

CHILD'S INDEX.



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CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS.

BY THE EDITOR.

“FATHER, whose picture is that, with so much beard and hair, and with such a singular dress?” Thus spoke Albert Lamar to his father, at twelve years of age. “That is, my son, a picture of the great Christopher Columbus, who discovered America in the year 1492.” “Do tell us about it, father,” said little Lucia.

“Yes, yes—tell us about Columbus and the discovery of America!” exclaimed Gusso and Johanna; and they all crowded around their father.

“Very well, my children,” he replied, “I will do so with pleasure, as I desire to give you information.”

Christopher Columbus was born in Genoa, Italy, in 1455. He soon showed great fondness for geographical knowledge, and a strong passion for a sailor's life. And as early as his fourteenth year he became a sailor, on the Mediterranean Sea.

“Wait, father, till I get the map. I want to find Genoa and the Mediterranean Sea.”

“Very well, Albert; I am glad to see you so desirous of being correctly informed. You see Genoa there, on the Mediterranean, in the Northwestern part of the Italian Peninsula.”

Now look over here, on the Atlantic Ocean, in the Northwestern part of Spain you will find the small country of Portugal, which was attracting much attention at that time by sending out ships on voyages of discovery. Well, this attracted Columbus, and he went to Lisbon, the Capital of Portugal, and there he got married. He became now fixed in the opinion that the world was round and that the shortest road to India was to sail due west, across the Atlantic ocean. You see the Portuguese were sending ships to India, around Cape Horn, the Southern point of Africa, which was a long and dangerous voyage. But the genius of Christopher Columbus embraced the idea that there was a great continent on the other side of the globe connected with India, and, as the world was round, he hoped to reach that continent by sailing boldly across the wide Atlantic.

“But did not everybody know the world was round?” asked Gusso.

“No, my daughter. The idea was hooted at by many, and Columbus was called a crazy enthusiast, for thinking such a thing.”

“Well, what did he do?”

“He applied to his native city, Genoa, for help to enable him to cross the Atlantic;—but he applied in vain. Then he sought to interest John II, of Portugal, in the project; but this effort was fruitless, also. He then went to the Court of Spain to beg assistance. At last after eight years of trying he succeeded; and Ferdinand and Isabella placed three small vessels and one hundred and twenty men at his disposal.”

“But, father, what made them so backward in helping him?” inquired Albert.

“Because they doubted his assertions. No one believed there was any land on this side of the globe. The whole project appeared like the dream of a crazy man. At length, however, Columbus set out with his three small vessels. It was early in the morning of Friday, the 3d day of August, 1492, that he set sail from Palos, in Spain. He was now fifty-six years old; and for eighteen years, amidst poverty, neglect and ridicule he had been trying to carry out this great enterprise. Day after day they sailed until his crew threatened to mutiny and throw him overboard. But at midnight of October the 11th, the joyful cry of LAND, was raised, just after Columbus himself had discovered it and pointed it out to others. It was the Island of Guanahani. Columbus sprang upon the land, the next day, and threw himself upon his knees and returned thanks to God. And while the natives crowded around him in silent wonder, his own men threw themselves at his feet and begged his forgiveness.

O, it was a proud day for Columbus!—Drawing his sword, he planted the royal standard of Castile and Aragon in the soil and took possession of the land, in the name of Ferdinand and Isabella.

On his return to Spain, he reached Palos on the 15th of March, 1493. He re-entered the harbor amid the shouts of the people, the ringing of bells, and the thunder of cannon. And when he repaired to Barcelona, where the King and Queen were, he entered the city at the head of a triumphal procession, with the productions of the newly-discovered countries carried before him. He was seated on a chair next to the throne; and there, proudly conscious of his merits, the newly-created Grandee of Spain gave an account of his adventures and discoveries. He afterwards made four voyages; but he had many enemies, who caused him to be treated with many indignities and with much humiliation. He died at Valladolid, on the 15th of May, 1506, in the 70th year of his age.

He was one of the greatest men the world ever saw. In appearance he was tall, muscular, engaging in his presence and of an elevated and dignified demeanor. His face was long, his nose aquiline and his eyes of a light gray color. At thirty years his hair became white from care and trouble. In diet and apparel he was moderate and simple; in discourse eloquent; engaging and amiable with strangers, and amiable and full of suavity in domestic life. He was naturally irritable in temper, but he subdued this infirmity by the benevolence and generosity of his heart. “Throughout his life he was noted for a strict attention to the duties of religion; nor did his piety consist in mere forms, but partook of that lofty and solemn enthusiasm, with which his whole character was strongly tinged. Of a great and inventive genius, a lofty and noble ambition, his conduct was characterized by the grandeur of his views and the magnanimity of his spirit.”

WRITTEN FOR THIS CHILD'S INDEX.

GRANDPA'S STORY, OR JULIA THORNTON.

BY UNCLE DAVYON.

(Continued.)

“TEACHERS are but men,” repeated the old man; “and sometimes I think they are more liable to go wrong than other men, in things that belong to religion.”

“Why, Grandpa, it seems to me they don't have anything else to do but to study and find out and tell us what is right. How can they be wrong?”

“They might be right, my child; if they would only be guided by the Bible; but they are apt to follow Mr. Wesley or Mr. Calvin, or Doctor Dwight, or Doctor Somebody else, instead of Christ. If they were all right they would be all alike in their faith and their practice—all alike in their

church order and ordinances. So we would have only one church, with one Lord, one faith and one baptism.” But though this is so plain to me now, I don't know that I would ever have found it out but for the heavenly wisdom of my sweet little niece. She was indeed a wonderful child.”

As he said this, the old man leaned his head back against his chair and closed his eyes. Lucy and the little children knew him too well to speak or in any way disturb him. He had gone away in his mind the days when little Julia used to climb upon his knee and put her soft hands on his face, and look so lovingly into his eyes, and talk so like an angel to his listening ears. He would open his eyes again when he came back, and then they could speak to him again. Lucy began to study about what she would say.

It was not very long before she looked for tear stole down his wrinkled face and the smile of hope and love gathered around his aged mouth. And Grandpa opened his eyes and looked fondly at the little group about his feet.

“What were you going to tell us about Cousin Julia, Grandpa?” asked Lucy, as his eye rested on her.

