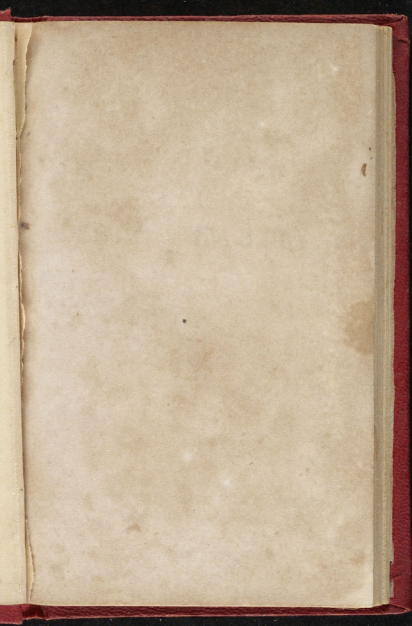
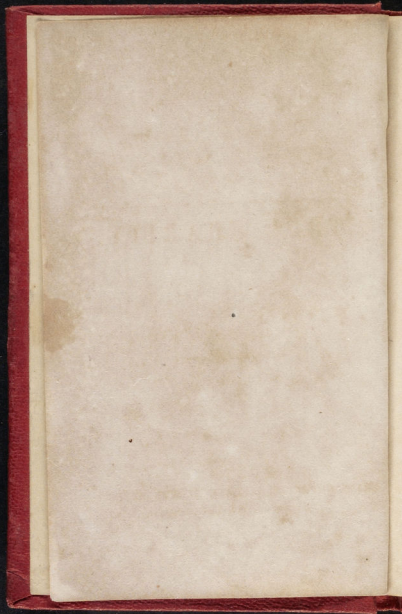


1852 - 1853
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TRUE CHARITY.



BOSTON:
MASSACHUSETTS SABBATH SCHOOL SOCIETY.
DEPOSITORY No. 13 CORNHILL.



(2)

TRUE CHARITY.

TOWARDS the beginning of winter, when the season had already begun to be rude and severe for poor people, Mr. S., a minister of Christ, had been preaching on the duty of charity.

“My dear friends,” he had said in his exhortation, “let us remember how our Saviour has

loved us. He who is the only Son of God, and the heir of all things, became poor for us, and his love did not show itself in words only, but in mighty deeds.

“This good God and Saviour has called us out of the world, to manifest himself unto us and to collect us into a little flock, under his own guidance. He has commissioned me to declare to you his will, which is always good, and to press you to fulfil it joyfully and promptly.

“Yes, my dear friends, there

are poor people among us. Some are too old or too feeble to work; others cannot exercise their industry; others have, in their numerous families, a heavy burden, and you know that neither aged people nor children can bear the cold.

“These friends, so poor and unfortunate, are our brethren—yes, our own brethren. They have been like all of us, brought from the darkness of sin into the light of life which is in Jesus.

“You love them, and, thanks

be to God, you have already often shown that you do so by your readiness to assist them. Many among you have even performed additional labor, and undergone privations to help others, — they have borne in mind the words of the Lord Jesus, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’

“Since, then, beloved brethren of the Saviour’s flock, your love has not merely been in words, but has shown itself in action, take courage anew, and before your poor brethren stretch out

to you their trembling hands, go to meet them, and let him who has two coats, if necessary, give to him who has none, and let him who has food do likewise."

God blessed this exhortation. The alms given in the church that day were very abundant, and during the week the pastor received several gifts, either in money, clothing, or provisions, for the needy of the flock.

Susanna, the eldest daughter of a shoemaker, belonging to the church of Mr. S., had lis-

tened to the sermon that Sabbath morning. She had been much affected by what the pastor had said about old people and little children, and, as she returned home, was silent and thoughtful.

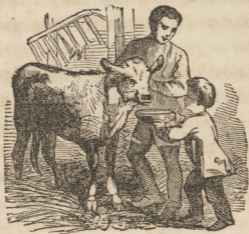
Susanna's mother was a faithful disciple of the Saviour. She had been unable to go to church that day, because she had sent Susanna, and could not leave her infant. Seeing that her daughter looked serious, she asked her what she had heard in church.

