don't come to us to help us, but I must tell you that the rent is to be paid. I am worn out—your father! and this is your mother. Can you let us be turned away? Can you see your mother suffer?”

The son jumps up, and stands with a face of fury, in front of the only father and mother life could give him.

“You talk to me of father and mother and rent, and I am up to my ears in trouble!”

It is the mother who speaks, and so tenderly! “Silas, what is your trouble now? Tell me, and let me do something for you.”

“It is enough for me to settle, I’m sure; but,” with a laugh, “what can you do? If you want to know, it’s just this: I asked John Wren for money for you, and he was soft-hearted enough to give it to me, taking a claim on my share of the mill. This is bad enough, for one night! At Jim Scott’s, I cleared out that, and a good deal more, with poor luck at cards; but Jim knows that about me to put me right in the penitentiary, if I don’t pay him all I owe him, and that’s the big trouble; so it’s a straight cut for me! When folks “wear out,” they have just got to hang up, and make an end of it. As to keeping you in clover, when you are worn out, why, I say, make a start for the better world you have talked so much

about." And turning as he goes, "You have seen the last of me!"

He looks up, and above the mantel, his eyes fall a moment on words, where the light seemed to point for him; and those words were, "Honor thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee."

The mother stretches out her arms: "Silas, O my son!—my dear son, come back!" But he is gone; and this was his last evening at home!

CHAPTER VII.

THE MURDERER.

THE Hoopers lived near one of our Virginia depots, where houses were scattered over the hills, to be close to the railroad.

Silas Hooper walked steadily on for a while, and then, as if with a new idea, went off, hiding through the trees, until he stood by a square white house, with a long porch covered with vines, and a look of comfort, as if people might be glad to live there—as if it was a “real home.” He looks through the blind of a low window, and sees the mother already gone to rest; one hand on a child’s crib—a baby sleeping there—two other children on a little bed. Haven’t you seen your little sisters and brothers, boys, look when asleep, as if dreaming of heaven; not as older people look, who have sinned and suffered more? Surely the man

looking in ought to have had better thoughts put in his heart, but he only sees that the one he wanted is not there. He moves further, and stops at the window of another room, and he stands there only a moment. John Wren sleeps yet on that sofa in the little parlor; the fire dying out, but the lamp still burning shows a face, not as peaceful and pure, perhaps, as a little child's, but the face of an honest man, who, doing his best in his duty to God, was able "to do unto all men, as he would they should do unto him."

Silas Hooper, with one pull of his strong arm, has the shutter open, and, with a spring, is by the man he owes; and the man who has, he remembers, the money to pay the next morning, in wages to the mill-hands. Not a soul near, except the sleeping wife and children. He don't stop to think. The sofa-cushion is pressed tightly on the eyes never to open again; and his fingers fasten on the throat, until no cry for help can come; and

there he stands, until the eyeballs almost start from the man's head, and, with the last struggle, he is dead! The money is in his pockets, and the son of a good father and mother, now a murderer, seizes the notes, and rushes down the road like one mad. No man to see him in his terrible sin; but God sees him, and keeps him back, perhaps to be saved by his mother's prayers. A trap for bears—for it was near the mountains—caught his leg, as he was running, certain that he could catch the night train for the West. There he was found; the money was found on him, and he was put in jail the next morning.

My boys, a man might not be caught and punished by law, but he could never forget the face of the dying human being. I remember passing a man very often; a great, strong-looking man, who always seemed startled and frightened, as if something followed him. One day a friend whispered, "They say he killed a man in California; it wasn't proved on

him, though." And this man ever saw, right by him, the last look of the man he had killed; not that the one dead had the power to come back, and to be always a shadow, very near him, but he constantly remembered the look of the dying—dead by his hand.

When you grow older, if in great anger, you ever feel like taking the life of a fellow-creature, try to think how it must be with you. God may forgive you, but you can never forget!

CHAPTER VIII.

THE LAST EVENING IN JAIL.

JERRY HOOPER and his wife had been with their guilty son every day. All through his awful curses, with the pain of his wounded leg, and through his trial, his patient mother had soothed and comforted and prayed. His sentence, that he was to be hung, seemed the last; but it was not the last for her. Now only a few hours! At ten o'clock the next day her boy must pass from her sight for ever! but with one hope, she staid by his side, her faith never failing.

