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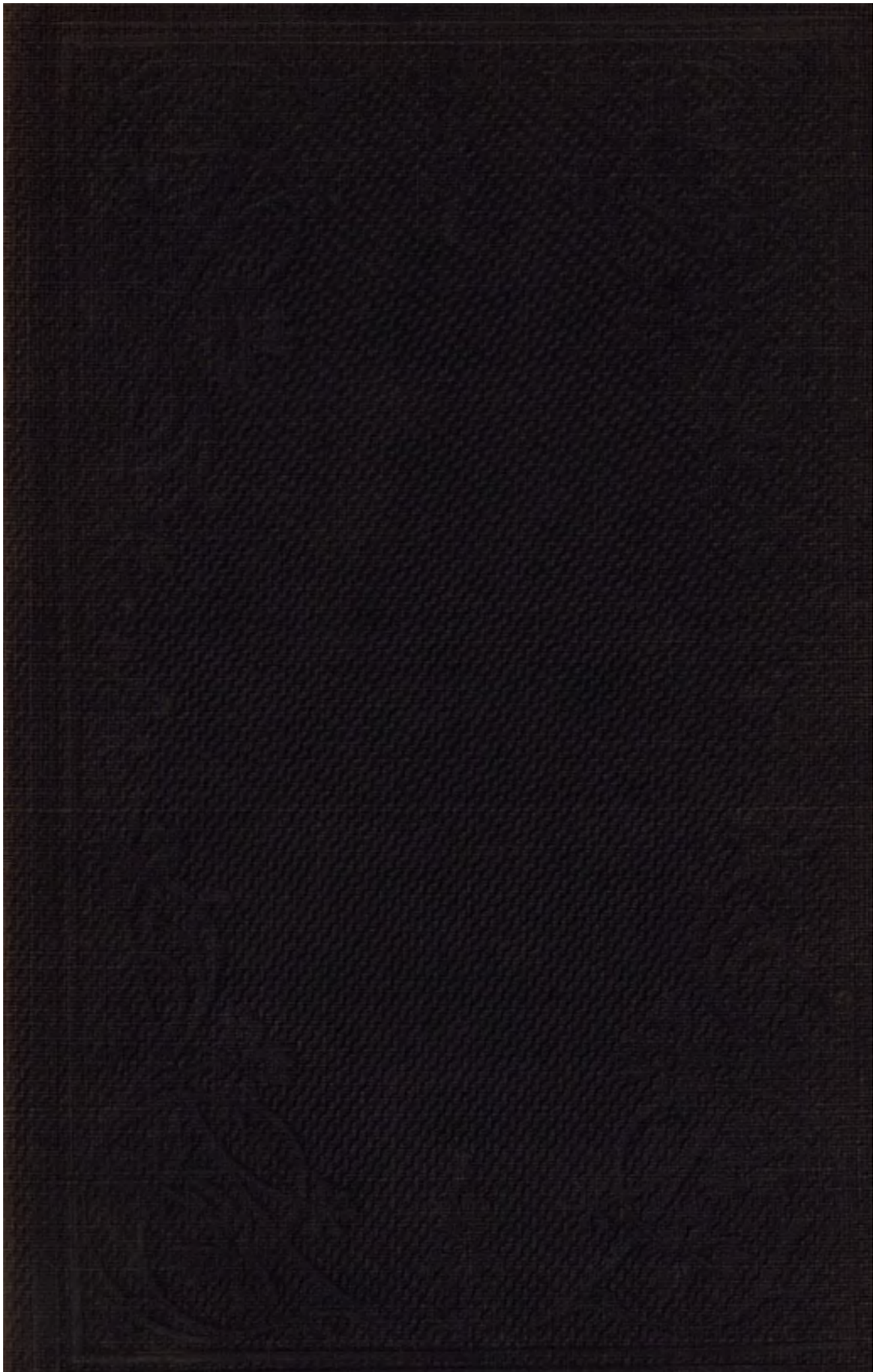
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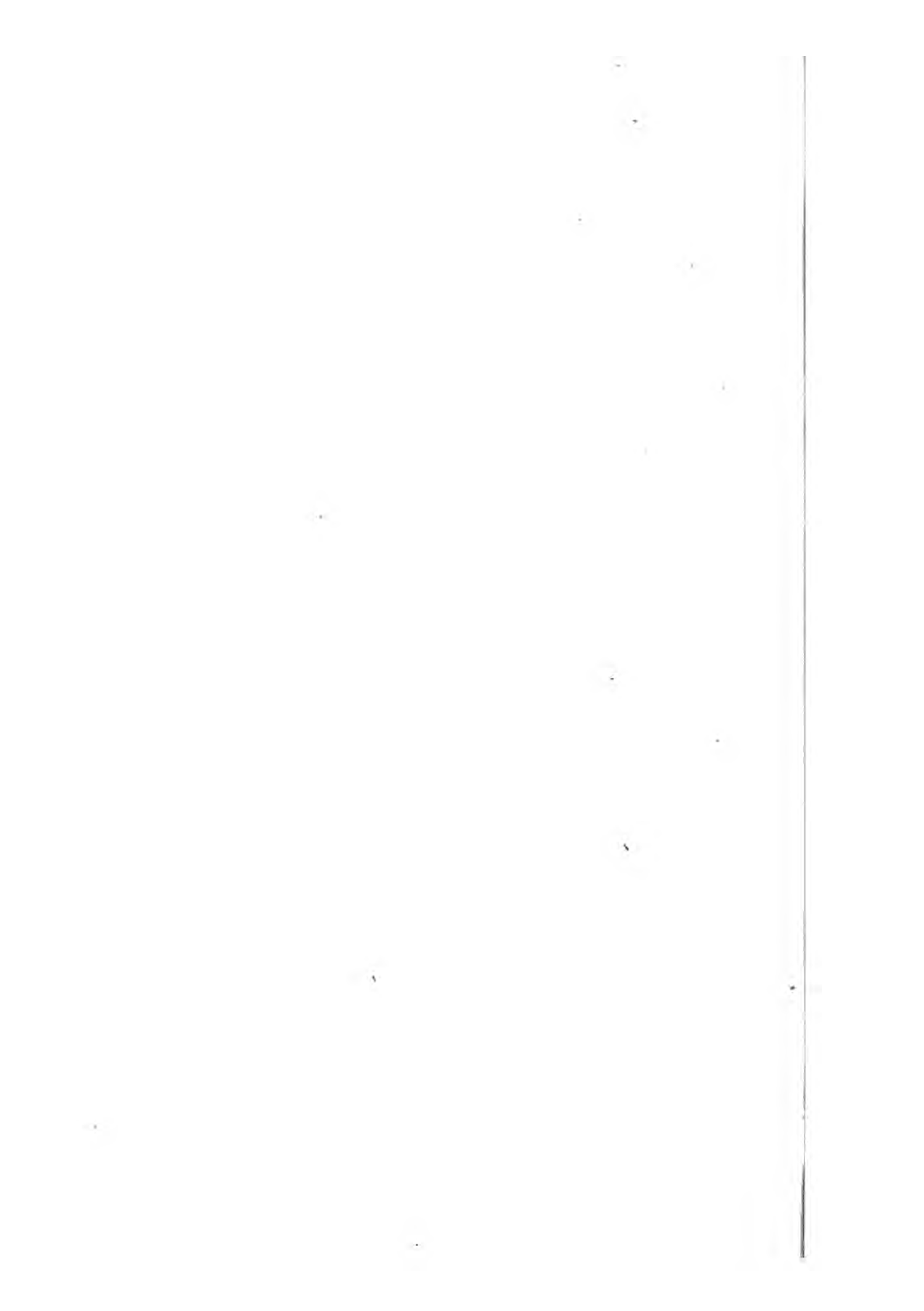
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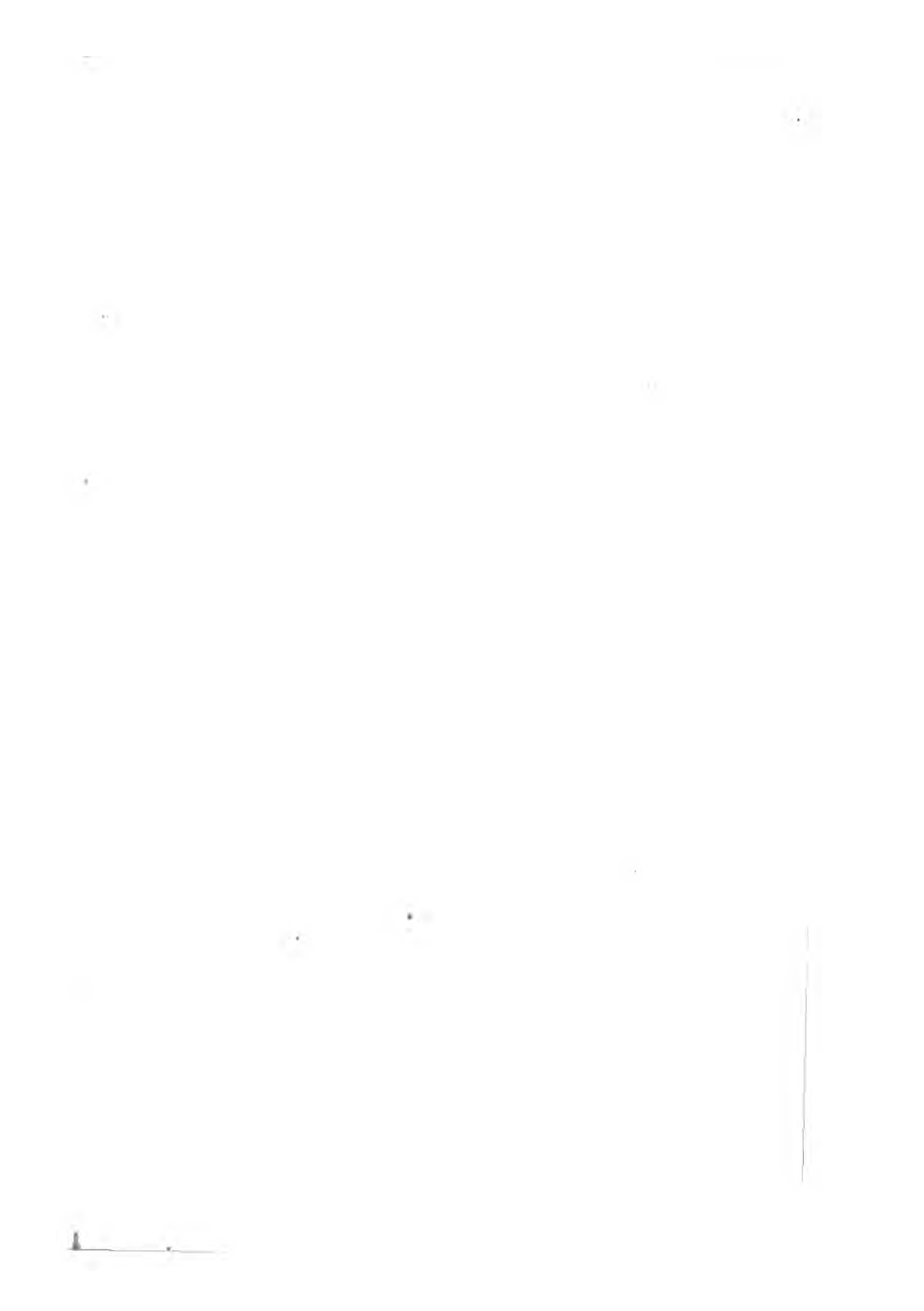


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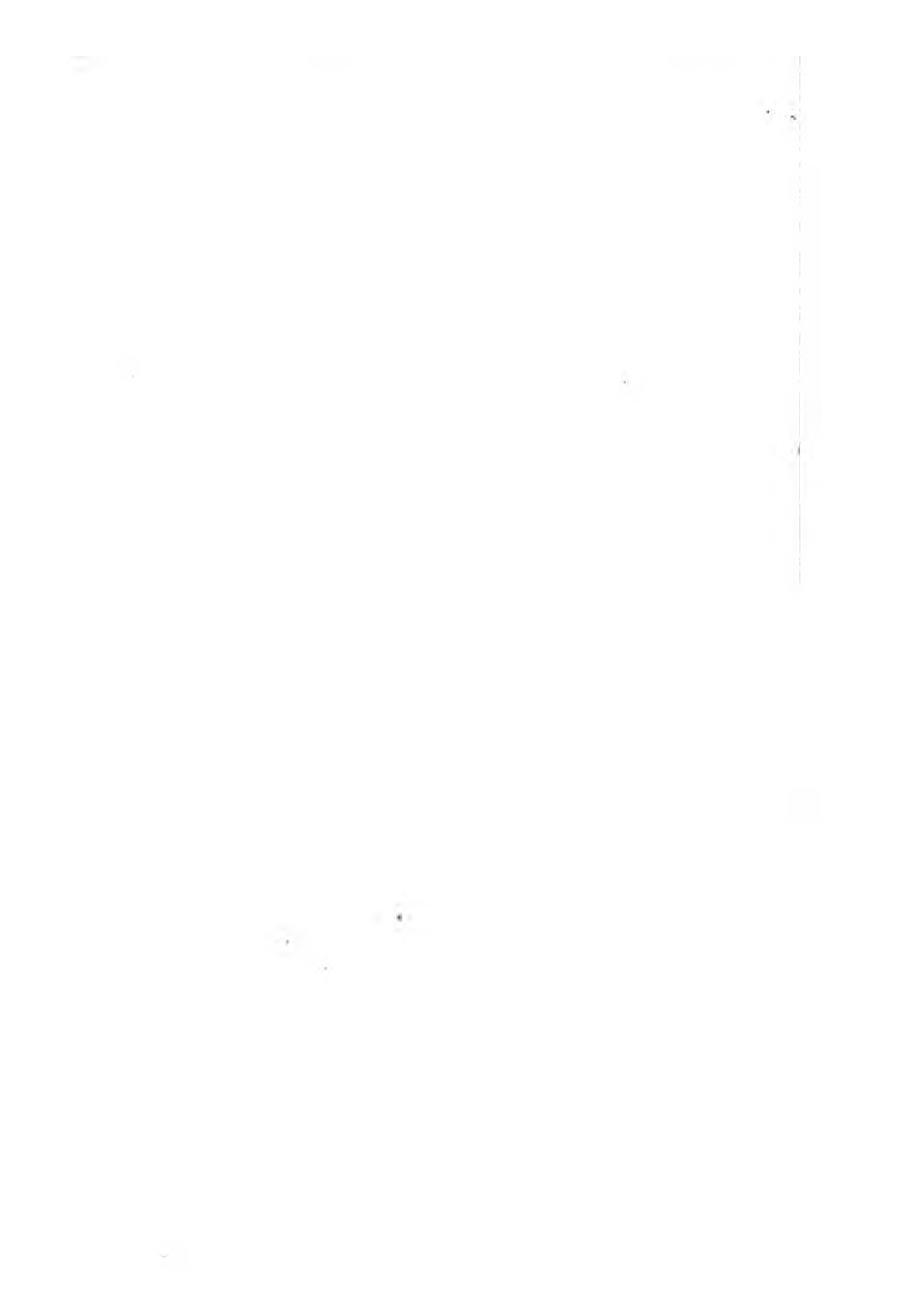
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# HARRY'S BATTLES;

AND HOW HE FOUGHT THEM.

