

THE
POACHER'S
DAUGHTER.



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POACHER'S DAUGHTER.

AS the amiable Miss Martha Field was walking one morning on the lawn before her father's house, she heard a noise at the gate, and looking round, saw a poor little girl open it, and run towards her. She appeared about nine years old; she had neither shoes nor bonnet on, while a few patched rags, rudely hung together, composed her clothing. Yet, though so meanly clad, her dark blue eyes glistening with tears, and her rosy sun-burnt face shaded with flowing curls, her simple intelligent look, and the unconscious wildness of her manners, much interested Miss F. as the little gipsy-looking girl drew near.—“Please, Ma'am,” said the child, weeping

as she spoke, "my mammy's very ill, my mammy's very ill, and father says that she will die, and leave poor Betsey, and he told me to run to the Squire's, and beg for some good things to make poor mammy well again." "Don't cry so, my poor little girl," said Miss F. kindly and condescendingly, "we'll try what we can do for your poor mother, and I hope she'll soon get well again. Pray what is your name, and where do you live?" "Ma'am, I'm Betsey Brown, and we live on the side of the hill in the forest, just by the rock, all alone by ourselves, and we have not any body to help us now mother's ill." "Come into the kitchen, Betsey Brown, and sit by the fireside, and you shall have something to eat, and I'll try what we can do for your sick mother."

Miss Field immediately went to her father, and told him all the circumstances of the case, and asked him what should be done for the poor family. Mr. F. said that the father of the little girl was the notorious "Will Brown," the robber and poacher, that he lived about three miles off, and that it would be too dangerous to

go alone. "My dear father," replied Miss Field, "perhaps this poor woman is perishing in dreadful ignorance, surely it would be a great kindness to do something for her in such an awful situation; cannot I go and see her? it may perhaps do some good, and there is no time to be lost."

"My dear Martha," said Mr. Field, clasping his daughter to his bosom, "I love your kind and generous spirit, in compassionating the most forlorn and wretched; go with the poor girl, let your brother James accompany you, and the coachman shall follow you with some medicines and nourishing things which you may find useful to the poor woman."

Miss Field immediately ran to get every thing ready; and in a short time she set out, accompanied by her brother and Betsy Brown, and followed by the coachman. As they walked across the meadows, they entered into conversation with the little girl, and were pleased in noticing the natural quickness and simplicity of the child. They found that she had been totally without instruction, and could not even say her letters; she did not know that she had

a soul, and never heard of God or Christ, except from her father's oaths and blasphemies. Miss Field asked her, if she would not be glad to go to the Sunday school, to learn to read her book, and to become wise and good. "O yes," said she, "I wish daddy would let me go to the Sunday school. I have often asked him. My cousin, Anne Jones, who has been in the school some time, reads so well, and has such pretty books given to her, that I should be very glad to go too, if I might."

Thus conversing, they came to a very dreary part of the forest, almost impassable; here their little conductor showed them the way between the brambles and underwood, running before them, and pointing out their path. At length, in a very solitary part of the forest, they saw the smoke ascending from a concealed spot, and the little girl, pointing between the trees, exclaimed, "That's where we live, Ma'am." It was a rude hovel, indeed, apparently built in an old quarry; the walls were made of mud and sticks interwoven; and the roof composed of thatch and brambles. A lurcher-dog stood cen-

tinel at the cottage door, and barked furiously when he saw strangers approaching; but the little girl fearlessly ran and hugged him round the neck, commanding him to be quiet. As Betsey Brown opened the door, they saw a tall fierce looking man in the house, and Miss F.'s heart began to betray her; but such is the effect of kindness and condescension, even on desperate characters, that the robber pulled off his hat, and loaded the kind lady and gentleman with thanks for coming to visit his wife in the time of affliction. Betsey brought a stool for the lady to sit down by the poor woman; she approached to her, and found her in one corner of the hovel, lying on a miserable bed of straw, covered with a few rags and an old cloak, while the blasts of the forest drove pitilessly through the crevices of the mud walls. The poor woman was in a very weak state indeed; but, on giving her some cordials and nourishing food, she revived a little, so as to be able to thank Miss F. for her kindness; who embraced the opportunity of speaking to her on the concerns of her soul, "Alas!" said the wretched