“Julia! Oh yes; I remember now. The Lord said truly, ‘Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise.’ What were we talking about, my child?—Grandpa is getting old, and sometimes he forgets what he says.”

“It was what Cousin Julia told you about the church, or something like that, wasn't it, Grandpa?”

“No; not what she told me about the church, but what she told me about the Bible. That was what opened my blind eyes. That was what made all things so plain and easy to understand.”

“Tell us how it was, Grandpa.”

“Yes, children, I will try to make it all as plain to you as my little earth-angel made it to me. Strange that a man must learn wisdom from a child! But this is what the Saviour taught—‘Except ye be converted and become like little children, ye cannot enter into the kingdom of God.’ Not like them in ignorance, but like them in simple trust, like them in believing all God says, and letting all his words have their plain and simple meaning.”

“What did Julia say, Grandpa?”

“Why, one day, when I had been greatly troubled, and had been praying much that God would show me the way in which I must go; I sat down with a sad heart, and was looking into the fire, thinking first about the Methodists and then about the Presbyterians, and trying to make up my mind which church I ought to join, little Julia came softly to my knee and looked up into my face, and said,

“Uncle John, what have you been crying about?”

“I have not been crying, my love, but I am greatly perplexed.”

“That means troubled; don't it, Uncle John?”

“Yes, Julia, I am in trouble. I want to unite with the people of God. I think he has converted my soul and made me a new creature. I feel that it is my duty to profess my love to him before men, and I don't know just where or how I ought to do it.”

“What makes you think so, Uncle John?”

“Why, it seems to me that if the Bible was at all plain in regard to it, all good men would be agreed. But you see how it is, my little one. The Methodists are good people, and they say the Bible teaches that their church is the right one. The Presbyterians are good people, and they say the Bible is all on their side. The Episcopalians are good people, some of them, at least, and they say the Bible teaches that their church is the only true church. And the Baptists are said to be a very good, honest sort of people, though I don't know much about them; and they say the Bible is plain as words can

make it on their side. Now, what am I to do? Who shall decide for me, when the Doctors differ so much, and all go to the same Bible?”

“But, Uncle John, the Bible must be plain, for God would not make a law which nobody could understand. And it must be all one way, for God would not be on both sides. What does the Bible say, Uncle John?”

She asked it so naturally and so simply, and it seemed so necessary to answer it, that I was ashamed and vexed that I had not at first thought of this way of settling the question.

“What does the Bible say?” I had been studying what Doctors of Divinity said, and what preachers said, and thinking where most of my best friends were found, and where I would most enjoy myself, as a church member; but I saw that I had nothing at all to do with all this. The only question was, What does the Bible say? Which church does the Bible command me to join? Which one is that which was ordained by our Lord Jesus Christ, and established by his holy Apostles?

“I hardly know, my little darling,” I replied, “what the Bible does say. I am sorry that I never thought of going there to learn what I must do. But I am afraid it will give me but little help after all.”

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

CHRISTMAS CAROL.

[In the Chorus for “Brothers” may be substituted “Sisters” or “Christians.”]

I.

Carol, but with gladness,
Not in songs of earth:
On the Saviour's birth.

Hallowed be our mirth:
While a thousand blessings,
Fill our hearts with glee,
Christmas-day we'll keep, the
Feast of Charity.

Carol, Brothers, carol,
Carol joyfully,
Carol the good tidings,
Carol merrily:
And pray gladcome Christmas,
For all good Christian men.
Carol, Brothers, carol,
'Tis Christmas day again.

At the bounteous table,
Think of those who've none,
The widow and the orphan,
Hungry and alone.
O, then, liberal offerings
To the Altar-bring,
Let the poor and needy
Christmas carols sing.

Carol, &c.

3.

Listening angel music
Discord sure must cease,
Who dare hate his brother
On this day of peace?
While the Heavens are telling
To mankind good will,
Only love and kindness
Every bosom fill.

Carol, &c.

4.

Let our hearts responding
To the Seraph band,
With this morning's sunshine,
Bright in every land,
Word and deed and prayer,
Speed the grateful sound,
Telling “Merry Christmas!”
All the world around!

Carol, &c.

A little sin may at once bar the door of heaven, and open the door of hell.

The Child's Index.

MACON, GEORGIA.

SAMUEL BOYKIN, Editor.

THE LAWTON FAMILY.

Third Sabbath Night Continued.

(Independence of the Churches.)

“What do you mean by a church?” asked William Harris, “There is a Presbyterian church, and a Methodist church, and an Episcopal church. Are they not churches? And is not each independent of the other?”

Mr. Stevens replied, “Remember, William, we are trying to find out what kind of churches there is in the times of the apostles. You know we have agreed to make them our model, because we believe the model of a church given in the Bible must be right. And if the churches or church establishments of modern times differ from the New Testament churches, we must believe that they are not formed altogether on the New Testament model, and therefore not altogether right. Now the very reason why I thought it ought to talk about the independence of the churches first, is because, I think, on an examination of the New Testament, we will find that there were a great many churches in the time of the apostles, and each church was distinct from every other church and independent of every other church. Now look in the Testament, each one of you, while I call out and read the passages to prove this position. Turn to Acts 8: 1—“And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem.” Acts 13: 1—“Now there was in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers.” 1 Corinthians 1: 2—“Unto the church of God which is at Corinth.” &c. Revelation 2: 1—“Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write,” &c. Revelation 3: 1—“And unto the angel of the church at Sardis write,” &c. I might read a good many more passages like these to show that in every town or city where there was an assembly of christians united together for the worship of God that assembly of christians was called a church. Let us read two or three verses in the 14th chapter of Acts, beginning at the 21st verse—“And when they had preached the gospel to that city, and had taught many, they returned again to Lystra, and to Iconium and Antioch, confirming the souls of the disciples and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must, thro' much tribulation, enter into the kingdom of God. And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord on whom they believed.” You see, now, that the assembly of christians who were organized in each place for the purpose of worshipping God and for the enjoyment of fellowship with each other, and with Christ in his institutions, was called a church. And each of these churches was distinct from and independent of each other.”

“How do we know that?” inquired William.