BY

THE AUTHOR OF "WILLY'S LESSON."

"My strength is made perfect in weakness."—2 Cor. xii. 9.

"There is none other that fighteth for us, but only Thou, O God."  
*Book of Common Prayer.*

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# HARRY'S BATTLES.

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## CHAPTER I.

“ We are soldiers doing battle,  
Day by day, and hour by hour ;  
Each one with his own temptation  
Striving in the Spirit's power.”

HARRY WESTON had nothing to do ; he had finished his library book, he had played with Lion his dog until he was tired, he had learnt his lesson for the Sunday-school quite perfectly, and had taught his little sister Lizzie to repeat hers ; but it was not time to start yet, and his mother would not let him go and play with the other boys in the street ; so after yawning once or twice, he suddenly bethought him of the large picture Bible which was on the shelf, and taking it down, he called little Lizzie to look at the pictures with him.

The child climbed upon the chair beside him, and said, “ Now, Harry, show me the

giant." This was Lizzie's favourite, and Harry's too ; it was a picture representing the shepherd boy in the act of killing the giant Goliath.

"What a little boy David looks," said Lizzie, "beside that great giant!"

"Yes, but little boys can be brave," replied Harry.

"Was David a brave boy, Harry?"

"Yes, I think he was."

"And God took care the giant shouldn't kill him ; didn't He?"

"Yes, and David killed the giant."

"I'm very glad of that," said the little girl. "Harry, boys can't fight in any battles now ; can they?"

"Lizzie, come and let me put your bonnet on, it is time for you to go to school," cried her mother from the next room, and the little girl ran away without waiting for Harry's reply. He sat for a few moments thinking over Lizzie's words. "Miss Hamilton said something last Sunday about boys being soldiers, only I was whispering to Johnny White and did not hear what it was," he thought to himself ; "perhaps she will say something more to-day ; I hope she will ;" and looking once more at the picture, he closed the Bible and put it away. By this time Lizzie was dressed, and taking their books they went to the school,

and Harry had his wish fulfilled; for Miss Hamilton referred to the lesson of the last Sunday, and went on to speak to them of the battles which Christ's soldiers must fight; of the daily, hourly warfare which they must keep up against the temptations of Satan, and their own wicked hearts; of the armour, the *proved* armour, which is provided for them; and of the strength which Christ gives to those who seek it, and without which no battle can be won. Harry's attention was aroused; he listened to it all, and the thought arose in his heart that he should like to be one of these soldiers; it would be a glorious thing to fight real battles, and to be a great conqueror at the end.

He felt pleased when he read the texts which he had to learn for the following Sunday. "Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ." 2 Tim. ii. 3. "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." Rev. ii. 10.

When Harry went home from school he took down the large Bible, and looked long and earnestly at the picture of David. "Yes," he thought, "boys can be soldiers. I am determined to try how I can fight; I *will* do what is right." This was a very good resolution, and Harry was quite right in making it; but he forgot one thing when doing so: however,

we must hear all about his battles, and how he fought them, and then judge for ourselves as to what it was.

"It isn't worth while beginning to-night," thought he; "time enough to-morrow morning;" and having settled this, he went into the front garden and leaned over the gate to watch the passers-by. Mrs. Weston did not like him to loiter outside the house on Sunday, but she was up-stairs attending to her lodgers, and did not see him. Perhaps if Harry had begun fighting that night he would not have done what his mother did not like.

Johnny White and Francis Clarke were playing in the street, and when he went out they came up to the gate to speak to him.

"Are you going to church to-night, Harry?" asked Francis in a low voice.

"Yes, of course I am."

"Good boy," said Johnny, mockingly, "of course he is, Francis; why do you ask him?"

"Because I thought he might like to join our fun. You were in church this morning, were you not, Harry?"

"Yes, I was."

"And at school this afternoon?"

"Yes, Francis; so were you."

"I know that, so I'm going for a walk with Johnny this evening; I've heard enough about good things to last me through next week."

“Hush, Francis, don't say that. I'm afraid mother wouldn't like me to go with you to-night.”

“I don't see why not; are you going to church with her?” asked Johnny.

“No, she isn't going to-night, but she'll ask me the text.”

“I know how to manage that,” said Johnny. “Oh! you may as well come, Harry, we are going for a beautiful walk; my mother has given me leave, and we are going through the Longford fields towards Newmartin. Now, do come after tea and no one will know it; you can walk to the church door, and we will meet you there, and before you come home I'll make my sister tell you the text.”

“Well, I'll think about it,” said Harry. “I should like to come very much.” He did not feel quite satisfied with himself; but the thought of a walk in those pleasant Longford fields overcame his wish to do right, and he was not going to begin fighting until the next day.

“Harry, it is nearly tea-time,” cried little Lizzie, coming to the door.

“Well, I will meet you this evening,” whispered Harry to Johnny, as he turned round to go into the house. “It can't be any great harm just for once,” he thought to himself, to silence the reproachful voice which



whispered in his heart, "you are doing very wrong."

Harry's mother was the widow of a soldier, who had been killed two or three years after little Lizzie's birth, leaving Mrs. Weston and her three children entirely dependent on her exertions for their support. Michael, her eldest son, followed his father's profession, and when he was old enough enlisted. His regiment was ordered out to the Crimea, where the war was then going on, so Michael had to say good-bye to the dear ones at home, and sail away with all his brave companions to that far country.

Poor Mrs. Weston looked very sad when he was gone; she missed his bright merry face, his ringing laugh, the thoughtfulness and care for her which had been mixed with his boyish affection since his father's death, and his kindness to the little ones; but she knew that God could watch over her Michael, so she asked Him to do it, and to bring him back safely to her, and then her heart grew lighter, and her face more happy.

Harry and Lizzie also missed their kind merry brother, but they thought it rather grand for him to go away in his red coat, and to be a real soldier as their brave father had been; besides this, Michael had left his beautiful dog Lion under Harry's care, and this

made the little boy very happy, for Lion was his constant friend and companion, and could go for walks with him that were too long for his little sister; and Lion could carry a stick and go into the water; in short, he was a very clever dog, and as gentle and affectionate as possible to his little master.

But we must go back to Harry on the Sunday evening when our story begins. When tea was over he rose and got his cap.

"Make haste, dear," said his mother, "I am afraid you will be late for church."

Harry coloured, but Mrs. Weston did not notice it; Lion ran to the door barking, thinking that Harry was going to take him out, but Lizzie called to him.

"No! no! Lion, Harry is going to church; come back, good dog. Harry, here are your books; you were leaving them behind."

Harry took them, and went quickly out of the house. "I *will* go to church," he thought, "it will be like a lie if I don't, and I promised Michael I never would tell a lie." At this moment Mr. Hamilton, the clergyman, overtook him.

"Are you on your way to church, Harry?" he asked, as he passed him.

"Yes sir," answered Harry, taking off his cap; and he meant what he said, but at the church door he met Francis and Johnny, and

they laughed at him for breaking his word ; so he went to walk in the Longford meadows on that bright Sunday evening, and the pleasure of the walk drove away the sorrow which he would otherwise have felt for deceiving his mother ; but as he was coming home, when he looked at the bridge over the brook where he had parted with Michael, and thought what his brother would say if he knew that Harry was acting a lie ; when he looked up into the quiet evening sky, and remembered that God was watching him, and had seen all that he had done, he wished from his inmost heart that he had not gone.

“ Johnny,” he said, anxiously, “ what shall I say to mother when she asks about church ? ”

“ What shall you say, Harry ? why tell her the text, she won't want to know any more. Here, Lucy, what was the text ? ” cried Johnny to his sister, who was coming along the road from church. She answered briefly and passed on, and the three boys, bidding each other good-night, went to their various homes ; but Harry Weston's heart was very heavy as he entered the parlour where his mother was sitting. She had been watching for his return, and her Bible lay open on the table before her.

“ Well, my boy,” she said, kindly, as he came in, “ were you in time ? ”

“Yes, mother,” replied Harry, and he turned to put his books away on the shelf, and to prevent his mother seeing the colour which rushed to his cheeks.

“What was the text, Harry?” was her next question.

He answered her quickly, and then bent over Lion, patting and stroking him, while Mrs. Weston, rising from her seat, went into the pantry to get Harry’s supper. When she was gone, Harry’s head was bent lower and lower over his dog, and big tears fell one by one on the shaggy coat of his favourite. Lion looked up wistfully into the face of his little master, as if he would have tried to comfort him if he could; but Harry felt that he did not deserve comfort, for he had done very, very wrong. He could hardly eat the nice fruit and bread and butter which his mother brought him, and he was not sorry when she told him that he had better go to bed, as he seemed very tired. If he could have seen the fond look which followed him as he left the room, and heard the whispered words, “May God bless him, he is a comfort to me, and grows so like Michael,” I do not think Harry Weston could have deceived his mother.

## CHAPTER II.

Still the wrong way will seem pleasant ;  
Still the right way will seem hard ;  
All our life we shall be tempted ;  
We must ever be on guard.

THE next morning Harry's first thought was his resolution about fighting. "Yes, I will be a good soldier ; I will begin fighting now. Let me see—a soldier shouldn't be lazy. I'll get up ;" and he sprang from his bed and dressed himself quickly. Then he knelt down to pray ; but his thoughts wandered off to the battles which he might have to fight that day, and he did not think much about what he was doing.

When he went down stairs he asked his mother what he could do to help her. (A deep feeling of shame came over him when he remembered his sin on the night before ; but he satisfied himself by thinking, "It is done now, and cannot be undone ; if she asks anything more about it, I will tell her the truth.")

Mrs. Weston told him to take Lizzie out for

a little walk before the house until breakfast was ready ; so he called the child, tied on her bonnet, and taking her hand, led her out into the sunshine.

Harry felt almost vexed that he had not something harder to begin his fighting upon. He wanted to be told "to do some great thing," not knowing that it is in the little daily tasks, "the common round," that the good soldier's battles have to be fought.

There was nothing very hard to Harry in listening to the merry prattle of his dear little sister ; there was no opportunity for fighting when he sat down to his good breakfast of bread and milk, nor when he got his bag of books, and joined some companions outside the gate to walk with them to school. "Well, I may have some fighting to do there," thought he. "I will be very kind and obliging to all the boys ; I will do nothing wrong there ;" and as he resolved this, he opened the school door, and hanging up his cap, with a bright face went to his place. He looked through the lessons which he had to say that morning, and found a few minutes to help little Georgie Clarke, whose face had grown very long as he tried to repeat his pence table to himself.

Things went on very smoothly for some time. Harry's lessons were well said, his

copy well written, his sums were quite right, and his master praised him for his diligence. Harry was pleased ; he forgot all about the weight which had been on his mind in the morning, and only thought of his mother's pleasure at hearing that he was at the head of his class. His next lesson was a geographical exercise which he had to write upon a slate. He wrote the answers to all the first questions very easily ; but at last he came to a difficult one. He took up his atlas and searched for the answer a long time, but with no success ; and at last leaning over to Johnny White, he said, " Johnny, what shall I do ? I can't answer this, and I shall lose my mark if I don't."

Johnny turned round with a smile. " I know what I should do ; but I suppose you are too good for that."

" What should *you* do ?" asked Harry ; for he was really anxious to get his exercise finished that he might play at cricket when all the boys went into the playground at twelve o'clock.

" Well," said Johnny, " I should just take a look into master's book of answers when his back is turned, and he'll be none the wiser."

" Oh ! Johnny, that would be like telling a lie—it would be deceiving him. I could not do that."

" No, I thought you were too good," said

Johnny, with a contemptuous look. "What did you tell your mother when she asked if you had been to church last night? you didn't tell her a lie, did you?"

The colour mounted to Harry's cheeks and flushed up over his forehead. What would he not have given at that moment to be able to tell Johnny that he had confessed the whole truth to his mother?

But the remembrance of the lie he had told made him feel ashamed even to look at his schoolfellow, and he busied himself in turning over the leaves of his atlas, and vainly searching for the answer he wanted.

The clock struck, and there was a general rush to the play-ground; but Harry still sat bending over his exercise.

"Are you not going out, Harry?" said his master, coming over to him, and laying his hand kindly upon the little boy's shoulder.

"Please, sir, I want just to finish this," replied Harry, looking up for a moment.

"Very well, my boy. I like to see you so diligent! you have pleased me very much lately:" and then Mr. Herrick locked his desk, piled up some books on the top of it, and opened the door which led into his own apartments. Without knowing it, he had left the book of answers on his desk, and when he was gone Harry saw it. The sun was shining



brightly, and he longed to be at play with the other boys. Why should he not just look at the book for one moment ?

It would do nobody any harm. He went over to the desk, and took the book in his hand. But no ! he could not deceive again—he would fight bravely this time ; and with a strong effort he put it down and went back to his place. Something seemed to whisper to him, “ What a brave boy you are ; you have fought hard and conquered nobly ; you are indeed a good soldier ! ” and he felt pleased and proud. Poor Harry ! he did not know how strong the tempter was, or he would have looked for a strength beyond his own to enable him to conquer. He finished all the other answers, and then searched again for the difficult one. And now the clock struck half-past twelve ; and he sighed as he looked up at the tops of the trees waving in the wind, and at the large fleecy clouds which were passing over the blue sky, and heard the merry shouts coming in through the open window. Alas ! for his resolutions. With a quick step and trembling hand he went over to the desk, opened the book, and looked at the answer ; while he was doing so, somebody touched his arm, and he turned round with a start.

“ Never mind, Harry, it's only me, ” said Johnny White, in a low voice ; “ I'll keep

your secret, never fear ; I came to see why you did not come out."

" I wish you would leave me alone," said Harry, roughly shaking his hand off ; and hurrying back to his place, he wrote the answer quickly, put his books together, and ran out into the playground.

" Our sides are made up—you cannot play with us, Harry," said Francis Clarke, who was in the middle of a game of cricket ; so Harry watched them for a few minutes, and then he walked off by himself to the far end of the ground, threw himself down under a large tree, and tried to whistle away the unpleasant thoughts which crowded upon him ; but it was useless ; they would come, in spite of all he could do. " Conquered twice," he thought, " when I meant to be so brave. I cannot understand it ; but it is not my fault, I have tried to fight ;" and this was the way in which he satisfied himself.