For days he had been more quiet, and had seemed to love to have her near him.

Boys, I cannot bear to tell you what I heard about the son's last hours with his mother. When they came in the morning, they found him on his knees by that mother, and her face

was the face of a mother who had found her son and given him to his God!

And Mary Hooper, the mother of a murderer, lived a year, or more, and rejoiced for the son God had forgiven, and, in mercy, had taken to Himself!

Again, I say, remember, and keep in your hearts, the sixth commandment,—“Thou shalt not kill!”

* * * * *

The next commandment, “Thou shalt not commit adultery,” may well be added here. This means that we must keep our thoughts pure; loving only the good, and pure, and true; loving only what God has given us to love; seeking only the hopes, the joys, the fears that He has intended for us. Our thoughts will never, then, lower our fellow creatures; will then ever prove pure, honest thoughts, to make ourselves and others better. Well, my boys, may we put the two commandments

together, as chiefly showing the greatest of Christian virtues, in our duty to mankind.

“And now abideth faith, hope, and charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.” In keeping truly the sixth and seventh commandments, you may well feel that you pass beyond the law given to you there, into that charity greater than all! Some day, you can ask a minister of the gospel, who can explain it better than I can, the meaning of that “charity” spoken of in the Bible, and you may understand what I want to teach you about these commandments.

CHAPTER IX.

“THOU SHALT NOT STEAL.”

I WANT to take you back to the town where Jim Lawson and Joy Hope lived.

I told you of children, who looked out on green fields, and played in the lanes, and waded in the river, as if a town was not right there, so near to them. You must go with me now to the upper edge of this same town, where the houses were closer together, still not the houses of the rich people of the little town, and the larger stores, too, were on the other streets.

In a garret room, with a great many steps to climb to get there, a mother sat with three boys.

The two older boys worked at a factory to sort rags, and had just come in.

The boys, who had been sitting over the

rags all day, with just the little dinner they carried with them, and just a little time to eat it, felt that they never were so hungry before. The little brother was hungry, waiting for them, and so they went right to work with their bread and milk, and until they had done, they didn't see how sorry and tired their mother looked. They loved their mother so much!

“Why, what's the matter, mother?”

“I was thinking, Charlie, of my old home in Richmond, of how much money I spent there, and how it would help us now.”

John, the biggest boy, says; “Mother, just wait and see.” And he looks very strong and big, to his little brother, who listens, without knowing what it all means.

“You know, children, when your father went away, and I found we had so little money, I moved out here, thinking we could do better in a smaller place, but everything has gone wrong. It is nothing but work! If I had

only saved money when we had it, to give you a chance for schooling."

Little Willie climbs on her knee: "Mamma, don't be so sorry 'bout doing bad; sposen we start being good now."

"That's it, Willie. I'll not give up! I *will* make money, and my boys shall have a chance yet, and with the best."

She looked so pretty, and so white, and so "tired," the three children felt that they must, somehow, help her, and not wait for her to do so much for them; but they didn't know how to help her, and mother and children didn't think once about asking God's help.

The winter was very hard for them. Mrs. Spencer, the young mother, was taken sick in January, and the two older boys had to spend many days at home, out of work. The neighbors were very kind to them, but it was still a hard winter.

John was sometimes employed by an old Jew to mind his store, when he went out, for

the Spencer boys were taught by their mother to be such gentlemen, everybody trusted them.

John stood by Mr. Rose's open desk one Saturday evening, looking at the heaps of money. Old Mr. Rose might ask him to stay that evening, and what would not five dollars buy for mother? But, if he waited, they would know he took it; so, in a moment, "for mother," he thought, the money was in his hand.

Mr. Rose could not see John where he was looking over the week's bills, and presently he said: "John, stay here a while, for me to get the Saturday's market."

"I can't stay—indeed I can't—I must go to mother."

When John Spencer got home, no longer an honest boy for his mother's pride, it was late, and kind people near them had sent food to last until Monday; so he put the money in his pocket, and pinned it tightly there, for that dear mother's breakfast Monday, and for dinner, breakfast, and supper, for many days. He

tried to be glad and to think that he had done right; for while these boys had been taught to be gentlemen, they had not been taught to keep God's commandments.