“Let us look into the New Testament and try to find out if it is not so,” answered Mr. Stevens. “Turn to 2d Corinthians, 12: 18—“And what is it wherein ye were inferior to other churches, except it be that I myself was not burdensome to you.” Now turn to Philippians, 4: 15—“Now, ye Philippians, know also that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only.” Don't you see that each church gave or not, as it chose? Romans, 16: 16—“The churches of Christ salute you.” 1st Corinthians, 16: 20—“The churches of Asia salute you.” Does not that look as if the churches were distinct from each other?”

“It certainly does,” replied William.

“It appears very natural for one body of christians to salute another that is separate and distinct. Now read 2d Corinthians, 8: 23,” continued Mr. Stevens—“Whether any do inquire of Titus, he is my partner and fellow-helper, concerning you; or our brethren be inquired of, they are the messengers of the churches, and the glory of Christ.” Does it not also appear natural for separate and distinct churches to hold intercourse by messengers, as was the case here, where certain churches sent messengers to the church at Corinth?”

“Certainly.”

“Well this was precisely the case. But let us go on. Read, now, Acts 9: 81—“Then had the churches rest throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified, and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied.” Does not that give you the idea that there were a good many separate and distinct churches in Judea, Galilee and Samaria? Now read Galatians, 1: 1, 2—“Paul an Apostle, and all the brethren which are with me, unto the churches of Galatia.” 2d Corinthians, 10: 10—“The grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia.” 1st Corinthians, 16: 10—“The churches of Asia salute you.” Well, now, children, all these passages show that, at the time the apostles wrote, every church was a body of christians separate and distinct from every other church. You have just seen that when all the christians of a province or country are spoken of, they are not called one large church, as the church of Judea, or the church of Galatia; but they are spoken of as the churches throughout all Judea, the churches of Galatia.” You cannot find in the whole New Testament any phrase or expression such as the “church of Judea,” or “the church of Asia,” answering to the modern phrase “Church of England,” “Church of Scotland.” Nor is there any expression that would lead you to suppose that there was any connection of churches into an organization like the “Methodist” or “Presbyterian churches” of the present day.”

(To be continued.)



IS SLAVERY RIGHT?

“FATHER, is Slavery right?” Thus asked Edward Gray of his father. Mr. Gray was the owner of a plantation, and he and Edward were standing one November morning observing the negroes picking cotton, as you see them in the above picture. Mr. Gray was a pious and wealthy man, owning many acres of land and a large number of slaves. Edward was an intelligent youth about seventeen years old. He had just returned from Connecticut, where he had been at school since he was twelve years old. He was spending a few months at home, intending to return North to finish his education. While there he had heard much said against slavery, and though he did not believe his father would do anything wrong, yet he was not quite satisfied that slavery was right, but he wanted to know how that fact was proved, and therefore he asked the question, IS SLAVERY RIGHT?

“Yes, my son, it is right. If it were not, I would free my slaves as early as possible.”

“But, father, a great many wise and good people at the North think it is wrong and very sinful. May they not be right as well as you? How am I to know whether you or they are right, when they say it is sinful and you say it is not?”

“If, my son, I can prove from the Bible that slavery is right, will it satisfy you?”

“Certainly, father, for whatever the Bible teaches is God's authority, and all must be convinced by it.”

“We will return home immediately and settle this question as soon as we can get a Bible.”

They rode home together, and entered Mr. Gray's study.

“Take down my large Bible,” said Mr. Gray to Edward, and turn to Gen. 9: 25 to 27: “A servant of servants shall he be to his brethren. And he said blessed be the Lord God of Shem, and Canaan shall be his servant. God shall enlarge Japheth and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant.”

“Here, my son, is the beginning of slavery. Is it not of God? Did he not put Canaan under bondage to Shem and Japheth? And if God did it, then it was right. Abraham was called the father of the

faithful, the friend of God, and yet he owned more than a thousand slaves, who were born in his house and bought with his money!”

“But, father, was slavery intended to last always?”

“We will answer this question from the same authority. Turn over to the Book of Leviticus, chapter 25: 44-46 verses and read.”

Edward turned and read, “Both thy bondmen and thy bond-maids, which thou shalt have shalt be of the heathen that are round about you; of them shall ye buy bond-men and bond-maids. Moreover of the strangers that do sojourn among you, of them shall ye buy, and of their families that are with you, which they begat in your land; and they shall be your possession. And ye shall take them as an inheritance for your children after you, to inherit them for a possession, and they shall be your bondmen forever.”

“Now, my son, read the 4th Commandment, Exodus, 20: 8-11—just read the 10th—[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.] Now read the Tenth Commandment—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, &c.

“Now, my son, these Commandments were given for the regulation of men's conduct towards God, and towards fellow beings, for all time, and for every age. If slavery had been wrong, God would have said so, but He puts them in the same list of property, with houses and cattle, and says we must not covet them when belonging to our neighbor.”

“But, father, while I admit that the Scriptures I have read say that slavery shall last forever, may it not be wrong in this gospel age?”

“If so, my son, Jesus, or his apostles, would have said so during their ministry or in some of their writings. Suppose you turn to 1 Tim. 6: 1 to 3, and I read.”

“Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honor, that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed. And they that have believing masters let them not despise them, because they are brethren, but rather do them service, because they are faithful and beloved, partakers of the benefit. These things teach and exhort. If any man teach otherwise and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness, he is proud, knowing nothing, but dotting about questions and strifes of words.” &c.

“Here, my son, we are taught by the Spirit of God,

- 1. That a slave who dishonors his master blasphemes the name and doctrine of God.
- 2. That if the master is a christian, the slave is to do the more willing and faithful service.
- 3. That these are the teachings of Jesus Christ, and that it is a doctrine which is according to godliness.
- 4. That those who oppose these views are proud, schismatic, railers, perverse, corrupt, and detestable of the truth.

Many other Scriptures might be quoted equally strong, but these are sufficient.”

“Well, father, I am satisfied, you are right, and slavery is right, or else the Bible is wrong, and that cannot be.”

THERE'S DANGER

That some dear little readers will miss a copy or two of the Child's Index for 1864, if their friends do not renew their subscriptions; for we cannot send a single paper after the time is out. Let all bear this in mind and send the money at once for 1864. See the new terms in this number.

THE SAVIOUR'S BIRTHDAY.