Just then he saw Georgie Clarke coming up to him. Georgie was very different from his brother Francis ; he was a delicate-looking little fellow, about nine years old, and his cheeks were very pale and thin.

" What's the matter, Harry ?" he said, gently.

" What's that to you ?" answered Harry, in a cross tone.

“I don't like to see you crying,” said Georgie ; “it makes me want to cry too.”

“I don't want you to cry,” said Harry.

“Can I do anything for you, Harry ?”

“No, except to leave me alone ; why do you come worrying me ?”

Georgie felt inclined to turn away angrily ; but he thought to himself that the Lord Jesus would not have done that, and Georgie was praying every day to be made like Him ; so he only answered quietly, “I am in trouble too. Francis gave me a penny yesterday to get some bull's-eyes for him, and I was running very quick, and dropped it, and he was so angry ; but I told him if he would stop kicking me, I would look for it in all my play-hours.”

“And have you found it, Georgie ?” said Harry more kindly, as he looked pityingly at the little boy's tired face.

“No, I've looked everywhere for the last two days, but it's of no use ; and to-day, when I went to play cricket, Francis sent me off to look for it again.”

“Shall I come and help you ?” said Harry, springing to his feet.

“Oh ! thank you, Harry, come along. I've looked all about the higher part of the field, but I have not looked here so much.”

The two boys began the search diligently,

but with no success; and Harry soon grew tired, and said, "It's of no use looking any more, Georgie; the sun is very hot now, but this evening, after school, I will come and help you again."

"Thank you, Harry; let us go and sit down under that nice shady oak-tree; the sun has made my head ache." And when they were seated, Georgie bent down his tired head upon his hands, and Harry could not help noticing how pale and tired he looked. "What a coward Francis is to kick that poor little fellow!" he thought; for though only three years older, Harry was much stronger and taller than Georgie, and he was wishing that Michael was near to knock Francis down whenever he ill-treated his little brother, when he heard Georgie's gentle voice saying,

"Harry, wouldn't it be nice to go up to that bright heaven, and never be tired any more?"

"Don't talk like that, Georgie. No, I don't want to go up there yet."

"Oh! why not, Harry? I want to go. Mother is there, and Susan and Willy, and people who go there never have any more pain and crying: and there is something better than all that."

"What is it, Georgie?" said Harry, gently, for he was thinking of his own dear father and

little baby brother who were there ; and how grieved that father would be if he saw what a dishonest boy his Harry was becoming.

“The Lord Jesus is there,” whispered Georgie, looking down upon the grass ; “and I love Him, Harry, and I know He loves me.”

“How do you know that ?” asked Harry.

“Oh ! I feel it in my heart,” answered the little boy.

Harry looked down at the gentle little face beside him, and wondered that he had never cared much about Georgie before. At last he said, “Don't you find it very hard to be good, Georgie ?”

“I am not good, Harry, but things don't seem so hard when I ask the Lord Jesus to help me.”

“It's dinner-time, Georgie—we must go,” said Harry, jumping up from the ground ; and as he walked home he thought to himself, “I have got a penny which mother gave me, and I will give it to little Georgie this afternoon.”

Georgie stopped for a few minutes longer in the field to search for the lost penny. He thought it was rather hard that he should be obliged to spend all his play-hours in this tiring employment ; but he said to himself, “I was careless to drop it ; I will try to be more careful for the future, and I will ask God to make me patient in looking for it.”

## CHAPTER III.

When a selfish thought would seize us,  
And our resolution break,  
Let us then remember Jesus,  
And resist it for His sake.

HARRY found little Lizzie playing outside the door when he went home, and she came running up to him with a joyous face, as he opened the gate.

“Oh! Harry, mother took me and Lion for such a nice walk this morning, and we went to the town, and she bought me a skipping-rope, and I can keep up ten times now; will you watch me, Harry?”

“No! I can't stop now, I want to get on with my ship,” he answered, quickly.

“Oh! Harry, just for one minute,” pleaded the little girl.

“No! I've not got any time to waste,” replied Harry, going into the house. Lizzie's bright face was clouded, and she laid her skipping-rope down rather sadly on the step;

she had been watching eagerly for Harry's return, but it did not bring her the pleasure she had expected. Harry, meanwhile, got down his ship, and commenced working at it. He felt rather sorry that he had spoken so roughly to his sister, "but," thought he, "I have been working hard all the morning, and I ought to please myself in my play-time; the child shouldn't worry me directly I come home. What do I care to see her skipping?" This, he imagined, was too small a thing to fight about; but he did not remember that "even Christ pleased not Himself," and that He did not regard with pleasure those who offended the little ones whom He loved.

But Harry and Lizzie had forgotten all about this little cloud when they met at dinner a short time after, and when that was over, Harry got out his penny for Georgie and set off for school.

"Don't go so quickly, Harry; wait for me," cried Johnny White, running out of his mother's house, which was very near Mrs. Weston's. "How does your ship get on? I have nearly finished mine, and Joe Smith has given me a little anchor for it, and I have painted it green, and now I'm going to stop at Mrs. Maynard's shop, to get some penny cannon for it. Of course you will have cannon in yours?"

“I’ve got one,” said Harry; “that will do, I think.”

“I shall have two,” said Johnny; “but I think my ship is nicer than yours altogether, because Joe Smith’s brother has been a sailor, and he told me how to do it.”

“I don’t think yours will be a bit better than mine when it is finished, and I could get Joe Smith to help me if I liked.”

“But no ship with only one gun could be as good as one that has two,” persisted Johnny. “Here is Francis; we’ll ask him. Which is best, Frank, a ship with one cannon or two?”

“Well, it would be a baby that couldn’t tell that,” said Francis, laughing. “Why, the ship with two, of course.”

“Well, Harry doesn’t think so,” said Johnny, as they stopped at the door of the toy-shop.

“Come in and help me to choose mine, both of you.”

One quick thought went to Georgie’s tired face, and the smile that would light it up if he was told that he might go and play instead of searching for the lost penny any more; but then Harry thought of the possibility of Johnny’s ship being better than his, and he looked down at the row of nice bright little cannons. There was a short struggle between his selfish heart and his wish to do right, and then Harry said, “I’ll have one too,” and laid



down upon the counter the penny which he had intended for Georgie.

“That’s right, Harry,” whispered Francis, “I wouldn’t be outdone by Johnny.”

But Harry was not so sure that it was right ; and if he had remembered Georgie’s words, and asked God to give him strength to do what was right, I do not think he would have bought the little cannon ; however, he excused himself by saying, “The penny was my own to spend as I liked, and I had not promised it to Georgie, so he will not be disappointed.”

But Harry did really disappoint Georgie that afternoon ; for when school was over, he went off with Francis for a walk, instead of keeping his promise of searching for the penny, and though Georgie looked up every few minutes in hopes of seeing him, he looked in vain, for Harry did not come.

In the middle of his walk he remembered what he had said in the morning, and felt inclined to run back to Georgie then, and search doubly hard to make up for lost time ; but he could not give up his own pleasure for the sake of helping another, though he would have been very angry if any one had told him that he was selfish. As he was going home in the evening he saw Georgie coming away from the playground, and his face showed that he had been searching in vain. Harry could not

avoid meeting him, so he stopped and said: "I am sorry I forgot to come and help you, Georgie; have you found it?"

"No!" replied Georgie, rather quickly; for he felt provoked with Harry for breaking his word, and he passed on, while Harry said to himself: "So even Georgie can be put out sometimes;" but just then he heard a gentle voice beside him, saying, "Please, Harry, I forgot to thank you for helping me this morning, and I am sorry I spoke so crossly just now, but I'm very tired."

"And I am sorry that I did not keep my promise," replied Harry, who now felt heartily ashamed of himself. "Poor Georgie, you do look tired; please forgive me."

Georgie gave him one bright look, and then went home. He *was* very tired, poor little fellow, but he looked over to where the red sun was dropping down behind the dark hills, leaving the sky rosy with its light, and he thought of all the goodness and love of his Heavenly Father, and of the bright home which his Saviour was preparing for him, where he would never be tired any more.

I wonder who was the bravest soldier,—Harry or Georgie? Harry fighting all his battles in his own strength, or little Georgie, not depending on himself for anything; knowing that of himself he could do nothing, and

looking up with simple trust to Christ, whose love was in his heart, and through whom he was "more than conqueror!"

When Harry went home he told his mother all about little Georgie's penny, and how long the poor child had been searching for it; for he rather hoped that Mrs. Weston would give him the money to bring to Georgie, but she only said:—

"Have you helped him, Harry?"

"Yes, mother," he replied, looking down.

"That is right, my dear; remember, if you want to show your love to the Lord Jesus, you must do it by showing kindness and love to those around you."

"Yes, mother," replied the little boy, slowly; for he was thinking how very little he had done that day for the sake of that "great love." But suddenly he felt Lizzie's hand slipped into his, and he heard her whisper, "Please, Harry, will you take this penny to the little boy who lost his brother's, and tell him that I don't want him to be tired any more?" Harry stooped to kiss the child, and then ran off to Georgie's home. When he saw the bright and grateful smile on the little boy's face as he sent his love and thanks to Lizzie, Harry wished that it had been his penny which had given so much pleasure. It had not been as satisfactory a day as he had anticipated—he had not done

much fighting—it was harder work than he expected—he had met with many defeats, and his heart was heavy as he went to bed that night.

When Georgie went up to the little attic where he slept with Francis, he did not forget to thank God for the penny which had released him from his tiring employment; and as he lay down, his heart was full of peaceful happy thoughts about the strong and loving Friend who was always watching over him and taking care of him, though he was only a weak and sinful little child.

## CHAPTER IV.

The spirit dark that works within  
Will whisper evil to thy heart,  
Will turn thee from the better part,  
And tempt thy soul to sin.

HARRY WESTON had not found out the secret of victory. The mere *wish* to be a good soldier was not sufficient to make him one. He had to learn his own utter weakness before he could truly begin to fight in the right way, and as yet he had been fighting all his battles in his own strength. He had no motive of love and gratitude to enable him to carry it on, and he soon gave up the attempt.

And now we must pass over some weeks, and look at Harry again, one bright evening when all the boys were at play.

The church at Woodspring was built at the foot of a hill, and the school stood on one side of it, so that the playground was only separated from the churchyard by a low wall.

On the other side was the Rectory, and from his study window Mr. Hamilton could see the

boys playing, and he liked to watch their happiness, and to hear their merry voices when lessons were over. On this particular evening he passed the school-gate, and looked in for a minute to speak a word to them, then he walked on down the road. His face was grave and anxious, and they knew the reason; for the fever was in the place, and many of his congregation had taken it. A group of boys were talking very busily in one corner of the ground, and Harry was amongst them. Harry's face was changed; it was not so bright and merry as it used to be, nor quite so open. Johnny and Francis were still his chief friends, and he did not see much of Georgie, for there was something in the little boy's earnest striving to do right that seemed to reprove him.

"I say, Harry, Joe Smith says his brother Ben can hit a bird's nest in the top of a tree with a stone; do you believe him?" asked Johnny White.

"No!" said Harry, "unless it's in a very low tree."

"How far can you throw, Harry?"

"I don't know; pretty far."

"I don't believe you can throw as far as I can," said Johnny.

"I'm sure I can."

"Try," said Francis, eagerly.

“No !” said Harry, “for Mr. Hamilton has told us not to throw stones in the playground.”

“Who cares what Mr. Hamilton says ?” cried Johnny, laughing.

“I do,” replied Harry, bravely, “and I won’t do anything to displease him.”

“Good boy !” said Francis, scornfully. “Don’t you see, Johnny, he knows that you throw much farther than he can, and so he is afraid to try with you.”

“I’m not afraid,” said Harry ; “I’ll show you that I’m not.”

“Well, come and try, then.”

Harry looked doubtful ; he did not like to disobey Mr. Hamilton, and yet he wanted to show Johnny that he was not a coward, so he began to think whether, after all, it would be doing any harm ; he would only throw once or twice, and no one would know anything about it as Mr. Hamilton was out, so after a minute’s thought, he said—

“Well, Johnny, I’ll just throw one stone, to show that I can beat you ;” and the three boys went round to the other side of the playground.

Georgie had heard them talking, and going up to Harry, he whispered, “Please don’t throw stones, Harry ; Mr. Hamilton told us not to do it.”

“I’m only going to throw one, Georgie, never fear,” replied Harry.

“They’ll make you throw more,” said the little boy. “Please don’t do it, Harry, it isn’t right.”

“Here, Georgie, what nonsense are you talking to Harry?” said Francis, turning round. “Go and get me some stones.”

Georgie looked up at him with rather a frightened face, and then said, gently, “Please, Francis, I can’t.”

“Why not?”

“Because it would be helping you to do wrong,” said the child, in a firmer voice.

“That’s what you’re always talking about,” said Francis, giving him a shake. “Thinking yourself so much better than other people.”

“Oh! I don’t; indeed I don’t, Frank,” said Georgie, earnestly; “and I’ll do anything else, but I can’t do that.”

“I don’t want you to do anything else. I suppose it’s part of your goodness not to be obliging and kind; go along, I don’t want you here; only be sure you hold your tongue about us, or it will be worse for you;” and with a rough push he sent the little boy away.

Georgie went round to the quiet corner where he had been before; he was feeling very angry, and as he stood leaning against the



wall the tears which he had tried to keep back before the boys would come. "How unjust!" he thought; "I'm sure I always try to please Francis, and just because I wouldn't do a bad thing, he laughs at me for trying to do right; it's very, very hard." But then came thoughts of Him whom Georgie loved better than any one; of how the Lord Jesus bore all the hard unkind words which were spoken to Him, and the blows given to Him by cruel men, and Georgie was sorry that he had felt so angry.

Harry had said that he was only going to throw one stone, but Johnny's went much farther than his the first time, so he threw again. This time Johnny challenged him to hit a swallow's nest under the eaves of the church, and they both missed it.

"Try again," said Francis, as he watched Harry's disappointed face.

"I don't think I'll try any more," said Harry, for he was beginning to feel rather uncomfortable. "Mine went farther than yours last time, Johnny."

"It didn't," replied Johnny, angrily.

"Well, try once more, Harry," cried Francis, as he looked about for a stone for him.

"Well, only this once," said Harry, taking aim. "I'll throw first, Johnny"—but before he could finish the words Johnny had thrown. The two stones flew through the air together,

and then there was a crash ! The boys looked at each other in dismay.

“ Oh, Johnny, what have we done ? ” cried Harry, and his face grew pale and frightened.

“ What have *you* done, you mean ; why you’ve broken a church window, ” said Johnny.

“ It was your stone which hit it, ” said Harry, quickly.

“ It wasn’t, I’m sure. ”

“ Yes, I think it was, Johnny, ” put in Francis.