Susanna replied that their dear pastor had been telling them of the poor, who wanted food and clothes, and urging them to assist them.

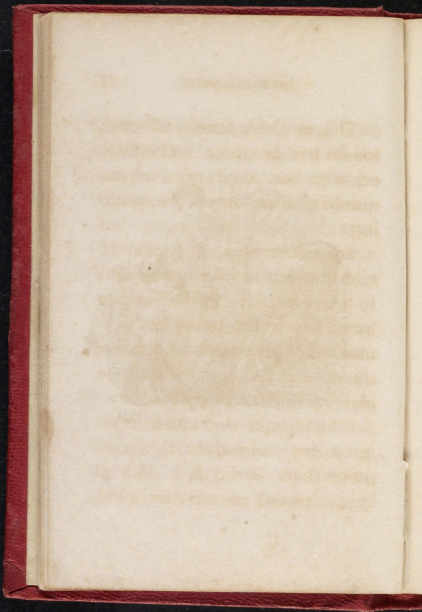
“That is one of our first duties,” said Susanna’s mother. “We have received every thing from the Lord, and nothing is more just than to give of our abundance to our dear brethren, his children, and even to share our necessaries with them, if we have nothing more.”

Susanna made no reply, but went into the next room, where

she remained some time. She then came up to her mother, and said, in a low voice, "Dear mamma, you know papa gives me a penny for every pair of shoes that I bind, and I have this money to do as I please with. Will you ask papa to keep my pennies, and give them to the minister? And then, dear mamma, please not to get me the fur shoes which you promised me at Christmas. I assure you mine are still very good, and my feet are never cold."



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The mother, much affected, kissed her daughter. The father, who just then entered, inquired of what they were speaking.

“Susanna is a dear child,” said the mother. “She wishes to prove her love to the Saviour by giving to the poor the pennies which she earns at binding shoes, and is even willing to give up her fur shoes.”

“Ah!” said the father, “we must deny ourselves this year more than we did last. There is much want among our breth-

ren. Our pastor has just been telling me that old Simon has become paralytic, and that his daughter, on whom he depends for support, is ill of a fever. My dear, we must retrench as much as possible in our family expenses."

"And what do you think," asked the mother, "of Susanna's request?"

"She is a good child," replied the father, caressing her. "Yes, you are doing quite right, my darling. You will be blessed, my child, because you have pity

on the poor. 'He that giveth to the poor, lendeth to the Lord.' ”

“Then you are willing, papa,” said Susanna, “to keep what I earn, and give it to the poor.”

“Yes, my daughter, with the greatest pleasure. You have earned lately eight or ten cents a week; you have only to keep account of the pairs of shoes, and every Sunday I will give your money to the minister.”

“Or perhaps, dear papa, you had better put it into the collection at the church door.”

“It would be the same thing, my daughter; but I know our dear pastor will be glad to receive your alms himself. You see, Susanna, it is the first fruit which you bear, and you know that the gardener who has planted and cultivated the tree will be much pleased to see that it begins to bear fruit.”

“You understand, Susanna,” said the mother. “Your papa does not mean that we should do our alms before men; for you know that our Saviour tells us to do them in the sight of God,

and never that we may be seen or praised of men; but your father wishes to cheer the heart of our good pastor, by showing him that you begin to exercise charity, and thus obey the commandments of the Lord.”

Susanna was willing that her father should do as he pleased, and applied herself diligently to work, that she might earn as much as possible every week for the poor little children of the parish. The next morning she rose early, and having offered an earnest prayer and

read, according to her pious custom, from the Holy Scriptures, she went to work, and had completed half a shoe before breakfast. During the day she took first fifteen, and then nearly thirty minutes, from her play hours, and thus finished that day a whole pair of shoes more than she usually did. Do not suppose that Susanna made any display of her industry, for she was doing this work of love for God, and not to obtain praise from her parents. She was more gentle

and obedient towards them than ever ; but she said not a word of her having risen earlier, or played less, than on other days.