“PON the 25th of December, which, you know, is called Christmas,—Eighteen hundred and sixty-three years ago, a babe was born of poor but pious parents in a stable at Bethlehem, Palestine; he had no soft bed to sleep on, and no warm nursery to shelter him, and many when they went and saw him might have said, “Poor little babe!”

But while his birth seemed so mean and obscure, and the news of it made very little stir among men, it was a matter of great joy in heaven. The angels were full of it, and one flew down from heaven to earth, crying to the shepherds in the fields, “Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people”—not to the shepherds only, but to all, to us. And what was it? “Unto you, saith the abiding angel, “is born this day in Bethlehem a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord,” and with this a multitude of the heavenly host joined him, singing praises to God, and saying, “Peace on earth, and good will to men.” Oh, yes, the gift of a Saviour is indeed an expression of God's good will to men; it is the fruit of his love.

And now, how can we best celebrate his birthday? Presents are often given on birthdays, tokens of our love; children make presents to their parents, and parents to their children; and these gifts, whether great or small, are always highly prized; can we make a birthday gift to the Lord Jesus?—Once he was poor upon earth, but he is rich in heaven now; and can we make an offering worth his acceptance there? Yes, O yes; we, sinful and unworthy though we be, can give to the Lord Jesus our hearts. “A broken and contrite heart, O Lord, thou wilt not despise.” Our poor sinful hearts do not seem to be worth much, but He prizes them, and he says again and again, “My son, give me thy heart.” And he can cleanse and purify them, and fill them with heavenly thoughts, and love and joy and peace. Will you not celebrate the Lord's birthday by giving him your heart; and if you have already done it, by giving yourself to him more and more, and fasting upon his goodness and truth?

THE PAST YEAR

“HAS been one of great sorrow and trial to our land. Distress and suffering have stalked all through the country. Cruel war has ravaged our borders, and thousands of our friends have been killed in battle or have died in the hospitals. But as all this suffering is endured for the glorious purpose of obtaining independence, we cheerfully submit to it all, and are determined to endure ten times more rather than submit to the cruel and hard-hearted Yankees. Yet God can make the way to a peace. He can put an end to it, with all its horrors. We ought to pray to him to do so.”

But, notwithstanding the war, the little readers of the Index have much for which to be thankful. God has taken care of them and supplied all their wants, and has given them many blessings. Let them be deeply grateful, and enter upon the new year, determined to love him and serve him better than they have ever done.

CHILD'S PAPER OR NO CHILD'S PAPER.

Would there not be a great many sad faces if we were to tell all the boys and girls, whose eyes dance for joy when they see the Child's Index, that they would never see it again? We have a great many little friends. Every month we go to almost twelve thousand homes. We have been invited into all these families, but our invitation to many of these families is out at the end of the year; and we shall stay at home, or go elsewhere, if the invitation is not repeated.

Subscriptions ending with the year 1863, should be renewed as early as January.—That will be a favorable time to get new subscribers. Besides the efforts of pastors, superintendents, agents, and colporteurs, and other friends, the young readers of the Child's Index might greatly increase the circulation. If Thomas will get ten subscribers, Mary will get twenty, and Susan will get thirty, and in this way the blessings of a cheap, beautiful, religious Child's paper may be extended to every neighborhood. Instead of sad faces, there will be glad faces everywhere.

A CHILD'S REVERIE.

"Thou, God, seeest me."

Where'er my little footsteps go,
Where'er I may chance to be,
This solemn truth I surely know,
"Thou, God, seeest me."

When, bent on some forbidden sin,
I think no one is near to see,
There speaks a monitor within,
"Thou, God, seeest me."

At noonday, or in darkest night,
I cannot hide away from thee;
Oh, that the truth were my delight!
"Thou, God, seeest me."

Whene'er I feel the tempter's power,
And sin allures my heart from thee,
May I remember in that hour,
"Thou, God, seeest me."

And oh! I pray for Jesus' sake,
That I a holy child may be;
And gratefully the message take,
"Thou, God, seeest me."

THE CHILD'S INDEX.

ONE short year ago we launched the Child's Index upon the sea of popular favor, and unfurling every sail, we sent it forth upon its mission of instruction, amusement and benefit.

It has tried to teach to children the truth as Baptists believe it: it has sought to interest them by pretty stories and pictures: it has endeavored to give them correct ideas of goodness and duty—inculcating lessons of morality, obedience, respect and brotherly kindness. In general, its mission has been one of love. And now, it is about to set out upon another year's journey. Its editor intends to try to the utmost to instruct, benefit and please his young friends; and he wants them to insist at once upon having their subscription renewed for 1864; and he begs them to obtain for him as many new subscribers as they can.

He has been encouraged during the past year by a subscription of nearly 12,000, and he hopes to increase that number during the year 1864.

THE GOOD MAN'S REVENGE.

(From the German.)

WITH a bundle of dry sticks upon his shoulders, almost benumbed with cold, Samson, an old fisherman, returned from the leafless grove. Trolling laboriously along upon the snow-covered path, he passed the house of Ithamar, the forester, and was about to cross the bridge that led over the stream to his cottage.

"Stop, old man!" cried the forester, as he rushed furiously from his dwelling, "where did you get that wood? The wood is not yours; you have stolen it from me."

"Master Forester, I have not stolen it!" stammered Samson.

"Do not lie, old man!" replied Ithamar. "I felled wood only yesterday; it lies in the forest yonder; you have taken it from that heap. Give it up!"

"No, Forester," replied Samson, "I gathered it stick by stick, honestly and fairly."

"Thou liest, old gray beard!" cried Ithamar. "Give it up!"

"But look!" rejoined Samson, "they are all small dry twigs, which I picked up as I found them, scattered beneath the trees and half-buried in the snow."

"They are stolen, I say!" With these words Ithamar tore the bundle from the old man's back, and threw it over the bridge into the stream. "Now, the dispute is at an end," he said with a scornful laugh, and hurried angrily into his house.

Samson gazed after him sorrowfully, and then staggered towards his cottage, his eyes filled with tears.

A few days the air grew warmer.—The ice upon the river was broken up, and came crashing down the current, piling itself against the wooden buttresses of the bridge. Huge masses of ice and broken timbers hampered the course of the stream, and swelled its rushing waters.