“ I am certain it was Harry’s, ” said Johnny, getting very angry ; “ but at any rate, it is better for us both to be quiet about it. ”

“ What will Mr. Hamilton say ? ” said Harry, anxiously.

“ He need not know about it, ” replied Johnny ; “ you know he is out, and nobody has seen us. ”

“ But he will ask who did it. ”

“ Well, we needn’t tell him. ”

“ Oh, Johnny ! ”

“ You had better not tell tales, Harry, I can promise you, ” said Johnny. “ I know several things I can tell about you. Who was it that went to walk in the fields, and told his mother that he had been to church ? Who was it that looked at the answer in the book, and got praised for having done his exercise so well ? ”

Who stole the pears which were brought to his mother's lodger?"

"You made me do it all," said Harry; "I hate you; I wish I had never gone with you."

But Johnny went on as if he did not hear him. "Those would be nice little stories for your mother and Mr. Hamilton to hear, and pleasant news for Michael when he comes home, wouldn't they?"

Harry could bear no more, and covering his face with his hands he turned away.

Johnny had gained his point, and putting his arm inside Harry's, he said, "Don't be a baby, Harry; I'm not going to tell of you, only you must promise not to confess if Mr. Hamilton asks any questions about this. Promise," and he gazed eagerly into Harry's face.

"Yes, I'll promise," sobbed the poor weak boy.

"Well, come home now, and don't think anything more about it," said Johnny, and Harry went home. But he thought about it all that evening when he was playing with Lizzie; he thought about it when his mother kissed him before he went to bed, and he longed to throw himself into her arms, and tell her all the truth; he thought about it when he was undressing, and he was afraid to ask God to forgive him, because he had promised to do

what was wrong, so he went to bed without praying; and he thought about it as he lay awake in his little bed, listening to the wind which was howling dismally on that stormy night, and the rain which pattered against the window-pane, and he drew the bedclothes over his head and shut his eyes tightly; but he could not shut out the dreadful sin which he had promised to commit. He did not think about fighting now, he had laid down his arms and gone over to the enemy; his only thought was how to shield himself from the disgrace of being found out.

If poor Harry had only gone to Him who alone could have helped him, and told Him of all the sorrow and trouble which was in his heart, and asked for strength to do what was right, he would not have been so unhappy; for the Lord Jesus Christ has told all who have sinned to come to Him for pardon and peace, and has promised that none shall seek His strength in vain.

## CHAPTER V.

May we ne'er by guilt oppressed  
Lose the way to endless rest ;  
Help us in our daily strife,  
Lead us in the way of life.

“ HERE is Mr. Hamilton : remember your promise,” whispered Johnny to Harry the next morning as the school-door opened and the clergyman entered.

Mr. Hamilton's face was very grave, and in his hand was a stone. He spoke to the master, and then laid the stone on the desk, while Mr. Herrick pronounced the word “ Silence !” and there was a pause in the hum of voices, and every face was raised anxiously to hear what Mr. Hamilton was going to say.

It was not much. He simply told them that some one had broken the rule which he had made about throwing stones in the playground ; they knew that he did not wish to check their happiness, but when he made a rule he expected them to keep it. A stone which had been thrown had broken one of the

windows in the church; and Miss Hamilton had seen some boys throwing stones, but could not distinguish them. "And now, boys," said Mr. Hamilton, gravely, "I do not ask you who broke the church window: but I do expect you to tell me which of you were throwing stones yesterday afternoon."

There was a long silence. At length Mr. Hamilton spoke again: "Is there no boy here brave enough to tell the truth? Remember, boys, though I cannot know who has disobeyed me, there is One who knows it all, and He is looking upon the boys who did it, and is watching whether they will try to please Him by confessing the truth. He will give the strength to do it, if it is asked."

There was another pause; and then Mr. Hamilton said, "I shall now ask each boy separately. Joe Smith, did you throw any stones yesterday afternoon in the playground?"

"No, sir, I was not in the playground; I went home after school."

Mr. Hamilton went through that class, and then to the second, in which Francis, Johnny, and Harry were sitting together.

"Francis Clarke, did you?"

"No, sir," said Francis, quickly.

"Johnny, did you?"

Johnny's voice trembled a little, but he answered, "No, sir."

And now it was Harry's turn. As the question drew nearer to him his heart had beat quickly, and he had clenched his hands under the desk to calm himself. Oh! for one moment's strength from God to tell the truth; but Harry did not seek it. The words were spoken: "Harry, did you?" and Harry answered in a low voice, "No, sir!"

"Speak out, Harry, we cannot hear you; you needn't be afraid," said Mr. Hamilton.

"No, sir," answered Harry, in a louder and firmer tone. He had done it now—the time was past; he had told the lie, and he must go through with it. As his eyes turned from Mr. Hamilton, they rested upon Georgie's face. The little boy was looking at him earnestly, and his eyes were full of tears; but it was his turn now to answer Mr. Hamilton's question, and he did so truthfully.

"No one will tell the truth, I see," said the clergyman, sadly, when the whole school had denied it; "and I am left to conclude that there are not only disobedient ones among you, but *liars*."

He paused; and Harry gave one quick glance at his pained and saddened face: he would have given anything not to have grieved him, but it was too late now.

Mr. Hamilton took up his hat; but before vent he said a few words of solemn warning

to the guilty ones, and Harry thought that his eyes rested upon him, and he looked down uneasily; but Mr. Hamilton went away, and the boys continued their lessons until twelve o'clock, when all were glad enough to go to the playground to talk over the event of the morning, and to repeat their various guesses as to who the culprits were.

Harry went home as fast as he could; he knew he was not suspected, for he was a general favourite in the school, and was thought to be a truthful boy: no one imagined that he had told a falsehood that morning, except those who made him do it, and little Georgie Clarke.

We will not dwell on the days of misery which followed, nor upon Harry's sorrow. He could not bear to meet his mother's eye, nor to see Mr. Hamilton, and he avoided little Georgie. His sin seemed to follow him into his lessons, into his games, into church—everywhere; and Harry knew what it was to be really unhappy. About a week after, he set out when school was over for a long walk by himself, as he did not care to join in the games, and he went alone towards the Longford Fields, which was his favourite walk; but he had not got far before he heard some one calling him, and on looking round, he saw Georgie running to overtake him. "Please,



Harry, may I come with you? I don't want to stay in the playground."

Harry could not resist the entreating look of the little boy, and said, "If you like you may, Georgie;" and they went together through the meadows.

When they came to the brook, Harry stopped, and stood for some minutes leaning over the railing of the little bridge which crossed it. He was thinking of that bright morning a year ago when he had stood there with his brother to say good-bye; and how Michael had said to him, "Harry, be a good boy to mother, and remember that we have a Father in heaven, though we've got none on earth now. Try to serve God, and always speak the truth." And Harry remembered how he had shaken hands with his brother, and tried to hide the tears which were filling his eyes, and how they had come in spite of all his efforts to be brave; and how Michael had stooped down and kissed him, and then gone away telling him to take care of Lion until he came back; and then how he had watched the red coat till it was lost among the trees.

"Oh! what would Michael say to me now?" thought the unhappy boy. "How ashamed he would be to have such a brother—" he was almost startled to hear little Georgie saying, "Harry, I am so sorry."

“What for, George?”

“For you, because you are not happy.”

“How do you know that, Georgie?”

“Because—because you can't be.”

Harry was silent for a moment, and then said, “Georgie, what do you do when you are unhappy?”

The little boy looked up at him wistfully. “Do you mean me to tell you, Harry?”

“Yes.”

“Well, I go to God and tell Him all about it; and ask Him to forgive me for Jesus Christ's sake, if I've been naughty, and if not, to make it bright again. I'm in a trouble now, Harry.”

“What about?”

“Why the boys—” he paused, and the sentence was finished with a sob.

“Don't cry, Georgie; what about the boys?”

“They say I have broken the window, and denied it.”

“How dare they say so?” said Harry, angrily.

“They saw me coming round from that side of the ground, and then they saw me stand by myself crying for some time; and, Harry—Francis told them—” he stopped suddenly.

Harry looked down at the water running so clear and sparkling over the little pebbles

beneath him ; then he said : “ Georgie, I may speak of it to you because you know it ; but I have promised Johnny not to tell. I don't think your trouble is as hard as mine.”

“ Oh ! Harry,” said the little boy, earnestly, “ I wish you would ask God to make you do the right thing.”

“ What is the right thing, Georgie ?”

“ To go to God first and tell Him all, and ask Him to forgive you, and then go to Mr. Hamilton and tell him the truth.”

“ But I have promised Johnny,” answered Harry, sorrowfully.

Georgie thought for a moment, and then said, “ Harry, do you mind me speaking to you ?”

“ No, Georgie.”

“ Then please, Harry, our teacher said something one day about it's not being right to keep wicked promises.”

“ Georgie, have you ever done anything so wrong as this ?”

“ Yes, Harry, I told an untruth to father once, and I was so unhappy for a great many days, because I knew father would beat me if he knew it ; and yet I wanted to tell him.”

“ And what did you do, Georgie ?”

“ I prayed to God, and asked Him to forgive me and to help me to tell the truth, and bear

the pain ; and He heard all I said, and then I went and told father."

"And did he beat you?" asked Harry.

"Yes ; but I was able to bear it then, because I was helped ; and, Harry, I was ever so much happier when I had done it."

"And, Georgie, do you think God would forgive me, if I were to ask Him?"

"I know He will, Harry. Oh ! I wish my head would not ache so dreadfully ; it makes me quite giddy."

"Come into our house, and see if mother can do it good," said Harry.

"No," replied Georgie ; "I would rather go home, thank you."

They had reached Mrs. Weston's door by this time ; and as Georgie left Harry he whispered, "Please, Harry, tell Him all about it, and then do the right thing ;" and Harry went up to his room, and, kneeling down, told all his sorrow and trouble to his Father in heaven—told Him how weak he was, and asked Him for His strength.

## CHAPTER VI.

Strong in the Lord of Hosts,  
And in His mighty power,  
Who in the strength of Jesus trusts  
Is more than conqueror.

BUT how should he tell Mr. Hamilton? This was the thought which troubled Harry now. He felt that he could not be happy until he had done it, but he shrunk very much from confessing that he had told a lie, and having to bear an open disgrace.

Harry did not become strong all at once: he had wandered so far from the right path, that the way back was long, and wearisome, and rough; he had become so weak, that his steps were very feeble and slow; but he had taken the first step. He had turned in the direction of the right way; he had given his hand to the Heavenly Guide whom little Georgie loved so much. He had told Him all about his weakness, and asked Him to bring him back over the rough road into the narrow path. "I will ask Georgie to tell me what to

say to Mr. Hamilton," he said to himself the next morning when he was setting out for school; "I dare say he will know." But when he got to the school, he found Georgie's place empty; and on asking the reason from Francis he was told that Georgie was ill. So Harry thought to himself, "I will wait until he comes back: it won't make any difference when I confess, so that I do it some time." It would have been better if Harry had done it at once: duties always become harder by being put off.

Nearly a week passed away, and Georgie did not come back: he had taken the fever, and Francis was removed from the school.

Harry was very unhappy. His trouble was still upon his heart because he had not done the right thing.

One evening he was weeding the little garden in front of his mother's house, when Mr. Hamilton passed by. Harry looked away, for he was afraid to meet the clergyman's eye; but Mr. Hamilton stopped at the gate, and said, kindly, "Well, Harry, are you busy gardening?"

"Yes, sir," replied Harry, without raising his head.

"I saw your little friend Georgie Clarke this morning. He is very ill, Harry."

“ I know he is, sir ; but I hope he'll soon be well again.”

“ I doubt whether he will ever be well again in this world, Harry.”

Harry looked up startled. “ Oh ! Mr. Hamilton—Oh ! please, sir, Georgie is not—not dying, is he ?” The boy's voice trembled, and he burst into tears.

Mr. Hamilton laid his hand gently upon his shoulder and answered, “ Life and death are in God's hands, Harry. The doctor thinks that Georgie has not strength enough to rally from this severe illness ; but, you know, while there is life there is hope.”

Harry could not speak ; quick sobs came bursting from him as he thought of that gentle, faithful little boy, whom he had learnt to love so well. His mind went back to that last talk—to the earnest persuasions which Georgie had used ; but how had he followed his advice ? He remembered his last words : “ Please, Harry, tell Him all about it, and then do the right thing,” and yet he had not done it, and perhaps he might never see Georgie again.

“ I know you love him very much, Harry,” said Mr. Hamilton, kindly ; “ but it must be as God wills. Good-bye—do not let us forget to pray for Georgie ;” and the clergyman passed on.

About an hour after, there was a low tap at

his study-door; and, on Mr. Hamilton's saying, "Come in," Harry Weston entered the room. His eyes were heavy with crying; but there was a quiet calm on his face which told that he had been seeking strength from God, and had obtained it. The colour mounted higher and higher in his cheeks, and he stood shyly near the door, twisting his cap about.

"Well, Harry, do you want to say anything to me?" said Mr. Hamilton, laying down his pen.

"Yes, sir—I want—please, sir, I want to tell you all about it."

"About what, my boy?"

"Please, sir, I want to tell you the truth."

"I thought you always did that, Harry; I have never known you to tell me a lie."

"Oh, sir! I can't bear to hear you say that. I've been a bad boy—you don't know how bad. I have told you a lie; but I'm very sorry—" his voice failed for an instant, but he soon went on: "Please, sir, I *did* throw stones that afternoon, and perhaps I broke the window; and I told you I didn't, and the boys say it was Georgie that did it."

Harry never forgot the grieved look which came over Mr. Hamilton's face when he said this: there was no anger in it, but it was very sorrowful. He did not speak for a few moments, but then he said, "Oh! Harry, I did not think that *you* had deceived me."



Harry put his hands over his face, and Mr. Hamilton felt that the boy was speaking the truth, when he said, "Please, sir, I never was so sorry for anything before."

A long conversation followed ; and Harry by degrees told his kind friend of the long course of deception which he had been carrying on, until he had come to think very lightly of a falsehood ; but he did not say one word about the part which Johnny and Francis had had in leading him astray. Mr. Hamilton gave him much kind advice ; and when Harry left that room his heart was happier than it had been for a great many weeks. He had gained his first victory ; and he felt a new strength within him which he had never known before, for it was the strength which God makes "perfect in weakness ;" and though he felt frightened when he thought of the battles before him, he took courage when he remembered that if he trusted in God He would enable him to fight them all, and he longed to give himself up entirely to the Saviour who had shown such love to him.

That night when Lizzie had gone to bed, Harry told his mother all about his troubles. She put her arm round him, and he laid his head down on her shoulder, as he had done long ago ; but he felt her hot tears falling on him, as he told her his sad story.