The rest of the week passed in the same manner. And this should be remarked ; for it often happens that children make resolutions to be good, which are forgotten in a few days.

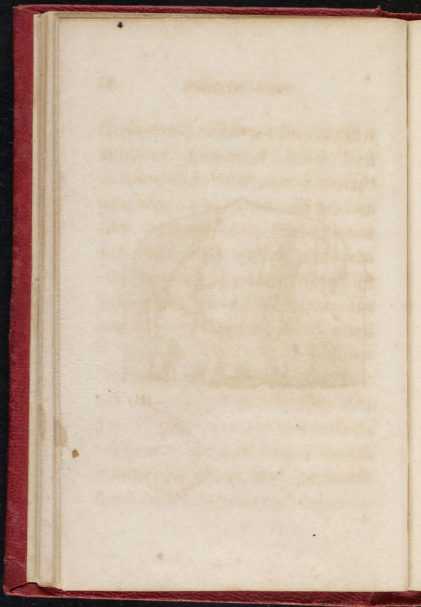
Susanna had begun her good work heartily, and as in the sight of God. She had prayed in secret, in her own room, before speaking of it to her mother, and she had acted according

to Scripture and the honor due to her parents, by asking their approbation. It was therefore that Susanna's resolution remained firm, and that the six days of the week passed without her becoming fatigued at the increase of her work, or weary at having so little time to play.

She earned this week sixpence more than usual; and her father, the next Sabbath morning, carried sixteen pence for her to the minister, at the same time informing him by



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whom, and for what purpose, it had been intrusted to him. Susanna was with her mother among the crowd of people who were going out of church. She saw her father approach the minister, and she guessed the reason. She leaned forward a little to see what the minister would do.

The latter, having received the money and listened to the shoemaker's story, was much affected, and looking round for Susanna, beckoned her to approach; but the child dared not

go forward alone, and begged her mother to go with her.

The minister stooped to kiss the child, and said to her, "My dear Susanna, that which the Saviour has given you grace to do rejoices my heart. May God bless your offering! He has already blessed it. Go on, my child, and be very humble in heart, for it is a great blessing which God has given you, and you ought to be very thankful. But remember, Susanna, that it is of God's grace, and proceeds from him alone."

Susanna received with docility the kind admonition of the pastor, and felt encouraged to persevere in her good and charitable design.

Christmas came. The thought of the pretty fur shoes did indeed occur to Susanna's mind, and she could not restrain a sigh, when her mamma asked her if she had quite given up that present.

"Quite, dear mamma," said Susanna, without raising her head from her work. "Yes, it is decided. And then you know

I go out so little. To be sure, I should have liked them to wear to church on Sunday ; but after all, it would only have been that my friends might see them ; and I do not care about that now."

"But then you can have no other present this year?"

"Dear mamma, what do I want of presents ? I have all I want, every day, and much more, through God's goodness and yours. I have no need of presents, and there are so many little children who not only do

not have them, but who have not even good clothes and shoes as I have ? ”

“ Then, Susanna, I shall not buy the shoes ? ”

“ No, dear mamma ; papa will be so good as to give the money to the minister. ”

So the shoes were not bought, and Susanna wore her common ones all winter.

All through the season, without missing a single week, her father handed the minister twelve, fifteen, and even once or twice, twenty cents, which

she had earned at her pious labor.

I leave you to imagine the joy which this dear little girl felt when, as the snow fell and the northeast wind blew cold, she thought that she had contributed in some degree to the comfort of the poor little village children. But she was destined to feel still greater pleasure, and it was thus.

Her father had begged the minister to devote Susanna's earnings to the relief of a single family, and, if possible, to cloth-

ing a single child. The pastor concluded to advance from his own purse the money necessary to clothe comfortably the child of a poor widow in the neighborhood. Every week he noted down what he received from Susanna, and when the money for the shoes arrived, only one third was wanting to complete the sum.