woman, "I have never thought of God while health continued, and now it is too late; I feel that I am dying, and that without a hope. Oh, my poor children! William, William, let my poor children go to the Sunday school, this is my dying request, in order that they may be saved from the miserable end of their mother." She said this with a wild and agitated tone, and then fell back, and groaning deeply, expired. The scene was even too affecting for the stern robber, and big tears rolled down his hardy face, like drops of water oozing from the rugged rock. Poor Betsey, when she saw that her mother's eyes were shut, and felt her hands growing cold, and could get no answer to her questions, cried most piteously; and her little brother wept because his sister cried; and the whole party wept for grief or sympathy. 'Tis enough to make the christian weep, to see a fellow-immortal on the verge of eternity, without a hope; to attend the death-bed of a sinner, and hear the last mortal sigh which may prove as the awful introduction to never-ending "weeping and wailing and gnashing of

teeth." Oh that those who are living in sin, careless of God and their never-dying souls, would lay this thought to heart, and consider what their situation will be on the bed of death, unless they now fly for mercy to "the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world."

Miss Field and her brother, after obtaining William Brown's solemn promise to attend to his wife's dying injunction, and send the children to the Sunday school, left the cottage, with many painful feelings, after desiring the coachman to render the distressed family all the assistance in his power. When they returned to their father's house, the affecting scenes they had witnessed, afforded them, in the moments of reflection, many solemn and salutary lessons, and they firmly resolved to use their most strenuous exertions to rescue the poor children from the peculiar dangers and temptations to which they were exposed.

In a few weeks, Miss Field and her brother called again at the cottage, and by their earnest persuasions, and the girl's constant entreaties, William Brown at

last consented to send his children to the Sunday school, on the next Sabbath, if they would give them some clothes, which they agreed to do. When they left the house, poor Betsey followed them through the forest, thanking them with all her heart for their great kindness. When they returned home, Miss Field immediately set to work to prepare a new dress for the girl, and James engaged, out of his pocket money, to pay the taylor for a complete suit for the boy. On Saturday, the clothes were sent to the cottage, and when the poor children saw them, they thought no people in the world would be so smart as they. As for Betsey, she could hardly sleep all Saturday night, for thinking of the Sunday school—"O what a fine thing it will be to go to the Sunday school! to see so many good children together, and to hear them all sing; and to be taught by the good dear ladies and gentlemen; and for the Squire to talk to us, and to pray with us; was there ever so fine a thing in the world as to go to a Sunday school?" As soon as ever it was light, up jumped the little girl, and put on her

clothes in haste. Alas! she had never learned to kneel by the bed-side, and to implore the blessing of God: no pious mother taught her to lisp an infant prayer, and told her that God would deign to hear a child's requests. How great the value of a pious mother, or father, or teacher, who instructs the young to begin and end the day with prayer and praise. Betsey then awoke her little brother, and dressed him; after which they took their brown bread, and their porringers of milk, and soon set off on their journey to the school. The larks sang sweetly, the lambs played cheerfully, and they were as happy as either, while they walked across the meadows to the school.

Soon the children approached near to the school-house; it is a neat white-washed cottage in the church-yard, just by the yew tree. Miss Field saw the little strangers approaching, and going out to meet them, she took hold of them, one in each hand, and led them into the school. What a number of nice tidy looking boys and girls were there; they seemed as happy as happy could be! Squire Field then put

down their names in a book, and told them to be good children, to come to school in good time, and to mind what their teachers said. "Was there ever such a kind man in the world as Squire Field?" said Betsey to herself. Then all the children stood up and sung a hymn. How sweet are the notes which children raise when their gentle voices join to praise the God of mercy and the Saviour of sinners! Then they all kneeled down, and Mr. Field prayed that God would bless poor children, and forgive all their sins for Jesus Christ's sake, and make them good and wise in the days of their youth. How ought all good children to love those who pray with them and for them! Then the children went to their several teachers; they moved regularly and quietly to their places, like soldiers at the word of command. These were quite new scenes for poor Betsey, she had never seen any thing of the kind before, and was often saying to herself, "What a fine thing is a Sunday school!"