He kept nothing back from her, beginning with that Sunday evening walk, and ending with his falsehood before the school.

“Mother, you are angry with me?” he said, sorrowfully.

“No, dear, I am not angry, I am only grieved; but, Harry, there is One whom you have grieved more than me.”

“I know it, mother; but don't you think He will forgive me?” he whispered.

“Yes, Harry, I know He will forgive you, if you are really sorry, for His dear Son's sake. No sin is so black that it cannot be washed away by the blood of Christ; but, Harry, it is sad to think of grieving Him who has shown such wonderful love to us.”

“I want to love Him, mother,” said Harry, in a very low voice.

“Ask Him to give you His Holy Spirit to teach you to do so, my child,” said Mrs. Weston, as she pressed a fond kiss upon his forehead.

“Oh! mother, what would Michael say?”

“He would be sorry as I am for what is past, and he would look forward to seeing you begin a new life from this time:” and Mrs. Weston felt that in his present weakness her little boy was stronger than when he began to fight his battles in his own strength.

The next morning Mr. Hamilton came in

before school was over, and as he entered the room he looked over to Harry.

Harry knew what that look meant—his greatest trial was coming ; but Mr. Hamilton's face was very kind, and Harry knew that whatever the consequences might be, he was going to do the right thing.

“Boys,” said the clergyman, “one of those who broke the rule about throwing stones has confessed his fault to me ; and as another has been unjustly blamed for it, he wishes to tell the truth before you all.”

Every one followed the direction of Mr. Hamilton's eyes, and there was a murmur of surprise when they rested upon Harry Weston ; but there could be no mistake, for Harry was standing up. His face was pale, and his hands clasped ; he tried to speak once or twice, but his voice failed, and his eyes were cast down to avoid meeting the gaze of the whole school. At length he raised them, and with one steady look around him, he said distinctly, “I did it, and Georgie Clarke told me it was wrong, and tried to persuade me not to do it.” He could say no more, but put his head down on the desk and hid his face. This, however, was only for a minute, and then he walked up to Mr. Herrick, and bravely bore the punishment of his fault, which was a severe caning.

“You may go home now, Harry, if you like,” said the master, kindly.

Harry thankfully obeyed; he had met Johnny White’s angry glance, but he did not fear him now. As he took down his cap; Mr. Hamilton held out his hand to him, and Harry whispered, “Please, sir, tell Georgie that I’ve done it.”

“I will,” answered the clergyman; and then Harry left the schoolroom, and went home.

Little Lizzie was not well, and was lying fretfully tossing about in her little bed. As soon as she heard her brother’s footstep, she called out, “Harry, come and tell me a story.”

Harry would rather have gone to the other room, and not have listened to the moanings of the sick child; but this would have been seeking his own pleasure, and he wanted now to follow the example of Him who “pleased not Himself;” so he sat down quietly by the bed, and gently smoothing the clothes over his little sister, he began. “Once upon a time there were two little children, whose father loved them very much;” but before he got very far he saw large tears rolling down Lizzie’s face.

“What’s the matter, Lizzie?” he said, pausing in his story.

“I don’t like that one; it frightens me when the lion comes.”

"Silly baby," was on Harry's lips, but something checked him ; the angry word was kept down, and he said gently—

"Don't cry, Lizzie dear ; you like the one about the little boy who went to pick violets for his sister, who was ill."

"Yes," said the little girl, and her face grew brighter while Harry related it ; and when he had finished she whispered with a pleased happy look, "Now, Harry, tell it me all over again."

By the time he had done, the little hand which held his so tightly relaxed its grasp, and Lizzie was asleep.

"Thank you, Harry dear, that is just what I wished," said Mrs. Weston, as she looked at the peaceful face of the sleeping child. "She has been so restless all the morning, and calling out for you every instant. Now come in quietly to your dinner."

"I am glad I was not cross to the dear little thing," thought Harry ; for though she was six years old she was small for her age, and Harry always spoke of her as "little Lizzie."

That afternoon was a half-holiday ; but as Harry was returning from the shop where he had been buying something for his mother he met Johnny White, who came up to him with a scornful laugh.

"Well, tell-tale, how do you feel ?"

Harry tried to pass him, but Johnny held his arm.

“Not so quick, Master Harry: we made a promise to each other if you did not tell about the stones I would not tell about the other things; but as you have broken yours, of course I may break mine.”

“You may say what you like, Johnny. I have told all, and I wish you would do the same.”

“You have told for me,” replied Johnny, angrily. “I did not think you were a tell-tale, Harry.”

“Oh! Johnny, I am not; please let me go home,” said poor Harry, trying to break from him.

“Of course not, because you’re a coward; but I know you told of me, for Mr. Hamilton said when you went out of the schoolroom, ‘I wish the boys who made Harry Weston break the rule would tell the truth as he has done,’ and he looked straight at me.”

“I never said one word of you, Johnny; won’t you believe me?”

“Not I,” said Johnny. “I’ve heard you tell too many lies to know when you’re telling truth.”

Harry was silent, though this was very hard to bear from the boy who had made him tell them all; but the anger was conquered, and

he replied, "I am speaking the truth now, Johnny."

"I don't believe it," said Johnny, "and I'll make you sorry for breaking your promise to me, some day, see if I don't." And thus they parted ; but Harry had gained a victory in those few minutes which was greater than that of the mightiest conqueror of the earth, for the Bible says, "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty ; and he that ruleth his spirit, than he that taketh a city."

## CHAPTER VII.

They are not all together now,  
For some are dead and gone before ;  
And some are striving still on earth,  
Their trial is not o'er.

LITTLE GEORGIE died : at least, if that could be called death which so gently removed the weary child from the toil of earth to the rest of Heaven. His feeble frame could not bear any weight of suffering, though he tried by patient submission and meekness to show his love to the Saviour who had loved him so well. To use his own words, "he was very tired," so the Heavenly Guide took the faithful little child in His arms, and brought him at once to His Father's house, "where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest." No more pain now, no more unkind words, no more crying, no more weary longings for a mother's tenderness, or a sister's voice of love, and no more sin ; all these were gone for ever, and instead of them there were white robes



washed in the blood of the Saviour, and a crown of gold, a harp, and sweet music, and endless love, and joy, and peace: these were what awaited him. Happy, happy Georgie!

The bell of Woodspring church tolled solemnly over the valley, and Harry was startled by the sound. His mother had needed him at home, so he had not been to school for some days, and he had not heard that a change for the worse had taken place in Georgie, and he said to himself, "I suppose some one else has died of the fever; I wonder if it is old Mr. Tanner."

Harry was returning from the post-office, and was hurrying home that he might attend to the lodgers while his mother sat beside Lizzie, for the little girl was still very ill.

"Harry," said the voice of Mr. Herrick, close beside him, "Mr. Hamilton wants to speak to you." They were passing the Rectory gate, and Harry with a respectful bow to his master, entered it.

He was shown into Mr. Hamilton's study.

"I have a message for you, Harry," said the clergyman, kindly; but Harry saw that his face was very grave and sad, and a sudden fear came into his heart.

"From Georgie, sir?"

"Yes; such a bright smile came over his face when I told him about your confessing the

truth, and he whispered, 'Tell him I'm so glad!' A little while after, he said 'Thank Harry for all his love to me; I should like to see him again, but I am going to the Lord Jesus, and He loves me best.'"

Harry looked up quickly; "Oh, sir, he is not dead? say, he is not dead?"

"He has gone to be with the Saviour who loves him so much," said Mr. Hamilton, gently.

"Oh! Georgie, Georgie!" were the only words which Harry could say; but he did not know till that moment how much he had cared about the little boy, and when the thought came into his mind that he was never to see him again in this world, he could hardly bear it.

It was with a heavy heart that Harry went home, and when he got there he found his mother busily engaged in packing a box; her face was wet with tears, and she looked up at him anxiously as he entered the room, and then said—

"Harry, my dear, what is the matter? what has happened, my child?"

But Harry saw that his mother was in trouble, and he did not intend that she should have it increased by him, so he answered quietly—

"Mother, Georgie is dead."

Mrs. Weston put her arm round him and

drew him close to her. She knew the sorrow which Harry had in his heart, and was so bravely trying to cover ; it was the first time that death had shown its bitterness to him, for he was too young to feel the loss of his father very deeply, and she knew the love which had been springing up between him and Georgie, so she said tenderly, " My poor little Harry ! " Neither of them spoke for a few minutes ; but then Harry looked up into her face, and asked what was the matter at home.

" It's hard to add to your trouble, dear," answered his mother, " but I must tell you now. The doctor has been here and says that Lizzie has taken the fever, and you must not stay in the house ; so he is going to drive you over to aunt Barbara's this evening. I know this is a hard trial for you, Harry, but you will seek for strength to bear it rightly ; will you not ? "

Harry did not answer, but walked over to the window, and stood looking out for a moment or two. The rain had begun to fall heavily, but it was not to that that he was listening ; and the darkness of the autumn evening was gathering thickly, so that it was not to look at anything particular that his face was pressed against the glass ; it was only to prevent his mother seeing the grief which was in his face.

He had not expected any trial so hard as this. Lizzie ill, and he must go away and leave his mother, which he had never done before, and to go to aunt Barbara whom he dreaded so much; and perhaps Lizzie might die while he was away, and he should never see her again: these were the thoughts which passed quickly through his mind. Oh! no, he would promise his mother to be very quiet and good, if she would let him stay; but the doctor had ordered it, so there must be some reason for his going, and Dr. Harper was not the man to be disobeyed; it would only cause his mother needless pain if he argued about it; what should he do? He did the best thing he could; he silently asked God to make him patient, and to teach him to do right, and then he turned to his mother, and stood watching her as she put his Sunday jacket carefully into the box.

At last he said, "Mother, does Dr. Harper think that Lizzie is *very* ill?"

"He thinks she may get through the illness very well, if she is carefully nursed," replied his mother, putting in his Bible and Prayer-book.

"Mother, if you have any time, will you write and tell me how she is? I can read writing, you know."

Mrs. Weston had been thinking what she

should say if Harry entreated to stay at home, as she expected he would ; but these few words showed her the battle he had fought and the victory he had won, and stopping in her work, she gave him a fond kiss, and said, " I will write often, Harry," then adding, in a lower tone, " my own brave boy."

Harry went over to the shelf and got down a book, which he was very fond of ; it was full of coloured pictures, and he was very careful about it, never allowing Lizzie to hold it in her own hands, which was her great desire, and always keeping it covered, but now he brought it over to his mother, saying :

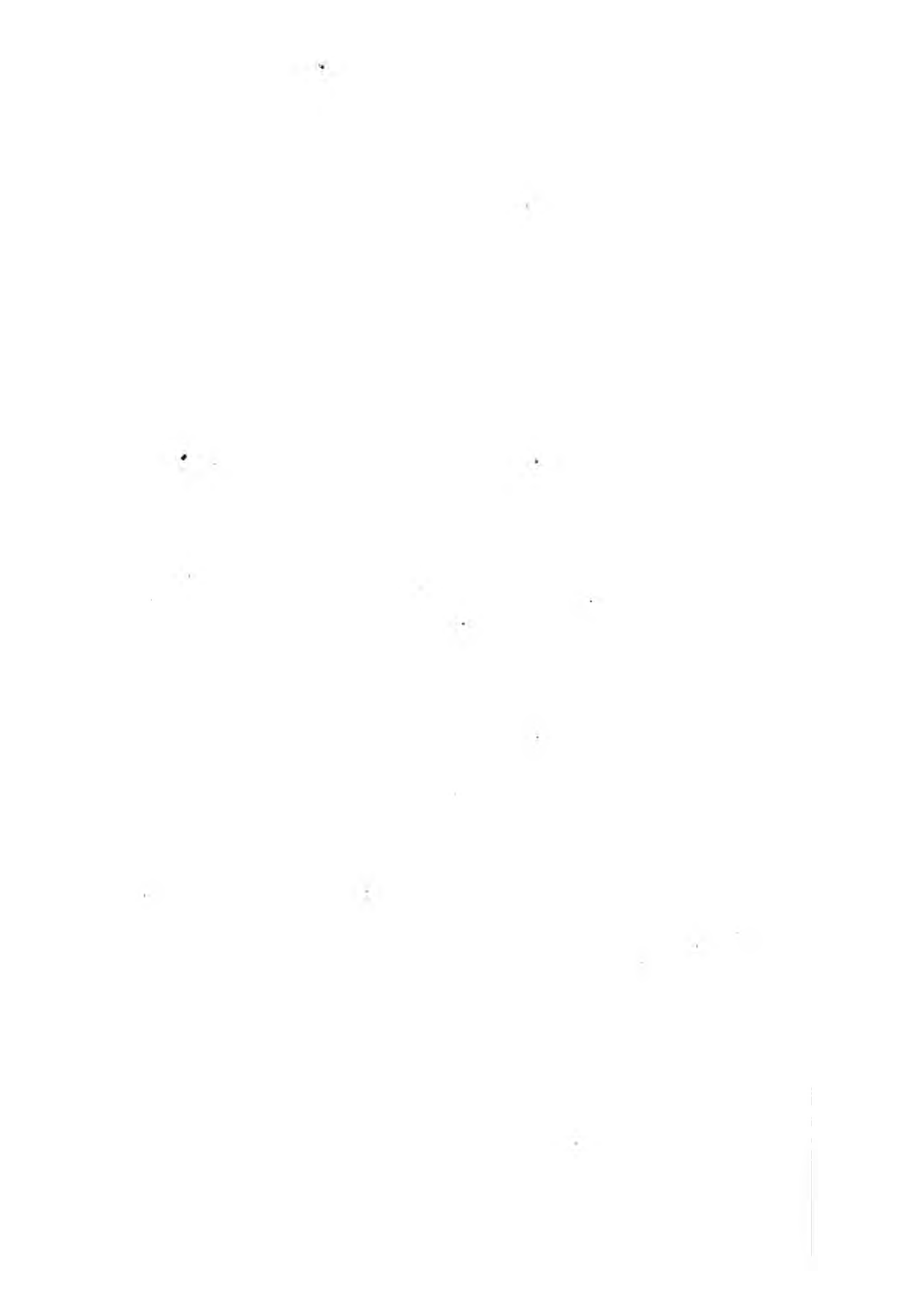
" Please, mother, I should like Lizzie to look at the pictures in this, and will you tell her the stories ?"

" Yes, dear," said his mother, with a kind look, and then she locked the box, and gave Harry the key.

" And, mother, you will take great care of Lion ?" said Harry, kneeling down beside his favourite, and laying his head on Lion's shaggy one.

" Yes, I will," said his mother. " Oh, dear, how it is raining ! I must wrap you up well, Harry, I hope you won't take cold ; here, drink this nice hot tea." And now the doctor's wheels were heard in the distance, and presently the gig stopped at the gate. Mrs. Weston





carried out the box, put it in, and then wrapping Harry's comforter more closely round his neck, she brought him out to the door.