Susanna did not know of the minister's plan; but she continued her work with increasing zeal and pleasure.

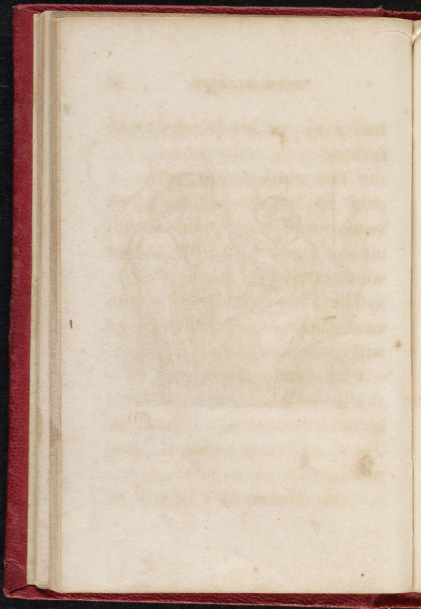
Early in February, when

there was still much snow on the ground, and the cold was severe, the shoemaker one day asked Susanna to go with him to the house of the minister, where he had to carry some work. Susanna put on her shoes, which she had herself lined with woollen cloth to make them warmer, and accompanied her father.

The pastor welcomed kindly his dear child, as he always called Susanna, and taking his register of alms, he showed the shoemaker the use which he



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had made of his daughter's offerings.

"The clothes are now all paid for," he said, in a low voice, "and there was enough money besides to buy a nice woollen cap."

The father thanked his minister, and soon after took leave with Susanna.

"Oh, how cold it is!" cried the little girl. "See, papa, those little birds pecking in the road. They certainly cannot find much."

"Our Heavenly Father does

not forget them, my daughter. You know what our Saviour says, that they neither sow nor reap, and yet not one of them dies without the permission of the Almighty."

As he spoke, they came to the house where the poor widow lived, whose child had been clothed by Susanna's charity.

It was just the hour for the close of school, and little Colin, the widow's son, was running and jumping towards home.

"You seem very merry, master Colin," said the shoemaker;

“you have nothing to make you sad.”

Colin laughed as he ran by, and entered his mother's cottage.

“That is a dear little boy,” said Susanna, “his mother takes good care of him.”

“And so does my Susanna,” said the father, with emotion, and embracing his daughter, “for it is you, my child, yes, it is you, thank God! who have provided that cap and coat for little Colin. Our dear pastor bought them with your earnings — he told me so just now.”

Susanna was astonished,— she had never dreamed that her small labors could accomplish so much. She wiped the tears from her eyes without speaking, and as soon as she returned home, entered the room where she had prayed before commencing this good work, there to thank God for the joy which she felt at having accomplished it.

Where is the child who will not say, after reading this touching story, “Oh how much better it is to give my money to the

poor, than to spend it for myself? How much better to deprive myself of some pleasure, that I may give the money to those who are in want?"



THE FINDING OF MOSES.



THE eye that watched o'er Moses' sleep,
When cradled on the waters deep ;
The Hand that sent him succor there,
Hath still the same unslumbering care.

Though tempests rise and snares beset,
God is our strength and succor yet ;
His love hath no forgetful hour,
No region lies beyond his power.

Then let us cast off doubt and fear,
Since that true friend is ever near.

THE

MASTER'S STEPS.

(39)



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THE MASTER'S STEPS.

“PAPA,” said Georgiana, “do you hear that poor animal crying?”

“It is some dog who has lost his master. This is market-day; the animal may have stopped in the town to get some food, and his master gone without him, and as it snows fast, the poor creature, notwith-

standing the excellent scent which God has given him, cannot recover the traces of him whom he is accustomed to follow."

"Oh, the poor dog!" said Georgiana, approaching the window. "How unhappy he is! Come and see him, papa; look, there he is, smelling under the thick snow. See, he stops, puts his tail between his paws, and whines. How I should like to tell him where his master is."