When Sunday came, John could not get over the idea that he had taken what did not belong to him; for it was the first time. As he wandered round the town, he went into a room where Christian people had opened a Sunday-school. He had sometimes been there before, and he thought he might learn there that it was right, after all, to take "just a little money for mother."

It was a Sunday-school like the one at the Old Market Hall, with boys sticking pins into the good boys, talking loud, whistling, and fighting—"only a little"—but enough to interrupt, and make the teachers look troubled and worn out. But, here and there, would be a boy or girl willing to learn; and I am very sure that, one by one, all will grow to love the

patient teaching, if teachers and scholars live and learn long together.

John Spencer sat down, scarcely seeming to notice, until he heard a teacher call out, "Children, try to say the ten commandments." She had to read them—the longer ones—for they would not even try to say them; but the short commandments were easy to them, and John heard a sweet voice say, in clear tones, that seemed to call to him for answer, "Thou shalt not steal." Then the teacher explained how wrong it was to steal.

John listened, and when he went down those steps, and out with the crowd, he said, "I can't spend this, even for mother." All that evening he was more and more sorry, until that night, he felt that he couldn't keep the money any longer, and he stole out to Mr. Rose's store. It was easy to get in at the back window. "They had not finished locking up," he thought.

As he was about to put the money on the

desk, something sharp struck his arm, and he fell. The windows had been left open on purpose, and the bullet intended for another, had struck the real thief.

“If I had only known,” said poor Mr. Rose, “the policeman wouldn’t have been there.”

He was taken back to his mother—the boy who had said to her, “Wait and see.” But it was the boy, too, who had gone to bed almost every night of his life, without a thought of God.

CHAPTER X.

UNCLE ZACK.

IT was an old gray house, set back in a large green yard, near where the Spencers lived. The father, mother, and children were sitting at their breakfast-table.

“Father, have you heard about John Spencer?” asks William Lee.

“Yes, and I am not surprised to hear it. Those are nice, quiet boys, but they have not been trained by their mother to understand and keep God’s commandments.”

“Mrs. Lee says, I hear the father is coming back to them, and it may be best for them all, to have this trouble to bear. I think, children, Uncle Zack would tell you that it must be for the best.”

“Let’s go to see Uncle Zack,” asks Eddie, and Mary and Annie say, “Yes; please go, Wil-

liam, and just after breakfast, for it's holiday at school?"

With the loving good-bye to father and mother, of children who knew well how to obey the fifth commandment, they were off to Uncle Zack's—an old colored man they dearly loved, who lived at the end of their street.

Uncle Zack was sitting at the door "Like one cat," he said, "sunshine nuff for Zack!"

The Lee party was always followed by other boys and girls, to hear Uncle Zack talk; but William and Eddie Lee were his favorites, for they were ever ready to read the Bible—right there, at his elbow. William is soon reading the fourteenth chapter of St. John's gospel.

"The book alays opens jest thar," Uncle Zack says.

He listens, too happy to talk, but at the words, "Let not your heart be troubled,"

"Chillen, sartain dat's enuff; ef we lef our trouble behine dar wid Jesus, wat we want more, 'ceptin we jes wants to go ahead. We

kan't sot down an' do nuthin. 'Pray widout ceasin.' Keep rite close to God, or human nater will be a slippin' an' er slidin', rite back whar she cum frum. 'Pray widout ceasin'. I tells you, chillen, sum uv ole Satan's ways has to be prayed agin mity hard! Thar's tellin' storys; let em take one good start, an' dey thrives on you, like taters in a tater-hill. I has sumthin to tell you 'bout dis here. I was a sittin' here 'fore you cum. I think I was mos' sleep, but I hears a fuss, an' sum boys had start to play ball in dat lot next to de meetin'-house. Well, I seed a boy's ball knock rite in de fine red an' blue winder, an' he seed it too; now t'other boy, an' he was dat pore boy, Tom Gregg; his ball went by, an' didn't do one bit of harm, but he was a winkin' uv his eyes, an' he didn't see wich ball broke de Postle's hed rite off, in de red an' blue winder. De lice-man cum along, an' tuk Tom Gregg, 'caus he seed his ball as he cum round de corner, an'

t'other boy sed not one word, an' he aint gwine to say nuthin eider."

"You going to tell on him, Uncle Zack?"