"Well, Mrs. Weston," said the doctor, "is my little friend ready?"

"Yes, sir. Good-bye, my Harry; may God bless you, my boy, you have been a great comfort to me to-night."

"Good-bye, dear, dear mother, and give Lizzie a kiss from me;" and Harry threw his arms round her neck for one moment, as if he could not let her go; then he silently gave his hand to the doctor, to be helped up into the gig, and they drove away through the rain and darkness towards the town of Westmartin, where Harry's aunt lived.

Miss Barbara Stokes was half-sister to Harry's father, and was a very tall, stiff-looking old woman of sixty; she was unmarried, and lived with her maid in a retired street of Westmartin. She was not fond of children, and made them all afraid of her; but she thought more highly of Dr. Harper than of any one else in the world, because he had once cured her of rheumatism; so when her maid Bridget opened the door of the room where she was sitting, and said, "Dr. Harper's gig is at the door, ma'am," she answered, "Show him in, Bridget, and get the best tea-things, and toast a muffin for tea; dear me! I



would have put on my other cap if I had known he was coming." But she had not time to say any more, for Dr. Harper was already in the warm sitting-room, with Harry close beside him.

"Good evening, Miss Stokes ; it's wet and cold. Well, I've brought you a visitor, you see."

Aunt Barbara looked at Harry in astonishment.

"It's your nephew, Harry Weston," continued the doctor. "Mrs. Weston's poor little girl has got the fever, so I brought the boy over to stay with you for a while."

"There's no bed ready," said aunt Barbara, stiffly ; "his mother should have written."

"It was I settled it this afternoon, Miss Stokes, so I alone am to blame ; but will you give me a cup of tea ?"

"With pleasure, sir. Harry Weston, do not step on the rug, your feet are dirty."

Harry wished that he was going back to Woodspring with the doctor ; but it was for his mother's sake, so he was patient.

Bridget, the tall, grave-looking maid, now brought in the tea, and poked the fire until a merry blaze sprung up, which brightened everything, even Harry's tired face, and made aunt Barbara look a little less stern.

As soon as tea was over Dr. Harper pre-

pared to go away ; and when he had buttoned his great-coat, he shook hands with Harry, and said, " Good-bye, my boy ; we'll have your little sister well and hearty soon, with God's blessing ; keep a brave heart." And then he got into his gig, and Harry felt very lonely as he went back into aunt Barbara's room.

" Harry," said she, " you may put your chair near the fire, but not on the rug, and do not disturb the cat, for she is asleep. If you have any question to ask you may do so."

Harry seated himself opposite to his aunt, on one of the straight-backed chairs which were ranged around the room, and wondered what question he should ask. Should it be what was the name of the cat ?—or who was that black likeness meant for, which was hanging against the wall ?—or where was he to sleep ?—or were there any books about shipwrecks in the bookcase which stood in one corner of the room ? And as he was undecided which was the best, he thought it would be wiser to say nothing, so he looked into the fire, and kicked the fender.

" Be quiet, Harry," said his aunt, looking up from her knitting.

He obeyed ; but he yawned once or twice, and then he began wondering what his mother was doing, and how Lizzie was, and then he thought of Georgie lying cold and dead in that

little cottage room, and then of happy Georgie in Heaven ; this made him so quiet that his aunt forgot he was in the room, until Bridget came in to put coals on the fire, and her eyes falling upon him, she exclaimed :—

“ Why, please ma'am, that poor child is asleep ! ”

“ Very good, Bridget ; then please don't wake him. ”

“ Well, ma'am, I've made his bed in the attic, and I think he'd better go to it. Dear me ! ma'am, how like his father the boy is ! ”

“ Do you think so, Bridget ? let me see ; ” and the stern face grew a little gentler, as the old woman looked at the sleeping boy, the son of the young brother whom she had loved long ago.

“ Yes, Bridget, he is ; but his face is not so open nor so true as his father's. I hope the boy is not deceitful : keep a watch on him, Bridget, and tell me what you think. ”

“ Yes, ma'am ; ” and then Bridget touched the boy's arm, and Harry was not sorry to let her lead him away to bed.

## CHAPTER VIII.

At our posts, beneath His banner,  
We must watch, and strive, and pray ;  
By the grace of God within us  
Growing better every day.

THE days were rather dull to Harry while he was at Westmartin, but he tried to be very patient. His mother's letters came frequently, bringing good accounts of little Lizzie, and many loving words for himself; and he had found a book about shipwrecks, and also about shipbuilding, which pleased him; but sometimes he could not help wishing for a little more amusement. Once he began to whistle, but aunt Barbara told him not to make a noise; and once he tried to make a boat, but aunt Barbara would not have chips scattered about her room. At last he offered to read to her, and as he read very distinctly, and in a pleasant voice, his aunt liked him to do so; and when he had finished all the shipwrecks she found a book of travels, which enlivened a great many evenings.

It was October, and nearly all the orchards

round Westmartin were stripped of their fruit, and the farmer's lofts were full of rosy apples ; but there was a little garden at the back of Miss Stokes's house (a narrow strip of ground with gravel walks on each side, and grass in the middle), at the bottom of which grew two apple-trees, and one of these was still laden with ripe fruit. †

One day when it had been duller than usual in-doors, Harry went into the garden, after receiving a special charge not to eat the apples. He looked about for some time in search of amusement, and at last began throwing stones.

"I wonder if I could hit that rosy apple which is hanging over towards me," he said to himself, after two or three vain attempts to hit other things. "I'll try," and taking good aim, he threw. He just missed it, so he threw again, and this time the rosy apple came tumbling down, and he ran over to it in delight. Yes ! there it was, lying on the ground, with two of its leaves, and very slightly bruised. "Well, that was a good shot, I really think I deserve to eat it," and he took it up ; it certainly did look tempting, but something seemed to say to him, "It isn't yours, Harry." "I knocked it down," he argued to himself. "But you had no right to do so," said conscience. "I can't help eating it," thought Harry. "God will help you, if you ask Him," said conscience.

And Harry did ask Him ; it was only a little battle, but still it required a strength beyond his own ; he asked, and obtained it, and then he laid the apple down, and began climbing the tree which had no fruit on it.

When it was time for him to go in, he picked up the apple, and brought it to his aunt, saying—

“ Isn't this a beauty, aunt Barbara ? I knocked it down with a stone.”

Aunt Barbara looked much displeased, but she said nothing until Bridget came in to lay the cloth, when, holding out the apple to her, she desired her to have them all picked the next day ; and she added, “ do not allow Harry to go into the garden until it is done, for he is not to be trusted.”

Bridget laid down the knives which were in her hand, smoothed her apron, and said—

“ You'll excuse me, ma'am, but I think he's more to be trusted than ever he was before. I saw it all, ma'am ; he knocked down the apple, and was just going to eat it, when he stopped, and he laid it down, and didn't do it ; no ! ma'am, he's an honest boy, I believe.”

Aunt Barbara's face became kinder than Harry had yet seen it, and she said, “ You did rightly, Harry ; your father would have done the same.”

That evening, Harry went down to the

kitchen to see Bridget. The old woman was seated by the fire, knitting, but she looked up brightly as he entered. "Oh! Master Harry, is it you?"

"Yes, Bridget, I've come down to talk to you; aunt Barbara is asleep."

"Poor child! it's dull for you here."

"But I shall be going home in a few days, Bridget. Mother says Lizzie is much better. It will be so nice to see them again, and dear old Lion; and Michael will be coming home soon, mother thinks. He has been in two battles, and got praised for being brave."

"Are you going to be a soldier too, Master Harry?"

"No, Bridget; I want to be a sailor, or else to learn to make ships."

The old woman went on silently with her work for a minute or two, and then said—

"Ay! Master Harry, bide at home and make ships, but leave others that have not got mothers to weep for them to go away in them;" and she wiped away some tears which were rolling down her cheeks.

"Yes," replied Harry. "Mother always looks sad when I say I want to be a sailor, so I suppose I must be a shipbuilder. Have you any sons, Bridget?"

"I had one, Master Harry," and her voice faltered; "my boy Tom, he was as fine a lad

as ever lived, and my comfort and joy ; but he took a fancy to go to sea, and one night he ran away because I told him I wouldn't let him go with my consent."

"And have you never seen him since, Bridget?"

"Oh! yes, Master Harry; he came back, and I forgave him, and then he went another voyage, but he never came back from that; he died when he was just in sight of England, and they buried him in the sea; yes, Master Harry, that's where my boy is, lying in the cold deep sea. It was ten years ago; that's a long time, but I seem to see his face still; that bright happy face which used to cheer my heart, and which I shall never see again."

"But, Bridget, you *will* see him again some day, won't you?"

"Yes, Master Harry; they tell me he died trusting in the love and mercy of his Saviour, so I know I shall find him in Heaven; but I'm lonely sometimes, for there was no one else to love me."

The old woman ceased speaking, and put her apron up to her face, and Harry thought to himself, "I will never go to sea without my mother's leave; it would be hard if I could not give up something for her who has done so much for me."

Then Bridget stood up, and opening a door



on one side of the kitchen, led him into a little room where several tools were piled in a heap, and the model of a ship lay upon a carpenter's bench. This is the place where he used to work before that last voyage, Master Harry ; your aunt was very kind to him. No one has touched these things during all these long years ; but if you will finish this little ship I should like to put it up in my kitchen."

"Thank you, Bridget," answered Harry, with a brightened face ; and then remembering what she was thinking of, he added gently, "I will be very careful of them all."

So after this he spent many pleasant hours in this little work-room, in finishing the ship, which was placed by Bridget on her dresser with a proud smile, and was always regarded by her as a great treasure, partly for the sake of the bright boy who had won her love by his honest ways and gentle words, but more because it reminded her of her sailor-boy who was dead.

And Harry was learning in that quiet home lessons of patience and gentleness, which were training him to be a good soldier. Each day led him to feel more of his own weakness, and to look for strength from above ; and his heart began to cling with love to Him who had loved him through so many failures, so many sins, and so many falls, and who he knew would love him to the end.

## CHAPTER IX.

But happy still in all distress  
The child that to his Father flies,  
The heart that on its God relies  
For strength and holiness.

“MOTHER, when *will* Harry be here?” said little Lizzie one evening, about a fortnight after her recovery, as she sat in her low chair by the fire.

“He’ll come soon, dear. Poor boy, how glad he will be to be at home again!”

“I wish he would come,” said the child, as she turned her eyes wearily round to the window.

“You must be patient, dear: would you like to look at the pictures in his book?”

“Yes, mother:” and the little thin wasted fingers turned over the leaves, one by one; but Lizzie’s eyes constantly wandered to the garden gate and along the road to catch the first glimpse of the good doctor’s gig.

“Here he is! oh, mother, here he is!” she

cried in a tone of delight, and in another minute Harry's arms were round his little sister's neck, and as he kissed her Mrs. Weston felt thankful that God had spared the brother and sister to meet once more.

For a few minutes Harry was completely occupied in looking at Lizzie's pale face, and asking his mother when she would get plump and rosy again ; and then seeming to miss something, he said abruptly, " Mother, where is Lion ? "

Mrs. Weston turned away her head, and did not answer immediately.

" Mother, dear— " he hesitated. " Please, mother, where is my doggie ? "

" I don't know, Harry. I have not seen Lion for several days, and I have inquired in every direction, but I can hear nothing of him. "

" But you promised to take care of him, " cried Harry, angrily. " You said you would, and you have lost him. "

" Harry, you must not speak in that way to me. "

" I don't care, it's very unkind of you ; " and Harry ran out of the room, and into the little garden where Lion's kennel was. He half expected to find his dog there ; but when he called out " Lion ! Lion ! " and there was no answering bark, Harry threw himself down

beside the kennel, and sobbed, "Michael's dog, Michael's own dog, that he gave me to take care of. Oh, what shall I do? Why didn't mother watch him better? Oh, Lion, Lion!" and then he remembered his angry words to his mother, and a new sorrow filled his heart. "I have been conquered," he thought; "I will ask to be forgiven, and to be helped to bear this trial patiently, as the Lord Jesus would have done."

About half an hour after, Harry returned to the sitting-room, and going up to his mother, he told her he was very sorry that he had spoken so angrily, adding, "Please, forgive me, mother; I will try to be patient."

"I am so sorry for you, Harry dear," replied his mother. "I have offered a reward for Lion; but I am afraid it is useless, as I think the dear old dog has been stolen."

Harry's tears came again, but he only said, "I hope whoever has got him will be very kind to him, mother;" and he spent the rest of the evening in amusing little Lizzie.

The next morning he remembered that he was to go back to school, and he rather dreaded it, for he did not know how the boys would receive him. "Never mind," he thought, "I will be patient. I know I did wrong, and so I must bear the punishment: they cannot despise me more than I have despised

myself for that lie, and God will help me now if I ask Him, for He knows that I am sorry ;” and after asking most earnestly for the strength he so much needed, he went down stairs.

He had occupied himself during his absence by doing a map for Mr. Herrick, and it was nearly finished, for he only had one or two towns to put in : he had coloured it nicely, and it looked very neat, so that Harry was sure his master would be pleased. Before school-time he sat down to finish it. He had printed the names of the towns, and was just putting a dark blue line outside the border, when his mother came into the room, bringing Lizzie with her. She looked at the map, and praised it, and then said, “ Harry, dear, have you cleaned the shoes ?”

“ No, mother.”

“ You had better do it, my boy, or you will not have them ready by school-time.”

“ Please, mother, let me finish this first ;” for Harry disliked that part of his morning’s work so much that he always put it off as long as he could.

“ I think you had better do it now, Harry, but you may please yourself.”

It was only a trifling thing, but it was not too small to require a battle, and Harry fought it. He quietly laid down his paint-brush,

and left the room, and his mother soon heard him whistling over his work down stairs, while the blacking-brush went backwards and forwards over the dirty shoes until they shone as brightly as she could wish.

When he came back to the sitting-room Lizzie met him at the door with a very sad face.

“Oh! Harry, I’m so sorry. I’ve spoilt your map.”

Harry crimsoned with anger, and raised his hand to strike her. “How dare you meddle with it!” he cried: “you naughty, troublesome—” He stopped suddenly, the angry words were kept down, and he said more gently, as his hand dropped again by his side, “What have you done, Lizzie? Never mind,” as the child’s eyes filled with tears, “I am sure you did not mean to do it.”

“No! I was only looking at the map, and my sleeve knocked the paint-brush on to it, and there was paint in it. I’m so sorry.”