When Betsey began to learn her letters, she found the work very difficult at first,

because she had never been accustomed to any thing of the kind before; but as she was resolved to try hard, and her teacher kindly encouraged her, she soon improved. At the end of school time in the morning, she found that she knew the three first letters, and well pleased was she to say A, B, C, and to know each one of these famous letters. When school was over, after singing a verse or two, all the children went to church, marching in a row, two and two; what a pleasing sight was this, it wonderfully delighted our young cottager. She was at first rather rude, and too fond of looking about, because she had never been taught better; but when she was told any thing was wrong, she tried to avoid doing so again, and always minded what was said to her. Soon the children were all seated in the church, and their teachers with them; Betsey was pleased to see the church quite full;—there were the Squire and his family, and his servants; many farmers, with their wives and children; and the decent labourers in their homely dress: the people prayed and sung, the organ

played sweetly, and the minister preached excellently :—“ Surely,” said Betsey, “ the church is the finest place in the world.”

When the service was over, our little cottage-girl and her brother went back to the school, to eat their bread and cheese which they had brought with them for dinner : while the clear bubbling stream which flowed through the village, furnished them with a pure and wholesome beverage. In the afternoon, the children returned to school, and Betsey felt increasing pleasure in learning her book, and found at the end of the Sunday that she could say the first six letters. As the evening drew on, our Sunday school girl walked home, and went part of the way with her cousin Anne ; she was quite delighted with the day’s employment ; a new world appeared to be opening to her view, and she could think and talk of nothing but the Sunday school. Her cousin Anne, as they were going through the fields, told her to try and remember her letters, and to say them over very often during the week. “ Here Betsey,” said she, “ mind

what I say, and then you wont forget your letters—there's the first, A, that stands for your cousin Anne; B stands for you Betsey; C stands for the Church; D for your favourite dog; E for your brother Edward; and F will put you in mind of Miss Field." "Oh what fine things these letters are," said Betsey, "which can put us in mind of so many things; I shall be so glad when I know all my letters, and can read as well as you, Anne; I do so love going to the Sunday school, and I shall so long all the week for next Sunday to come, I wish every day was a Sunday." "Well, cousin, I am glad you love your school and this way of spending your sabbaths; you and I can say, in the words of my favourite hymn,

I have been there, and still will go,
 'Tis like a little heaven below;
 Not all my pleasure and my play,
 Shall tempt me to forget this day."

Betsey Brown was so pleased with these lines, that before they parted, she made Anne promise to teach them to her in the week. When Betsey and her brother ar-

rived at home, they both thought that they had spent the happiest day in their lives ; and even when she fell asleep, in her dreams she was thinking of all she had seen and heard. Poor simple-hearted children ! sleep in peace on your beds of straw : “ holy angels guard your heads,” nor do they scorn your mean abode, or overlook your lowly couches !

Betsey Brown having felt so much pleasure in going to the Sunday school at first, afterwards attended regularly, and though somewhat of the novelty gradually wore off, yet she found increasing benefit every Sabbath. She was furnished with several books, and Miss Field desired her to learn something every week, to say to her on the following Sunday. Accordingly Betsey applied closely to her book, and often went to visit her cousin Anne, to get some assistance from her in learning. She also taught her little brother at home what she had learnt at school, and thus improved herself while teaching him. Here let me observe, that elder brothers and sisters should always strive to improve the younger, and to set them a good example ;