Then Chalmers, Ithamar's son, came from the city and wished to cross the bridge; but he started backward, irresolute and terrified as he gazed upon the fearful spectacle. Samson himself, who was near by mending his boat, advised him not to risk his life in the attempt. Ithamar saw this. "Come boldly across!" he cried, "the bridge will not

break yet. Heaven knows what the old crumbler will put into your head next.—Come over!" Chalmers ran across.

A crashing sound was now heard, and the bridge tottered; another crash, and it sank into the water, carrying with it the unfortunate boy. An angry malediction broke from the lips of the father, a cry of lamentation from the old man, Samson; both heard above the tumult of the water!

The boy cried fearfully in the stream, and screamed for help. Clinging to a beam, half-crushed by the ice, the current bore him onward. The despairing forester ran along the bank, stamped upon the ground, and called, and wrung his hands helplessly. How could he hope that the old fisherman would risk his life to rescue his unhappy child!

But Samson, with the snow-white hair, sprang boldly into his boat, impelled it bravely through the broken ice, and the drifting timbers of the broken bridge, tore the boy from the wild current, and brought him happily to his father on the shore.

"I have bring thee thy son," he said mildly, and in a tone which would have tamed even a wolf. "See, he is safe and well, only a little frightened."

Ithamar did not venture to lift his eyes from the ground, but stood long abashed and silent. "Forgive me, worthy old man," he said, at last, while a stream of tears coursed involuntarily down his rude cheeks. "Forgive my inhuman conduct."

"For what have I to forgive thee?" replied Samson, with a friendly air. "Have I not just taken ample vengeance upon thee?"

"So, then," cried Ithamar, "an act of benevolence was thy revenge, much injured man! Is it thus, indeed, that the upright revenges an injury?"

SAVINGS OF THE LITTLE ONES.

ONE boy who paid close attention to the Scriptures, whenever he heard them read, had a great admiration of physical strength and vigor, and a correspondent desire to attain them. He was observed very frequently to wash his hands. On almost every occasion, when he could obtain water, and when there seemed no necessity on the score of neatness, he would be zealously practicing this ablation. To an enquiry into the cause of this almost constant washing of his hands, his reply was:

"I wish to grow strong."
"Do you suppose the frequent washing of your hands will give you strength?"
"Is not the Bible true?"
"Yes."

"Does it not say that he who hath clean hands shall wax stronger and stronger?"

A young child was permitted to pay a visit to his grandfather. He knew that he was highly venerated for his talents and learning, and felt a proportionate ambition to make a favorable impression. Sating himself with great deliberation, in a high chair, he crossed his short legs, and taking one small foot in his hand, and holding his head slightly on one side, looked in the face of the lofty, dignified man, and said:

"What's your opinion, sir, of the restoration of the Jews?"

"Be good, my people," said a boy between two and three years old, as, mounting upon a block in the poultry-yard, he proceeded to "preach," as he called it, to his feathered audience! "I heard you quarrel. When you were fed, you sateched away the large pieces. Tall Turkey! I saw you peck a small chicken. You did very wrong. You must all love one another, or you will not go to heaven."

"Dear nurse" said a child, "has Satan any India-rubber?"

"What do you ask such a queer question for?"

"Why, the minister told us last Sunday, we must write God's words upon our hearts; but if Satan can get any India-rubber, I am afraid he will rub them out again."

"Does God make the new moon, mother?"
"Yes, my child."

"Well, when he makes a new moon, does he not cut up the old one to make stars of?"
The astronomical theory of the dear little girl seemed to have an element of that thrifty economy which would fain see nothing wasted.

RECEIVED FOR "LITTLE JESSE."

From L. V. Currier, 50 cts; M. A. King \$1; Mattie Butler 50 cts; Mrs. M. L. Baird, from "a little S. S. class," \$2.75; Milton R. Fall \$1; "Dora," 50 cts; "Little Sabbath School," 50 cts; M. Ella N. 50 cts.

LETTERS FOR THE CHILD'S INDEX.

YACHTS FOR THE LITTLE ONES.

LITTLE BOYS:

No. 1.

IT is said that Dr. Judson could read the Bible when only three years old. Little John Ryland read a chapter in the Hebrew Bible, to Mr. Hervey, before he was five years old. He was converted when about thirteen years old, and was soon afterwards baptized. He began to preach when he was sixteen.—He preached no less than eight thousand six hundred and ninety-one sermons.

Dr. Basil Manly, Jr., was able to read the Bible so well when only three and a half years old, that he would read the Bible for his father at family prayers.

There is a boy in Alabama who learned his letters by playing with little cubical blocks on which the letters and pictures had been pasted. He knew the blocks so well that whatever picture you showed him, he would immediately tell you what letter was on the opposite side. What is still more remarkable, he learned to call the letters as correctly when upside down as when properly placed; and in that way learned to read as freely with a book upside down as when properly held. He was born in Shelby county. His father now lives in Talladega county. A. T. S. Selma, Ala.

FROM THE LITTLE ONES.

OAK HILL, Wilkes Co., Ga.,
Nov. 10, 1863.

Dear Mr. Boykin:

I have seen so many letters from the "Little Ones," in the "Child's Index," that we want to write you a letter and tell you all about our Sabbath school.

Our Sabbath school numbers only about twelve scholars. The youngest member is four years old, and the oldest, fourteen. We do not meet at a church. There are churches in our vicinity, but no Sabbath school is held at them yet. We meet every Sabbath afternoon, at Mr. D's, one of our neighbors, and Miss S and Miss A are our teachers.

We study the "Primary Bible Question book for young children." It was very difficult to get books, and we now have only three, which answer very well until we finish the second edition. The largest class will get through and review it by the end of the year. Can you tell us, Mr. Boykin, where we can get three books of the third edition of the "Primary Question book."

Ours is a very pleasant, and we intend it shall be an "evergreen Sabbath school."—The cold blasts of Fall and Winter shall not "scatter our leaves." We will put on our warm muffs, and a walk of only one mile will make the roses bloom on our cheeks.

We love the "Child's Index," and wish we could have it once a week instead of once a month.

We are going to send you a Christmas present for little Jesse Hartwell.

With much respect,
THE LITTLE SABBATH SCHOOL.