It was not a large blot, but it was enough to spoil the neatness of the whole, and it was a great disappointment to poor Harry. But he felt thankful that he had gained this victory over his angry words; and when Mr. Herrick praised the map, but gave him a slight reproof for untidiness, he thanked God in his heart for enabling him to win this battle.

The boys welcomed Harry back very warmly.

His fault seemed to have been forgotten by most of them, and he was so kind and merry that he became even a greater favourite than he had been before. But he had some trials which were very hard to be borne. When he went into the playground, he told the boys about Lion, and asked them if they had seen him anywhere. They all replied that they had not ; but Johnny White said, "It serves you right ; I should think Lion would not have far to look before he found a better master than you."

Harry turned away from him because he felt such a strong desire to knock him down, which he could easily have done, as he was much stronger than Johnny : but instead of doing so he joined another group of boys at the farther end of the ground. Francis Clarke was amongst them, but so much changed that Harry hardly knew him, for he had been ill, and was still looking very pale and thin ; but his voice and manner were much softer : he seemed obliged for kind words and deeds however small, and was very quiet and subdued, so much so that Harry fancied he could see some faint likeness to Georgie in him now.

"Are you all right again, Francis?" he said, going up to him as he stood leaning against the school gate.

“Yes, thank you; only I’m not as strong as I used to be.”

“I’m so glad to be at home again,” said Harry.

“I am glad you are back at school, I’m sure,” said Francis; “for now you won’t let Johnny knock me about, will you?”

“No, I won’t,” said Harry. “Do you mean to say that he forgets that you have been ill?”

“He does *not* forget it,” replied Francis; “that’s the reason he does it. He wouldn’t do it if I were quite strong.”

“The coward!” said Harry, angrily; but Francis coloured and went on though the words came with difficulty. “Harry, I think I deserve it. I used to do just the same to one who was weaker and smaller than myself, and he was my own brother.”

Harry knew that this was true, and he could not answer for a minute; then looking into Francis’s sad face, he said, “You know that he forgave it all, Francis?”

“Yes,” said Francis; “and I know he was too good for this world; but, Harry, it doesn’t seem like home without him, and when I was ill I kept thinking how unkind I had been to him, until I got so unhappy I didn’t know what to do. I wish he would come back just for a day or for one hour, that I might ask him to forgive me.”



(Too late now, Francis! No sorrow or remorse of yours can bring him back for a moment, or can recall one of those angry blows, one of those unkind deeds, one of those unbrotherly words which you so often gave him. It is true he is out of the reach of all pain and unkindness, but you may well feel ashamed and self-reproachful. If we were to pause before speaking angrily or acting unkindly to any one and say to ourselves, "How shall I like to remember this when this person is dead?" how much pain we should save ourselves and others, how much "bitterness, wrath, evil-speaking, and clamour" would be "put away" from us!)

But Harry did not say all this, he did not even feel it; he only knew that Francis was very unhappy, so he tried to comfort him as well as he could, and before they parted Francis had promised to take him after school was over to show him the place where Georgie was buried.

Accordingly in the afternoon the two boys went to the churchyard, and Francis led the way to a little grave just under the church. A small fir-tree at one end, and a rose-bush at the other, with a few monthly roses upon it, which were beginning to wither, were the only things that marked the spot.

"That's it," said Francis, with a little sigh, and Harry stood looking earnestly upon the

narrow green mound which covered his play-fellow.

“ I wonder what he is doing,” he thought ; “ can he see me, and does he know that I do want to love the Lord Jesus now, and am trying to fight His battles ? Happy Georgie, to have no more hard battles to fight—no more chance of being conquered ! I think I should like to be with him.”

“ Come along,” said Francis, laying his hand upon Harry’s arm, “ I hate this place, it is so gloomy. Let us come to the brook at the bottom of the long meadow, and I want to tell you something ;” and he ran down the church-yard path and through the gate which led to the fields, while Harry followed more quietly.

They amused themselves by leaping the brook for a few minutes, and then Francis broke a branch off one of the trees which bent down into the water, and began throwing little bits of it into the stream. He was seemingly intent on watching the twigs as they were carried along by the current ; but he was really thinking how he should begin to tell Harry the secret which he knew. At last, without looking up, he said, “ Harry, I didn’t think I should ever like you so much.”

Harry laughed ; but Francis went on very seriously : “ I wish I could be brave and strong as you are, Harry.”

“ I'm neither one nor the other, Francis, so you needn't wish it.”

“ Well, I wish I could always do right, as you seem to do.”

“ I cannot do right, Francis, except when God helps me ; if I try to do anything by myself I am sure not to succeed.”

“ That is what Georgie used to say. But, Harry, I want to tell you something.”

“ Well ?” said Harry, looking up.

“ Do you want to know what is become of Lion ?”

Harry started. “ Francis, tell me, oh ! tell me, where is he ? what has become of him ? Please, Frank, tell me ;” and he looked most earnestly and beseechingly into his companion's face.

“ Well, you mustn't say one word about it. Promise that.”

“ Oh, I can't. I can't promise that—it would be wrong.”

“ Then I can't tell you, because it would hurt two people if you said anything about it.”

“ Well, tell me, Frank.”

“ Well,” said Francis, turning round and looking full at him. “ Johnny White stole him, and sold him to a man who was passing through the village ; a kind of tramp, I think, and you would never find him if you were to try for ever. And now I will tell you why

you must say nothing about it; first, because Johnny would be so angry with me I don't know what he'd do to me; and, besides this, he would be expelled from the school. I shouldn't much care about that, but perhaps you might."

Harry's eyes had been intently fixed upon Francis all the time he had been speaking; but when he had done, he turned his face away, for he could hardly control the passion which was rising in his heart. At last he said very sorrowfully, "Oh! Francis, how could he be so wicked?"

"He wanted to spite you in some way, and he knew how much you loved Lion."

"And did you know it without trying to prevent him, Francis?"

"No. I did try to prevent him, Harry, but he laughed at me, and I was afraid of him. He offered me some of the money, but I could not take that."

"Did the man look as if he could be kind to Lion?"

"Well, I don't know. He put a rope round his neck, and dragged him away; he told Johnny he could sell him for a good price in London. But, Harry, we must be going home."

"Please, Francis, I would rather go home by myself—good-night." So Harry went slowly up the steep path, and through the

churchyard gate, and then Francis saw him no longer.

It had begun to grow dark, but Harry could not go home immediately ; he paused by Georgie's grave. He hardly knew what he was doing, for he felt as if some terrible weight were lying upon him which he could not shake off. He never told any one of the hard battle which was fought in that quiet churchyard. His first wish was to do Johnny some great injury. Why should he not get him expelled ? then he would no longer be tormented by him. But then there came holier thoughts ; thoughts of his Saviour, whose dying prayer had been for forgiveness for His enemies ; thoughts of all the forgiveness which had been shown to him ; thoughts of the heavenly strength which would enable him to forgive Johnny. And before he left the spot his head was bent in earnest prayer, and the words he uttered were, "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us." They came from his inmost heart ; and no one ever knew from Harry Weston that Johnny White had stolen his dog.

## CHAPTER X.

• Forgive when injuries around thee roll,  
Howe'er thy peace be riven ;  
Forgive with all thy heart and soul  
As thou would'st be forgiven.

JOHNNY could not find out from Harry's manner that he knew his secret. Harry never lost an opportunity of doing him a kindness ; he never returned any of his bitter words, or showed any anger against him, except on one occasion, when he found him beating Francis ; and then he tried first what fair words could do ; but finding them of no use, he caught hold of Johnny's arms, and kept him fast until Francis got away, then quietly releasing him, he walked off saying—"I wonder you are not ashamed, Johnny, to strike one so much weaker than yourself."

And now Christmas was rapidly coming on, the trees were bare and leafless, but the red holly-berries were clustering thickly amongst their dark leaves, delighting the hearts of the children, to whom they spoke of all the joys of the happy season which was fast approaching.

Harry was returning home one day laden with holly-boughs, which he had been cutting in a neighbouring wood, when Francis met him, and said, "Harry, have you heard about Johnny?"

"No," replied Harry.

"He was climbing a wall last night in the dark, and he slipped and has hurt himself dreadfully."

Harry's face showed the sorrow he felt, as he said, "Oh, Francis, how will he bear it? It seems *too* dreadful."

"He deserves it," said Francis. "I'm not very sorry."

"I am," said Harry. "He does not deserve it any more than we do, Francis."

"Mother," he said a few minutes after, when he came into the sitting-room; "have you heard about poor Johnny?"

"Yes, Harry dear, aren't you very sorry for him?"

"Yes, mother, very."

"Poor boy. Think how lonely and dreary it will be for him as day after day passes on, and he is obliged to lie still. I hope, Harry, that you will do all you can to comfort him."

"Oh no! no! mother, I don't want to go near him."

Mrs. Weston looked surprised and grieved. "I didn't think I should hear you speak in

that way, Harry, of one of your friends who was in trouble. I did not think that my little boy would be unwilling to give up a few hours of his own enjoyment for the sake of another."

"It isn't that, mother. I would go to any one else, but not to Johnny; I couldn't go to *him*."

"Well, my child, I shall not desire you to go—I leave it to yourself; but I do not think that Jesus would have refused to visit any one who was in pain or trouble; and if we wish to please Him we must strive to follow His example though it may cost us a little self-denial."

A few days afterwards, Johnny White was lying tossing about on his bed. He was suffering great pain; his cheeks were burning, his hands were clenching the bed-clothes, and every few moments he moaned so sadly, that his mother, who was sitting beside him, had to turn away her head that he might not see the tears which were rolling down her cheeks.

"Johnny dear," she said, entreatingly, "do try to lie still; you know Dr. Harper said you would get much worse if you tossed about."

"I can't help it, mother. Oh! this horrid pain; I don't believe you care about it."

"Johnny, dear, don't talk like that; it breaks my heart to hear you."

"Well, you don't seem to mind that I've got to lie down here all this time, bearing this



terrible pain, and nothing to amuse me, while the other boys can go skating and sliding and having all manner of fun at Christmas. Do move me, mother—turn me round. Oh! I can't bear it, mother, I can't," and he burst into a passionate fit of crying.

His mother bent down and kissed him, while she gently lifted him in her arms, and put him in a more comfortable position. "Is that better, dear?"

"No, not a bit. Do leave me alone. Why can't you get something to amuse me?"

"What shall I get, dear boy? you don't care for pictures. Shall I call Lucy to come and read to you?"

"No, I don't want her; she never reads properly, and if I tell her so she gets sulky."

At this moment there was a tap at the door, and a boy's voice said, "May I come in, Mrs. White? Lucy told me I might come up stairs."

"Oh, Johnny dear, here is your friend Harry Weston; now you will be happy, won't you? Yes, come in, Harry; my poor boy is suffering dreadfully."

"I am so sorry," said Harry, coming up to the bedside. "I wish I could do something to make you better, Johnny."

"I don't want you to do anything;" and

Johnny drew the clothes over his face that he might not see Harry.

Harry had not expected such a reception as this ; his visit had been the result of a hard battle. For some time he had determined not to go near the boy who had treated him so unkindly ; he could not see why he should trouble himself about him—Johnny certainly would not come to see him if he were ill ; he had forgiven him, but he could not be expected to do more. But then Harry remembered that the Lord Jesus, whose soldier he was, and whom he so earnestly wished to serve, had spent His whole life in doing good to those who were His enemies, and that in God's Holy Word it was written, "Do good to them that hate you ;" and so he prayed that he might be enabled to do good to Johnny ; and he thought of the sweet Christmas blessing, "Peace on earth, *good-will* toward men." If God had at this time shown His good-will toward men by sending His Son into the world, should not he for his Saviour's sake try to show *good-will* toward poor Johnny now that he was suffering ? So his mind was made up, and he went to Mrs. White's house the next day. But the unkind greeting which he received was a great trial to him ; he had felt so sure that Johnny would see directly that he wanted to be kind to him.

"I thought you might like to hear about school," said Harry, gently.

"I don't want to hear anything from you," muttered Johnny from underneath the bed-clothes. "Mother, do send him away."

Mrs. White beckoned him out of the room. "I am sorry he should be so rude, Harry, but he is in great pain; if you will come another day I dare say he will be glad to see you."

And two or three days after, Harry went again with a little basket of fine rosy apples which his mother had given him for Johnny. When he knocked at the door Lucy opened it.

"Oh, Harry, is it you? Do try if you can do anything with Johnny; he's so fretful, and mother was obliged to go out."

Harry ran up stairs and knocked at Johnny's door.

"Come in or stay out—do," was all the reply he got, so he went in.

"Well, what do *you* want?" said Johnny. "I told you the other day that I didn't want *you*."

"Please, Johnny, don't send me away again. Mother has sent you some apples, and they are uncommonly good ones—just try one. Look, isn't that a beauty?" and he chose one of the largest and rosiest, and handed it to the sick boy. Johnny took it, and eyed the basket with satisfaction; but he made no remark until he had finished the apple; when he





stretched out his hand and said, "That was very good, Harry; give me another."

Harry was delighted; and when he had chosen another nice one, he said, "Is the pain very bad, Johnny?"

"Indeed it is," said Johnny; "and I suppose you are very glad of it, and come here for the pleasure of seeing it."

"You know that is not true, Johnny; I am very sorry for you, and I have only come because I thought you might like to see some one besides your mother and Lucy."

"Mr. Hamilton has been to see me twice, but I am very glad when his visits are over."

"Would you like me to read to you, Johnny?"

"No!"

"Well, may I tell you a story that I read in one of my aunt's books? it is about a lion hunt."

"Very well," said Johnny, and Harry told it to him as well as he could remember it.

Johnny's eyes were fixed upon him the whole time, and when it was finished he asked for another.

Harry told him a short one, and then Lucy came into the room; she was surprised to see Johnny looking so much quieter, and she gave Harry a quick grateful look, which made him feel very glad that he had not been discouraged

by Johnny's manner at first. He leaned over the bed, and whispered to Johnny, "Won't you give Lucy an apple?"

"Will there be enough left for me?" said Johnny.

"Yes, plenty; and you shall have more when you have eaten these."

"Well then, Lucy, here's an apple for you."

Lucy looked astonished, but said, "Thank you," and then smoothed the clothes which he had tossed about, and poked the fire. "Mother is just coming in, Johnny, I saw her turning the corner."

"It doesn't seem long since she went out," said Johnny. "There she is, knocking at the door."

Lucy ran down to open it, and Harry bade Johnny good-bye. Johnny took no notice until he was leaving the room, but then he called him back in a low voice. "Harry!"

"Yes!"

"Nothing; only I should like you to come again."

Harry could hardly believe that that gentle speech came from the rough Johnny; but he did not know how much his kindness had softened the heart of the sick boy.

## CHAPTER XI.

As soldiers, Lord, of Thy dear Cross,  
Prepare our souls for "joy" or loss ;  
On Thy Right Arm make us confide,  
And gladly "live" for Him who died.