thus they would both receive and communicate instruction, and much assist their parents or teachers. In a few months our young cottager made considerable progress, and was able to read the plain short sentences in her spelling-book. Miss Field was so pleased with her attention and improvement, that she gave her several rewards, which proved a great encouragement to Betsey, and excited her to increased exertion and perseverance. She loved her books, her teacher, and her school, so that she soon got on very rapidly. While her father was roving about in his lawless occupation, she would take her book with her, and, rambling through the wood, sit on the stump of a tree, or, walking through the fields, recline on the flowery banks of a meadow, with her lesson before her; thus she improved her spare moments, and was constantly endeavouring to gain wisdom. She was not satisfied if any day passed away without learning some lesson to say to her teacher on the Sabbath. Sunday scholars should remember to imitate this example, and that may be called a bad day in which they

have not learned something for the Sunday; those who wish to be wise must improve every day as it passes. I have known many children improve more by this plan, though they only attended on a Sunday, than others who went to a school every day in the week.

Betsey Brown not only improved in her learning, but her behaviour was remarkably good; she was always attentive and quiet at church, and very obedient and grateful to her teachers. "Oh!" said she, "I'm sure I ought to love Miss Field very much, for she persuaded my father to let me come to the Sunday school, and though she's the Squire's daughter, she is so good as to teach us poor girls; surely it is the smallest return I can make for all this kindness, to love my dear teacher, and to do as she tells me. I can't return her kindness by any thing I can do, but I'll prove how I love her by doing all I can to show the thankfulness of my heart."

Betsey Brown continued to attend the Sunday school for four or five years with increasing pleasure and improvement. Not only did she learn to read her Bible at

school, but she often read it at home, when no one saw her; and would frequently kneel down and pray that God would teach and bless her, a poor ignorant child. Good children should always remember, that they must often pray by themselves, and for themselves. I know of no sight in the world so delightful as the youthful suppliant bowing at the throne of grace. Dear child, though unseen, or despised by man, thy heavenly Father beholds thee in secret. Angels in heaven rejoice over the youthful penitent—

And Satan trembles when he sees,
The youthful saint upon his knees.

The religious instructions imparted at the Sunday school had made a deep impression on the tender heart of Betsey; she was often observed with tears glistening in her eyes, while her teacher spake of the evil of sin, the mercy of Jesus Christ, his special tenderness to the young, and his willingness to pardon, to save, and to bless them. She had many excellent tracts and books lent or given to her,

which she carried home, and delighted to read; thus her mind was improved, and her heart impressed with the great things which belonged to her everlasting peace; she grew in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Often would she make the forest echo with her songs of praise, while she joined with the choristers of the grove in singing the praises of God. The conversations of the teachers, and the prayers and addresses of Mr. Field, were eminently useful to Betsy; she thought of them seriously as she walked across the fields to her home on the Sabbath evening, and frequently, during the week, those instructions recurred to her mind, and deeply affected her heart. She was not satisfied with merely learning the tasks which were set her; but she wished to understand the meaning of every thing that she read, especially in the Bible; and when she was at a loss, she always found her teacher willing to give her information; thus, this poor cottage girl "grew in wisdom and in favour both with God and man." She was a comfort to her

teacher, an example to her companions, and the ornament of the Sunday school.

While this blossom of early piety was blooming in the forest; while Betsey Brown was thus gaining knowledge, and learning in the days of her youth to see the value and to feel the power of religion, there was one subject which much distressed her mind, and led her frequently to weep tears of bitter sorrow. It was when she considered that her father was living in open violation of the laws of God and man. To be obliged to hear constant blasphemy, cursing, and swearing,—to witness intoxication and riot, and especially to hear of his feats of plunder; and all this evil as connected with a father; O! it was acutely painful, and unspeakably distressing to the tender conscience of our Sunday scholar! Sometimes she would try to persuade her father to allow her to read to him some suitable passages of scripture, which she had selected. Sometimes she would endeavour to get her little brother to say some of his hymns before him; but, alas! he treated these things with contempt, and if any thing se-