WASHINGTON, GA., Nov. 13, '63.

My Dear Mr. Boykin:

ALTHOUGH I have never seen you, yet I have thought perhaps you would not think it very foolish in such a little being as I am to write you a letter, for you must know, Mr. Boykin, that I am a reader of that interesting little paper, the INDEX,

which is such a regular visitor to our School every month. In your last, I saw that you wished to hear something from the Sabbath schools all over the country, and I thought I would write and tell you about ours, for I love the Sabbath school, and love to talk about it. Well, let me tell you, we have one of the nicest schools in the country; to be sure it is not so large as the one over in Greenville, we read so much about; but for all that, our's is a very nice one, numbering, teachers and pupils together, sixty. At the opening and close of school we always sing some of those pretty hymns in the "Ball," and I just wish, Mr. Boykin, you could hear us sometimes. I am sure if you could say nothing better, you would declare there was a plenty of noise made. If it were not for the little boys who stand in front looking back at us, I think we could do much better. About our leader says we sing best, and I suppose it is because we sing more than you look about.

Now I must tell you about our Missionary societies. For two or three years the money we contributed was sent all the way over to Africa, to educate a little heathen boy, who Mr. Bowen, the missionary, selected for us, and whom we named Jesse Mercer, but who, like many other boys named after great men, turned out very badly—that is, he ran off, and would not be educated. Now the money is given to some other good object; and we hope this year to send more money than we have ever done before to the heathen, or to our missionaries in the army, who are doing such a good work among our soldiers. But I must tell you some of the names of our societies—one we call the "Mary Reid," for our missionary who died in Africa, but who was once a teacher in our Sabbath school; one the "Henry Colley," for our dear superintendent, who a little more than a year ago fell a victim to this cruel war; then there is the "Allen Tupper," "Ever Ready," "Easy Bee," "Wee Wee," &c., and then what do you think, there is one called the "Samuel Boykin," just for you, the friend to us little folks. I am so glad you think of us, dear Mr. Boykin, and hope the paper will never, as the grown up people say, be obliged to succumb to these hard times.

I wished to tell you in this about the treat we have every Sabbath afternoon, (for our pastor, like yourself and every good man, never forgets the little folks) but I have not time now—maybe, I will do so in my next. In this you will find fifty cents; please give it to Jesse Hartwell. Perhaps I may send you some more after a while.

Good-bye; I beg your pardon for writing such a long letter.

Yours, affectionately,

DORA.

[Dora's letter is very welcome, and we will be very glad to hear from her again. Some of our other young friends may take a hint from this nice letter, how they ought to write to the CHILD'S INDEX.

RENEW SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 1864.

Those Sunday schools that subscribed for the year 1863, should renew their subscriptions in good time, or they may lose a number of the Child's Index; for we never print a greater number than we actually need for that month.

Individuals who subscribed for one year only are, also, reminded that their time is nearly out, and that they should renew their subscriptions. Single copies \$2 per year.

MENTAL BIBLE PICTURES.

No. 20.

A wild waste of waters! As far as the eye reaches a vast sheet of water is seen stretching from one side of the heavens to the other. Dull, leaden clouds cover the firmament. Upon the rolling, heaving mass there calmly floats a huge house with one window; and in all this wild, melancholy scene the eye cannot rest upon anything save that one huge floating building. At length a swiftly-flying white bird is seen rapidly approaching; it darts to the window and bends pitiously against it with its wings. A hand is reached forth: the bird is taken in; and all is again a wild, mournful scene, with no living creature visible and only that huge building floating calmly upon the heaving waters.

KEY TO MENTAL BIBLE PICTURES.

- 16. Moses on Mount Nebo.—Deuteronomy 24th chapter.
- 17. Jonah cast into the sea.—Jonah 1: 15.
- 18. Jonah vomited forth upon dry land.—Jonah 2: 10.

ANSWER TO SCRIPTURE ENIGMA No. 11.

- Gen.—Genesis 49: 19.
- Obad.—Obadiah 20.
- Deborah.—Judges 4: 5.
- Israh.—1st Kings 22: 8.
- Silam.—St. John 8: 7.
- Lily.—Matt. 6: 28.
- Olive.—Genesis 8: 11.
- Yashit.—Ezher 1: 11, 19.
- Esau.—Genesis 25: 33.
- God is love.

INCREASE OF PRICE.

We are forced to increase the price of the Child's Index for the year 1864. Therefore, all subscriptions beginning with January next or any time after that will be One Dollar for each copy. Thus, 20 copies will cost \$20, and 100 copies will cost \$100. This will apply to all those who renew their subscriptions for another year when they take five or more numbers. Single copies will be 32c.

SANTA CLAUS.

BY MRS. JANE A. M'CRIMMON.

'Twas colder than Zero on Christmas Eve night, When far off in Lapland, the great "North-ern Light," In streams of wild beauty illumined the skies, Like joy when it sparkles from innocent eyes. Old Santa Claus, seeing the hour at hand, When children get sleepy all over the land, Put eight tiny reindeer to one little sleigh, And seizing a bundle, he started away— Far over the mountain and over the snow, As light as a feather and swift as a roe.

At last on our chimney he drew up his team, And stole out as silent and soft as a dream, Least hearing his footsteps on top of the house, The children, all sleeping "as snug as a mouse."

Might wake up and catch him with pockets and hat Stuffed full of nice candy, and much more than that—

Nuts, raisins and apples, and all sorts of toys, Exactly the thing for the girls and the boys; As light as a feather he came down the flue, That seemed to grow wider to let him get through:

And there in a corner, all ranged in a row, Were four little stockings, as white as the snow.

He smiled when he saw them, and winked his old eye,

Then waited a moment, and passed them all by, To peep thro' the curtains of two little beds, Where, wrapped in sweet slumber, lay four little heads;

And he read in the faces of each little pair, Who'd acted the wisest throughout the past year.

If one had been naughty and told a white fib—

Another got angry and tore up her bib— If he had his parents neglected to mind, Or she to her playmates been rude or unkind, From them he'd have taken to give to the rest, For "Santa Claus" always gives most to the best.