"HARRY, there is to be a magic lantern shown at the school this evening, and I have never seen one ; won't it be nice ?" cried little Lizzie, as she sprung to meet her brother at the door, one day about a week after Christmas.

"Yes ! I've heard all about it, and I've never seen one either, Lizzie ; but Francis Clarke says there are to be pictures of lions and tigers as large as life. You know the room is to be darkened, and then we shall see the pictures on the white sheet against the wall."

"I don't think I shall like the room to be darkened, Harry ; I don't like the dark."

"Oh ! but I will hold your hand tight, and then you won't be afraid. Now I must go and see Johnny, and take him my new picture-book ;" and with a quick step and joyful face



Harry went down the street. All his thoughts were running on the treat in the evening, and he was passing Johnny's door without knowing it, when he saw Lucy standing at the window ; she turned joyfully to the door when she saw him, but he knew from her face that something was the matter.

"Johnny is fretting about to-night, Harry. Mother is gone to uncle Ben's, because his little Teddy is very ill, and there is no one to nurse him ; but Johnny is so much better that I don't see why I shouldn't go to the school. Mrs. Jones says she will come and give him his tea, so don't you think it is very selfish of him to want me to stop at home?"

"It is rather hard, Lucy, but he must be very much disappointed at not going himself, poor Johnny."

"Well, that is no reason why he should disappoint me," and Lucy's face grew very sulky. "It's always the way ; I'm made to slave for every one, and get no thanks for it."

"Oh ! Lucy, I am sure Johnny thanks you in his heart. Now I must go up-stairs, for I can't stop long."

Johnny poured out all his complaints again to Harry, as he sat beside his bed, and Harry did all he could to comfort him, promising to come the next day and tell him all about it, and begging him not to prevent Lucy's going.

“ Well, I won’t,” said Johnny ; “ she can go if she likes.”

“ May I tell her so when I go down ?”

“ Yes, if you like.”

“ I’m so glad. Here is the picture-book I promised you.”

“ Thank you, Harry ; how kind you are ! I wish every one was like you.”

Harry told Lucy the good news, and then went home. He was very thoughtful during dinner-time, and when it was over, he stood by the fire, cutting a stick and throwing the shavings one by one into the flames. At last he said, looking up into his mother’s face—

“ Have you got anything to do this evening, mother ?”

“ Yes, dear : Miss Hamilton has been here to ask me to go to the school this evening, but I am too busy.”

Harry drew a long sigh. “ Mother, you would like me to take care of Lizzie, wouldn’t you ?”

“ Well, dear, I’m afraid you can’t do that, for Miss Hamilton says the boys and girls are not to sit together, so Katie Jones is going to take the charge of Lizzie.”

Harry threw the rest of his stick into the fire, and shut up his knife.

“ Mother, when a thing is very hard, and yet one thinks it is right, but it isn’t quite

wrong not to do it, what ought one to do ?”

Mrs. Weston put down her work, and made him explain himself a little more fully ; he repeated his question in different words, and then his mother said—

“ Harry dear, if we *think* that a thing is right, it is generally what we ought to do, for that is why God puts the thought into our hearts ; and if it is very hard, then you know we must ask for His strength to enable us to do it.”

Lucy went to the school at the appointed time, and left Johnny lying up stairs moaning with pain and weariness. When he heard the door close behind her, he buried his face in the pillow and cried bitterly.

“ Johnny !” said a kind voice beside him, and the speaker laid his hand gently upon the sick boy’s arm, which was stretched out on the bedclothes.

“ Who’s there ?” said Johnny, without turning round.

“ It’s Harry Weston. I’ve come to stay with you this evening, if you will let me ; mother says I may.”

Johnny raised himself and looked in astonishment at Harry. “ No, you mustn’t stop with me, I—I don’t deserve it from you,” and his sobs became quicker and heavier than before.

“Don't cry, Johnny, I don't mind about it; I shall be much happier if you will let me stay. Mrs. Jones is coming in presently to make our tea, I settled it with Lucy this afternoon, so it's all quite right.”

“No! it isn't right; it's all wrong. Oh! Harry, if you knew all you would not be so kind to me.”

Harry was silent for a minute or two, and then asked Johnny if he should light a candle and read to him.

“No,” murmured Johnny, “I want to tell you something, and it is much easier to do it in the dark.”

So Harry sat down upon the bed, and Johnny held his hand very tightly while he went on speaking in low hurried tones.

“Harry, I know you will go away when I tell you all, but I am so miserable I must tell you. I have been thinking about it all the time I've been lying here; and if I had died, oh! Harry, what would have become of me? Don't hate me, Harry; and yet you must when you know.”

Harry's hand trembled in Johnny's grasp; he knew well what was coming, but Johnny went on.

“Harry, I stole Lion, and sold him; it was out of spite, because I thought you had told Mr. Hamilton of me; and when I found out

that you had not, I was sorry ; and now, Harry, oh ! please forgive me, *do* forgive me ?”

Harry's own voice trembled very much as he answered, “ Yes, Johnny.”

“ But I am afraid you will go away and never come near me again.”

The colour in Harry's cheeks deepened, and he whispered, “ You need not fear that, Johnny ; I knew all this before.”

Johnny looked at him earnestly for a moment, and then as the truth of his words came upon him, he threw his arms round Harry's neck, and sobbed out—

“ You knew all this, Harry, and yet you have come to me, and been as kind as a brother to me. Oh ! Harry, I wish I was like you.”

“ No ! no ! Johnny ; if you knew what I was you could not wish that ; if you knew the hard fights I have, and how often I am conquered, you would wish for something higher.”

“ How is it then, Harry, that you so often do right ?”

“ I don't like speaking of myself, it seems too grave a thing to talk about, and I don't know what to say, the words won't come ;” and Harry's eyes fell, and his fingers were busy drawing imaginary patterns on the quilt.

“ But please tell me,” pleaded Johnny ; “ I thought you were good only to please your

mother and Mr. Hamilton, to make believe you were sorry for that lie, but now I see there is something more, Harry ; tell me what it is."

Harry thought for a moment, and then said hesitatingly, "Johnny, I *do* not do what is right ; I—I am so weak that I am always going wrong, but I am helped. Georgie told me that he never could do anything right unless he asked the Lord Jesus to help him ; and I have asked Him, and I know He loves me ; and the weaker I am the more strength He seems to give me." Harry paused : he had never said so much about himself before, but as the thought of that great love which had now become the ruling motive of his life filled his mind, he could hardly keep back the flow of loving grateful words which rose to his lips ; and while the darkness of night stole into that quiet chamber, and the flickering fire-flame was the only light which fell upon the faces of the two boys, Harry told, in low and reverent tones, of the happy service of that gracious Saviour who is so ready and willing to forgive all who come to Him ; of the joy of feeling His love surrounding him, brightening every thing he did, and enabling him to bear every trouble.

"Was it that which helped you to be so patient when you found Lion was gone ? Oh ! Harry, I felt so sorry when I saw you going

out to walk without him. I tried not to be so, but I couldn't help it."

"It was very hard at first. I missed Lion whenever I went home, and used to forget that he was gone, and call him sometimes:" and at the mention of his dog Harry's voice faltered; "but I did ask to be taught to bear it rightly and patiently, and I think I have been. But Johnny here is tea; I am afraid I have talked to you too long."

"Oh, no! I have liked it so much; at least if you are quite sure you have forgiven me."

"Indeed I have, long ago; please don't say anything more about it."

After they had had tea, Harry read a story aloud to Johnny, until the weary boy fell asleep, and then Harry read on to himself, until it was time to go home. When he was bidding him good-bye, Johnny whispered, "I will not forget what you have said, Harry; perhaps I shall be happy like you some day." And Harry set out for his home with a thankful heart: he was very glad that he had not gone to the magic lantern.

It was a clear frosty night, snow was lying upon the ground, looking most pure and white in the moonlight, and Harry stood for a moment or two at the gate of his home, whistling to himself, and shaking the snow off

his boots ; but his tune was interrupted with a cry, as some dark object came running towards him, and rubbed itself against him, and in another instant Harry was kneeling in the snow, with his arms tightly clasped around the neck of a large shaggy dog, and a delighted exclamation of "Lion ! my own dear old Lion !" told that the lost favourite had returned, and that when Michael came home he would not find his charge unfulfilled.

Oh ! the delight of running up the path with Lion by his side, and pouring out his numerous questions to his mother, who completely shared his joy ! Lion had come to the door barking about an hour before ; and when Mrs. Weston heard Harry whistling at the gate, she had let the dog out to welcome him.

Harry stretched himself beside the fire, and laid his head upon Lion's, while the dog returned his caresses with quite as much warmth as his little master could desire.

Harry only raised his head for a moment to say, "Mother, how do you think Lion got here ?"

"I don't know, dear ; I think he must have run away, and found his way home."

"Dear faithful old doggie ;" and Harry stroked and patted him, while Lion wagged his tail, to show how much he enjoyed all the petting he was receiving.



Harry was a happy boy that night as he went to bed : Johnny's softened manner towards him, the knowledge that he had done a kind action, and above all the return of his dog, were bright things about which he was very thankful ; and though he did not say the words, he understood in his heart the meaning of the prayer in which we all unite in our church service when we ask our Heavenly Father to teach us to show our thankfulness and praise to Him for all His mercy, " not only with our lips but in our lives, by giving up ourselves to His service, and by walking before Him in holiness and righteousness all our days, through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Johnny was quite as glad as Harry when he heard that Lion had come back ; and when he got quite well again, he made what reparation he could for stealing the dog by returning the money to the man who had bought him, and who had hung about the neighbourhood in the hope of reclaiming him. And then the mystery of Lion's return was explained. The tramp had been going about for some time, and had tried to sell the dog, to save the trouble of taking him to London ; at last he stopped at Westmartin, and was taken ill there. Lion had been tied up, but he broke the rope which fastened him, and as he had

often gone over to the town with Michael, he easily found his way to Woodspring and to his little master.

Harry and Johnny became firm friends. Harry's quiet example and influence were not without their effect upon Johnny; and any one who had watched him closely would have seen that he was trying to fight, though it was very hard work, and he was only a feeble soldier at first, but we may hope that he will be as happy some day as Harry Weston.

The last time that Harry saw him in Woodspring was when he came to Mrs. Weston's house one evening in a sailor's dress to say good-bye before setting out on a voyage to Australia.

Francis was apprenticed in a chemist's shop in Westmartin; but he was so weak and undecided that he was constantly getting into trouble: still he had not quite forgotten Georgie, and the lesson of his little brother's holy life and death will perhaps bear fruit in his heart before it is too late.

As soon as he was old enough, Harry was bound to a shipbuilder, but not before he had welcomed Michael home and delivered up Lion to him in safety. And now we must leave him fighting on, not in his own strength, but trusting entirely to Him who had made His strength perfect in His child's weakness, and learning

more of that love which had saved him in so many dangers, and would keep him faithful, and enable him to "fight the good fight" until death.

THE END.

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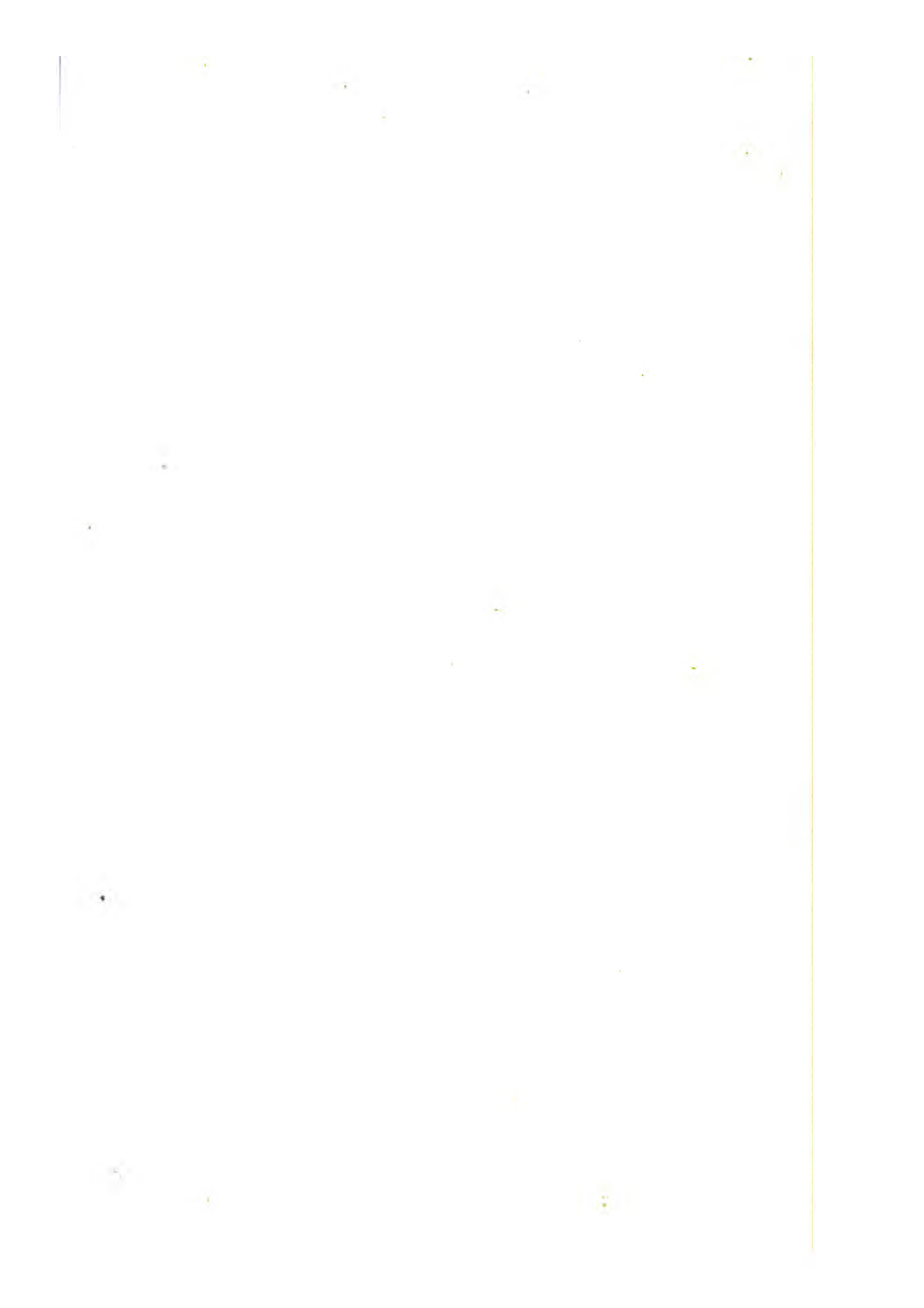
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