"I dun kno; dat's on my mine," says Uncle Zack. "Tom Gregg's mother is mity pore, an' kant pay dat fine. Chillen, I wants to hear dat mandment I speaks uv now. Giv it to me out uv Scriptur."

Eddie reads, "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor."

"Now de English of dat is dis here,—don't you tell storys!—lies, I calls em, an' dey makes a boy mean, 'fore he kno uv it. You see it's jes' as bad to keep de truff back as to tell an out an' out lie. Eff a boy tells lies, he aint gwine to stop at nuthin; an' dere's anuther meanness dat cums up close arter it. Dat's de las mandment; read dat for Zack."

"Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house; thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his

ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbor's."

"O chillen!"—and he rises in his chair in his excitement—"trus' de Lord; feel sartain dat He kno' bes' how to vide out. Don't wan' nuthin longin' to t'other folks, for greef an' sorrow, an' great trouble mus' cum uv it! T'was wen de Lord set us free, wen I was livin' on my ole marster's land, down near Melia Courthouse. Well, I looked over at Brudder Wilson's orchid an' tater-patch, wich want on my marster's land, til I got to hankerin' arter dat orchid an' tater-patch, too bad to liv. I did sumthin' mean to make Brudder Wilson sel me dat house of hisn, wid de orchid an' tater-patch; an,' chillen, my ole ooman couldn't stan' seein' me—a preecher of nigh forty year—go agin de Scriptur, an' she got sicker an' sicker til she died. Well, de six boys an' gals, wid Scriptur names, was all sold away at de South, an' when my ole ooman went, I giv de orchid an' tater-patch, wid de house too, back

to Brudder Wilson; an,' chillen, sence dat day I has tried to trus' in de Lord!"

The tears were rolling down Uncle Zack's face, and some of the children were crying.

"Don't you cry, my chillen, for Zack, but let lone t'other folks' things, an' trus' de Lord! Want apple longin to nuther boy, an' it leave a very bad tast! I likes white chillen,—you knows I does. I likes all white folks, an' dey bothers me now."

"How, Uncle Zack?" asks William Lee.

"Why, you see, a rage for an idee runs through, like yaller fever, an' de small-pox, an' de hooping-cough, an' de measles, an' de chillen's teething."

"That aint catching, Uncle Zack."

"No, I guess 'taint, Miss Annie, but it's pretty nigh, it seems like; so many takes to it. An' jes so wid an idee; an' it's that way bout edecating colored folks. I tells de white folks, caus I loves em, dey bes spread deyseves an' edecate der own trash. You see, de colored

folks follers, an' de white folks leads,—dats dere nater,—an' when sin takes a tite grip on white folks, widout ligion, dey goes fas' an' dey goes fur. I don't mean disrespec', boys, I means dis: de white folks bes edecate deyseves wile dey edecates de colored folks. Dey better go high an' low, an' giv' out ligion to all; for sin, sartain sure, can tak' a good hold on white folks, ef dey tries to go long widout ligion. De colored folks follers, an' de white folks leads, so let de white folks what's got 'ligious larning, edecate all dey got on han', an' den dey will go straight ahed together. I is 'trubled," says Uncle Zack, looking very solemn, "but de Lord will pervide."

I hope Uncle Zack may make the boys and girls I write for, feel even more kindly to the good old colored people around us. I remember such a family as the Lees, and I wish I could tell you all about them, but I can only say a few more words.

This "talk" about the ten commandments is intended to show that they were written as much for the people who live now, as for the people who lived in the time of the Old Testament. You must feel that they are surely to guide you, my boys, every day you live, and if you act from this belief and teaching, you must grow up good and useful men.

YIELD not to temptation,
For yielding is sin;
Each victory will help you
Some other to win;
Fight manfully onward,
Dark passions subdue;
Look ever to Jesus,
He'll carry you through.

Ask the Saviour to help you,
Comfort, strengthen, and keep you;
He is willing to aid you,
He will carry you through.

Shun evil companions,
Bad language disdain;
God's name hold in rev'ence,
Nor take it in vain;
Be thoughtful and earnest,
Kind-hearted and true;
Look ever to Jesus,
He'll carry you through.

To him that o'ercometh
God giveth a crown;
Through faith we shall conquer,
Though often cast down;
He who is our Saviour
Our strength will renew;
Look ever to Jesus,
He'll carry you through.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 027 261 052 6