rious was read or said before him, he would burst into a violent passion, and call religion nonsense, and abuse all pious persons in the most violent manner. He could not bear to see the Bible or any good books about, and the children were always obliged to run and hide them whenever their father came home. This conduct of William Brown was a severe trial to poor Betsey, and almost broke her heart, so that she would sometimes retire and weep by herself, and pray that God would change her father's heart, and turn him from his evil courses. Though she saw no alteration in her father's conduct, Miss Field encouraged her to continue praying for him, and mentioned several instances in which Sunday school children had been like ministers or missionaries, to convey the gospel to parents, who had before been entirely regardless of God, and their immortal interests. It is sometimes the case that we pray a long time before any answer appears to be granted to our petitions; thus God exercises our faith, increases our fervour, and prepares us for the blessing he intends to bestow; let us

therefore feel encouraged to continue to "pray without ceasing," and we shall not pray in vain.

One dark winter's evening, William Brown prepared to go out on one of his plundering excursions, and called Betsey to prepare him some refreshment. She obeyed with cheerful alacrity, for she was always attentive to treat her father with the greatest kindness, and to make him as comfortable as possible, though he was a wicked man, and often passionate and violent to his children, even when they committed no fault. Betsey had learnt in her Bible, that it was her duty to obey her father, and to be subject "not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward, for this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God, endure grief, suffering wrongfully." The robber took his refreshment, and prepared for his "deeds of darkness;" soon he heard the well-known whistle resounding through the forest, and, after telling his daughter that he should not be at home till the morning, he hastily quitted the hovel, to join his comrades in crime. Poor Betsey heaved

a sigh as he lifted the latch of the door, and raised a silent prayer to God, that he would change her father's heart. When her father was gone, she called her little brother to her, heard him repeat his lessons, and his prayers, and then sent him to bed.—It was a cold, dark and dreary evening, the wind whistled through the trees of the forest, and a violent storm arose, which frequently shook the frail walls of the hovel. The storm was followed by snow, which descended in quick succession, and wrapt all nature in its white mantle. Our poor cottage girl gathered up a few sticks, to enliven the fire on the hearth; she then went to a secret corner, and pulled out a little pocket Bible which Miss Field had given her as a reward; it was her greatest earthly treasure, her comfort, and delight. She turned over the sacred pages, and read with lively interest and feeling, the wonders which revelation makes known to guilty men. Happily, most parts of the Bible are so simple and easy to be understood, that even a cottage girl may comprehend it; the young are therefore without excuse, if

they neglect the word of God, and refuse to obey its salutary commands. Betsey thus spent her evening in reading the word of God, and in occasionally lifting up her prayers for divine grace and wisdom: "Open thou mine eyes to behold wondrous things out of thy law." How happily and usefully are those spare moments occupied, which are consecrated to the word of God and prayer, and happy are those youths who love thus to employ the early part of their lives.

Meantime, William Brown, finding the weather tempestuous, and the snow descending so fast, resolved to return to his home, and to defer executing the plan of plunder which had been projected for that night.—As he returned through the forest near to his home, he was surprised, at so late an hour, to see a light from his cottage, sparkling through the trees. A guilty conscience makes a man a coward; he was fearful that some officer had been sent to search his home, or to apprehend him, and therefore he advanced slowly and cautiously towards his habitation. As he came nearer, he could not hear any noise, nor

could he perceive any footsteps in the snow, he therefore quietly advanced to the rude paper-patched window of his hovel, and peeped through it. There he saw his daughter sitting over a few embers, reading a book, while now and then the tears rolled down her cheeks, as she lifted her eyes to heaven in the attitude of prayer. He stopped a few moments gazing with surprise on this unaccountable conduct of his daughter, and then suddenly burst open the door upon the astonished girl. With a volley of oaths and curses, he angrily asked what business she had to be sitting up at that time of night, and what she had to do with the foolish book she was reading. "My dear father," said Betsey, in a kind and gentle tone, "I have been sitting up to read the Bible, the best of books, which tells both you and me of the good news of salvation, in which, father, we are all most deeply concerned." "What have I to do with the Bible, foolish girl?" "Father, we have all much to do with the Bible, for it tells us that we are all sinners, and makes known a way of pardon even for the most guilty; it tells us that the

blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin.” “ Ah! girl, whatever it may say, I know that I am too great a sinner ever to be pardoned.” “ No, father, you are not, if the Bible be true, for it says: Come now and let us reason together, saith the Lord, though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow, though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.” “ What you have been saying is not in the Bible.” “ Yes, father, come read for yourself at Isaiah, the 1st chapter, and 18th verse.” “ This cannot be true of such an one as I,” said he, looking with eagerness to see that the quotation was correct, “ it cannot be true, for I have been too great a sinner to be pardoned.” “ Father, it is true, and if you please I will read to you how Jesus Christ, when on the cross, pardoned a guilty malefactor.” “ Can all this be true?” exclaimed the enquiring robber; “ and is there mercy for such a sinner as I have been all my life long? it is too good news to be true.” “ It is true, father, and I will show you many passages throughout the Bible, full of mercy and pardon to peni-

tent sinners.” “The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin, and it can cleanse yours, father.” Betsey then quoted several passages from the Bible, which she had often read over, with earnest wishes that her father might be led to seek that mercy to which they invited. The robber, for almost the first time in his life, was pensive and sad; his hard heart began to break: “And is there, indeed,” exclaimed he, “mercy for such a sinful wretch as I have been? I will fly to the cross of Christ, and this shall be my constant prayer, God be merciful to me a sinner. Blessed be God for the glad tidings that there is a way of salvation; I have for many years been a miserable sinner; I have found no solid happiness; the very thought and hope that there is mercy with God, gives me greater joy than I ever felt before. Betsey, you are the first person that ever told me that such a wretch as I am, may hope for forgiveness.” Thus saying, he clasped his daughter in his arms, and they both wept together. Then they kneeled down, and with broken accents, and broken hearts, approached the

throne of grace. Afterwards, they retired to their beds ; but William Brown's penitential feelings, and Betsey's grateful sensations, prevented them from enjoying undisturbed repose ; the night was past by each in reflections and supplications.

Betsey was well pleased to find that the conversation of the past night was the first object of her father's solicitous inquiries in the morning. This well instructed girl became her father's teacher, in the great concerns of religion : she rejoiced in every opportunity of reading the Scriptures to him, and the excellent books she had received from the Sunday School Circulating Library. Her father had many questions to ask, and she endeavoured to answer them as well as she could ; happily her attention had been so great to the instructions she had received, that, though young in years, she was well acquainted with the great truths of the Gospel, and was enabled to answer most of her father's inquiries. Betsey pressed upon her father's mind the great importance of attending the public worship of God, and she had the happiness of seeing him on the

next Sabbath, braving the scorn of his comrades in crime, and going peaceably to the house of God ; when he arrived there, he crept into a secret part of the church, as if unworthy of the meanest place in the sanctuary of the Most High. He continued to attend the means of grace every Sabbath ; he rejoiced in every opportunity of gaining religious instruction, and showed a marked and decided alteration in his whole conduct : his former companions forsook him, and treated him with the utmost contempt and ridicule, which he returned by earnest prayers for their conversion.

Betsey beheld, with unspeakable delight, this alteration in her father's character, and his increasing love to the service and word of God ; she could not conceal from her dear teacher the pleasing intelligence of her father's conversion, but, requesting to speak to Miss Field in private, she, with tears of joy in her eyes, stated the change which divine grace had made in her father's conduct, modestly concealing the means by which his mind had been first awakened, and her own endeavours

to impart religious instruction to her parent. Miss F. was delighted to receive this information, and promised that she would soon call at their house. In a few days, Miss F. requested her father to go with her to William Brown's cottage: he was always desirous of encouraging the benevolent labours of his excellent family, and, immediately assenting, they walked across the fields together. As they approached near William Brown's house, Miss F. was struck with the alteration in its appearance since her former visit; it had been lately thatched, and white washed, and now appeared, though small, a very comfortable house for a poor man. It was now surrounded by borders of flowers, a large garden was laid out, and there was a great abundance of poultry of all kinds in the yard. These alterations Miss F. knew to have been chiefly made by her scholar Betsey.