But these little fellows, it seems, had done well, For how much he gave them I hardly can tell; To one he gave candy, a drum and an apple, Another a pony—a beautiful dapple— Birds, baskets and dollies, with pretty black curls,

Fruits, flowers and ribbons, he left for the girls—

If either was slighted, I cannot tell which, For all received something—and no one a wick.

"Good night, little darlings," old Santa then said,

As shaking with laughter, he turned from the bed, And mounting the chimney, he started to go, Far over the mountains and over the snow.

This happened one Christmas. I'm sorry to write,

Our ports are blockaded, and Santa, to-night, Will hardly get down here; for if he should start, The Yankees would catch him, unless he was "smart!"

They beat all the men in creation to run, And if they could get him, they'd think it fine fun.

To put him in prison, and steal the nice toys, He started to bring to our girls and our boys. But try not to mind it—tell over your jokes, Be happy and cheerful, like other good folks; For if you remember to be good and kind, Old Santa, next Christmas, will bear it in mind.

THANKING GOD.

A boy of two years old, was annoyed and perplexed by the behavior of an untrained and not very amiable guest. He resorted to various expressions of displeasure. At length he said, "I will go, and tell my God." A night or two afterward, when his nurse, having put him to bed, and heard his prayers, was about to leave him, he suddenly called out:

"Here! here! stop! come back! I have not thanked my God for making that visitor a little better boy, to-day."

GOD WATCHING.

"I do not want to go to bed," said a very young child. His mother tenderly convinced him that it was proper for him to comply with her wishes.

"But I do not like to go alone," was another argument. She assured him that he was not alone, for God, who watched over him, was ever near. He yielded to her reasoning and pleasantly obeyed.

WRITTEN FOR THE CHILD'S INDEX.

CHRISTMAS GIFT!

BY MRS. M. J. M.

CHRISTMAS Gift, papa!" exclaimed a chubby little fellow, as he bounded into the sitting room one bright, cold Christmas morning.

"Christmas gift, hey?" said Mr. Barron, as he threw the morning paper aside and caught the little fellow in his arms, imprinting a kiss on the sweet cherry lips. "Why, I thought old Santa Claus was going to bring you that, Robbie?"

"Oh, yes, he did bring me a heap of good things. My stocking stuck out all round, it was so full, but that wasn't yours, papa;—that was Santa Claus gave me them."

"Well, well! I suppose I must give you a Christmas gift, too. What shall it be—what do you want, Robbie?"

"What do I want? Why I want, I want so many things. I want a drum and a gun, and I want a soldier-belt, and a toy circus, what turns round and round, and I want a big horse, too, and—oh, a heap of things."

"Well, little gentleman, your wants are numerous. I see very plainly my Christmas present has to come out of my purse." So saying, Mr. Barron pulled out his well-filled pocket book; but suddenly stopped, saying "Why, where is Nellie?"

"Here I am, papa," said a gentle voice almost behind his chair.

"Come here, darling; don't you want papa to give you a Christmas present, too?"

"Yes, sir," said the same sweet, gentle voice, and a little arm stole lovingly around his neck.

Little Nellie had been a delicate child from her cradle. Her pale cheeks and transparent temples, where the blue veins so visibly throbbed their way, contrasted painfully with Robbie's rosy hue of health.

Mr. Barron gazed into Nellie's sweet brown eyes as he said,

"Why didn't you run and catch papa, too? Didn't you want a nice Christmas present with Robbie?"

"Yes, sir; give me one just like you give Robbie, please. Santa Claus gave me a heap of nice things this time, and I'm so glad."

"Yes," chimed in Robbie, "Santa Claus is a good man, ain't he, Nellie? Papa, Naney says he's got sixteen horses. Has he, papa? She says he drives all of 'em in his big carriage at a time. What's the reason Mr. Jeff. Davis don't take his horses when he's got so many? We didn't have but Bob and Charlie, and he sent for poor Bob, and he oughtn'ter done it neither."

"Buddie, don't you know who Santa Claus is?"

"Why, yes, I do know. He's a big fat man that rides over people's houses, and when he comes to a chimney he puts his pretties on his back and comes down. I'm glad I didn't see him, for I know he was ugly and mighty smutty; he would skeer me 'most to death. I was so skeered he would put a switch in my stocking; wasn't you, Nellie?"

Before Nellie could answer, Mr. Barron said:

"Well, Nellie, here is a nice ten dollar bill for you, and here's one for you, Master Robbie. Now, Nellie can buy herself a nice new doll, and Robbie can buy his circus, if he likes."

Papa received a kiss and a "thank you," from each little child, and seemed quite well satisfied with his share of the profits.

Robbie ran off to show his to nurse Naney, while Nellie took her seat quietly by her father, holding the bill between her fingers and looking intently into the bright, cheerful fire.

"I cannot think what is the matter with Nellie, this morning," said Mrs. Barron, who had come in just in time to see the Christmas gift; "I'm afraid she is not well."

"My dear," said Mr. Barron, looking at Nellie, "why do you think so? She looks about as usual."

"Well, she hasn't touched one of her Santa Claus—not even a sugar-plum, and all her toys she has wrapped up and put back in her stocking."

"Didn't you like your Santa Claus, Nellie?"

"Oh, yes, papa, only I didn't want to eat it—not just then," said Nellie, her pale cheek warming into a blush.

Breakfast was announced, and Santa Claus was forgotten in the plentiful table-wealth spread before them.

[CONCLUDED NEXT MONTH.]

WRITTEN FOR THE CHILD'S INDEX.

IDA TRUDESDALE, OR THE WAY TO BE HAPPY.

BY ELLA DEAN.

"Hi! Bell, how can you do so! It is so cruel: the poor old man is lame!"

"Now, Ida, don't be so squeamish; come on and let's have a little fun," and Bell dashed off ere

Ida had time to reply, to the spot where the old man sat. Creeping slyly up to his side, she stole his walking stick, which she saw lying on the ground, and running off with it, concealed it among some leaves and grass; then returning to the spot where she had left her friend a few moments before, stood anxiously watching the old man, in anticipation of a "rare frolic," as she termed it. The jocund expression of Bell's face showed that it was by no means a "rare" thing with her thus to take advantage of the misfortunes and infirmities of others:—for she was one of those many little girls who in violation of the "Golden Rule" are accustomed to amuse themselves and have their fun at the expense of others. A glance at Ida's face revealed to Bell the sadness of her friend's heart. Instead of meeting the sweet smile she was accustomed to see there, Bell beheld the big tear-drop standing on her cheek, and the thoughtful expression of those soft blue eyes bespoke, plainer than words, the pain it gave her to see the waywardness and cruelty of her little friend.—Bell was not insensible to the pain she had caused one she loved so dearly; nor did Ida's reproving glance fail to touch her heart. Ida was thinking of what she had learned at Sabbath School, how the Lord called the bears from the woods to devour the children for laughing at Elijah's bald head. And as the sad image came up before her mind, she feared for Bell, lest her excessive love for fun, and careless disregard for the feelings of others should require the chastening hand of the Lord to be laid upon her, ere she should forsake her wicked ways. For it was with painful remembrance that she dwelt on the truth of the old proverb, "Retribution though late, comes at last." Ida well knew that this was Bell's besetting sin, for it had become a habit, and a very sinful habit it was, for her to amuse her friends and school-mates by mimicking and teasing all those possessing defects either in movement, form or speech. She also remembered how often she had tried, and so often had failed, to win by word her little friend from the wicked course she was fast pursuing, and she now resolved to test the virtue of example; and in this, as we shall see, her virtuous efforts proved more effectual, and impressed more forcibly on her mind that "Example is better than Precept." Ida could no longer remain inactive on such an occasion. She turned from Bell, took her little basket on her arm, in which she had taken her noon-day meal to school, and going up to the poor lame man, offered him the contents of the basket, which he accepted with a heart overflowing with gratitude, for he said he had travelled a long way, and was very tired and hungry. Ida thought, as she saw the grateful smile that still lingered on the old man's face, and as his prayer for God's watchful providence over her, fell on her ear, that indeed it was a good thing to help the needy; and that she was never so happy as when in the discharge of some benevolent act. The old man had finished his meal, and now the time had come for Bell to have her fun. He rose to go, and as he did so he clasped Ida's proffered hand in his, and a prayer went up to the throne of Him

"Who is in mercy, truth and love."

After Ida had received his parting blessing the old man turned and felt for his stick, but, alas! where was it? Bell tried to enjoy the prank she had so mercilessly played off on the old man, but in vain. She now looked upon it in a different light, for she could not refrain from thinking how good and nobly Ida had acted in depriving herself of a tempting meal, and how happy it seemed to make her feel to give it to one whom she thought more needy than herself. She was no longer happy at teasing him whom God had deprived of a blessing who was still allowed to enjoy, and keenly felt that her's was not left her as a means for her to add to the discomfort of those whom God himself had afflicted. With these feelings, which had been aroused by Ida's noble example, Bell bounded to the spot where her mischievous little hands had laid the cane, returned it to the decrepid old man, begged his forgiveness, and resolved from that moment to make Ida her example, and the

Golden Rule her motto, and never again to allow her merry disposition to lead her to forget that she must "Do unto others as she would that they should do unto her."

It is indeed a sad thing to see how common it has become for the little boys and girls of the present day to laugh at and ridicule those who have been unfortunate and afflicted. And it has also become very common for them to mock others whom they imagine to be less graceful and less pleasing in appearance than themselves. But while we ponder on these unpleasant facts, it must also be remembered that though they may not be derided by boys, as the wicked children of Elijah's day, yet the Lord reward just reward at the final day of judgment.—But I hope that all the little boys and girls who may chance to read the story of Bell and the lame man, will endeavor, like Ida Truetsdale, to exert a good influence on their friends and associates. Childhood is the time to break bad and sinful habits and to implant good moral principles in the heart. It is an old and true saying, "As the twig is bent, the tree is inclined." Let each and all of the little boys and girls, who may some day grow to be men and women, keep in mind what has been wisely said, that "he who does good in his day and generation, influences, whether he designs it or not, the fulfillment of his example into a multitude of hearts which nature has opened for its reception, and thus with good and high results, light them upward to happiness and glory."

WRITTEN FOR THE CHILD'S INDEX.

HOME SMILES.

BY EUNICE CLIFTON.

SMILES may be compared to bright, pearly dew-drops that fall upon a withered flower, nestle softly into its heart, and cause its fallen head again to look up into the blue dome of heaven. With what ease can one loving smile find admission into a heart that is said to partake more of iron or steel, than of anything else! Not that cold, unmeaning smile, which is dressed with "company manners," or which lights the face only in the brilliant throng, but the genuine one, which comes immediately from the heart, arouses saucy little dimples and calls forth a glad, joyous light into the eyes of some one whose heart is burdened by the pressure of an unknown sorrow.

How frequently, in the domestic circle, do we see faces that would be beautiful, were it not that a frown rests upon that otherwise fair brow, so dark and scowling that one almost fears to remain in the region of that face, from dread of being the recipient of that shower of anger which seems portending. Now, dear girls, do not deprive the loved home-circle of whom you might be so bright a gem) of your smiles, and reserve them for the entertainment of some one who would not appreciate them. If these smiles are limited, why not bestow them on those whose hearts and sympathies have been called forth to us?

There are numerous occasions in a family that ask for smiles, when we think we cannot spare another one. For instance, our baby-sister leaves the impress of its bony little fingers on our neatly fitting collar, or, if worse, to come off in two wee handfuls of our "golden tresses." No matter! we'll just allow our wrath to gush out in merry laughter, and not crush the happiness out of that little spark of vitality by returning its caresses with frowns, because our heads do not feel quite so comfortable as they did, or because the crumpled collar will be removed. Then there are whole crowds of little brothers who have commenced grinning and do not know whether cow is a verb or not. Perhaps, too, there is an aunt of a suspicious age, an inmate of the house, who is denominated cross by those who do not strive to please them. Well, let us dispel the gloom which is oppressing that isolated heart, break through the ranks of those frowns which have stationed themselves on that once fair brow, as sentinels, to repel any encroachment upon the limits of that heart; a good heart-felt smile would soon find a road down to that heart, and then you could fill up a nice so long void.

Let us adopt Mrs. McCrimmon's mode of "bottling sunshine" to pour out upon those who make such large demands upon our patience.

Little Gus saw a vivid flash of lightning that seemed to rend open the very sky. "Oh!" said he, "if it had opened a little wider I would have seen God."