When they knocked at the door, they found that no one was at home, but the noise soon brought Betsey's brother, who was at work with his father at the further end of the garden; when he came near,

he pulled off his hat, and made his best bow to the Squire and his daughter, and then ran back to call his father. William Brown soon came, he hung down his head, as if ashamed to see Mr. F.; but this gentleman, kindly accosting him, soon dispelled his fears. When they entered the cottage, they plainly saw that it bore strong proofs of Betsey's industry, cleanliness, and neatness; when they were seated in the clean white-wooden chairs, they entered into conversation, and with much pleasure learned all the pleasing particulars of Betsey's pious conduct, and her father's conversion. In closing the narration, William Brown, looking at Miss F. exclaimed, with tears in his eyes, "Oh, Miss Field, you have been the best friend I ever had; you taught my dear child the things of God, and she has taught me; and, I hope, God has taught us both!"—"You must only look at us as the means," replied Miss F.; "it is God only who can give us hearts, and the means, and the talents, to do any good to our fellow-creatures. To him alone be all the glory." They were soon joined by

Betsey, who returned from market, where she had been selling her eggs; and, till the evening, they continued in pious and pleasing conversation; the happy party then joined in singing a hymn of praise to God, and separated with emotions which may be conceived, but cannot be expressed.

Happily, William Brown's feelings were not "like the morning cloud, or the early dew that soon passeth away;" he read the Bible for himself; he continued to pray; he attended the means of grace, and became an altered character, "a new creature in Christ Jesus." He obeyed the command, "Let him that stole, steal no more; but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth." Instead of continuing the pest and the terror of the neighbourhood, by the grace of God, William Brown was earnestly desirous of making recompense to those whom he had injured, and became a useful member of society, and a humble and devoted Christian. Betsey Brown had the happiness to behold her father for

several years adorning the doctrine of God his Saviour in all things, and when called to attend his death-bed, she beheld him resign his spirit into the hands of Jesus, saying, with his dying lips, " Lord, remember me, and receive me into thy kingdom."

It is a most delightful fact, that this man, who had been a notorious robber, and perhaps a murderer, became a true penitent, and an entirely altered character. Thus God was pleased to own the humble prayers and endeavours of so weak an instrument as a poor Sunday school girl. All may do some good, however lowly their situations, however contracted their means, however feeble their abilities; if we have but one talent, we must improve that to the utmost extent, and we are responsible to God for the right use of that one talent, as much as if we were the most gifted of mortals. If you have parents who are thoughtless of God and of their immortal souls, learn, from Betsey Brown's example, to pray for them earnestly and constantly, and, whenever you have an opportunity, endea-

your to communicate religious instruction to them. God may own even the efforts of a young child, and, like Naaman's "little maid," you may tell of the great prophet Jesus Christ, the Physician of souls, who alone can cure the leprosy of sin which infects the whole human race. Let those who possess pious parents, or teachers, or friends, improve the great advantages which they enjoy, and bless God that they are not a robber's children, living in a hovel in a forest, and trained to wickedness from the earliest days of their youth. Let every reader learn the infinite importance of loving and serving God in the days of youth, then God will bless us, and make us a blessing, whatever our situations in life may be, and whether we are cut off in the bloom of youth, or spared to mature years. May we all esteem it our great object, to live and die in the favour of the Lord, then "whether living or dying we shall be the Lord's."

“Remember thy Creator,” &c.

In the soft season of thy youth,
In nature's smiling bloom,
Ere age arrive, and trembling wait
Its summons to the tomb.

Remember thy Creator, God!
For him thy powers employ;
Make him thy fear, thy love, thy hope,
Thy confidence and joy.

He shall defend and guide thy youth
Through life's uncertain sea,
Till thou art landed on the shore
Of bless'd eternity.

Then seek the Lord betimes, and choose
The path of heav'nly truth;
This earth affords no lovelier sight
Than a religious youth.