"It is wonderful. *Sée*, my daughter, with what care and

perseverance the animal pursues his search. He has discovered the steps of a horse, and he scents each of them with the greatest attention. Do you see how he returns to the spot where he has probably found some trace? What astonishing instinct, and what perfection in the organ which guides him, now that his eyes and ears are become useless to him!"

"But how he whines! I feel as if I could cry with him."

"Here, my dear child, come to this window, where we have

a better view of the road. Ah! it is as I thought. See how happy the dog is. He wags his tail like a setter who scents the game. Ah! he is gone. See him run!"

"What has happened to him? Did he see his master?"

"No, my daughter; but at that part of the road where there is a gap in the hedge, the wind having blown off the snow, which has not fallen so fast for the last quarter of an hour, the dog has found on this empty space some traces of his master,

and he is now running up the road."

"How happy he will be when he finds him; for I hope he will find some more places cleared from snow, and so be quite certain which way his master has gone. I can almost see him jumping for joy, and licking the hand which his master holds out to caress him. This dog is very interesting, is he not, papa?"

"Yes, my daughter, this circumstance has affected me much; and I will tell you why,

that, by the blessing of God you may be profited by it.

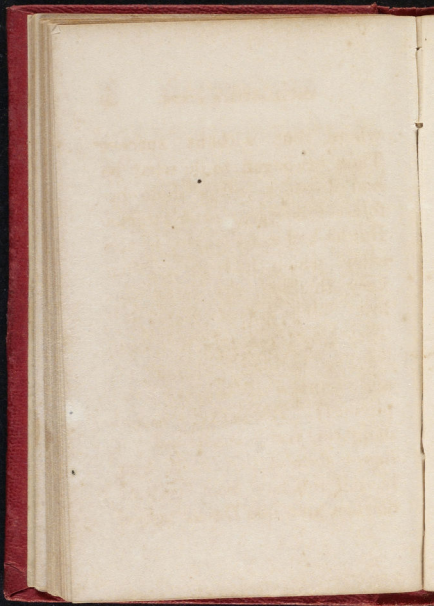
“This dog, as I have told you, probably stopped at a distance from his master or his carriage, in some street of the town, where perhaps with other stray dogs he sought unwholesome food among the gutters. I have no doubt that if he had stayed with his master, he would have given him enough to eat ; but the animal was drawn away by some vicious appetite, and also by the example of others of his kind equally foolish.

“Is not this a very exact emblem of a sheep of the good Shepherd, of a child of God, who, instead of remaining near his Lord and Saviour, and in communion with him, allows himself to be turned aside, seduced, and finally ensnared in the noisy and tumultuous streets of the world, where, with other souls as imprudent and guilty as itself, it seeks among the dunghills and sweepings of covetousness and pride unwholesome food, quite foreign to its nature ?”

“ I should never have thought of that, papa ; but I am struck with it now, and find it very just as regards myself.”

“ I hope, my daughter, that, though you are still very young, you are sufficiently accustomed to the discernment of spiritual things by faith, to understand what I say. I will therefore go on. While this poor dog was thus acting contrary to his duty, his master left the market. The dog, on his return, found the market-place empty. He searched and smelled every-





where, but without success. Then he began to do what he had doubtless often done before—follow his master's tracks. But he had not thought of the snow, which had then fallen very thickly; the track was lost. What was to be done? The poor creature, separated from its friend, felt its distance, and mourned; it began to howl piteously. Here, my beloved daughter, you see the sad yet happy state of a Christian who, having returned from his wanderings, and, like David, turned

his feet toward the testimonies or steps of the Lord Jesus, has applied himself earnestly to seek for those steps of holiness and peace, but who, finding them with difficulty or not at all, mourns and afflicts himself."

"Is not this what the Bible calls the time of trial and temptation, when God hides his face; and seems to turn away from his children?"

"Exactly, my dear Georgina; you have understood me perfectly. This sudden fall of snow, which has covered, and

as it were destroyed, the tracks and the scent of the dog's master, is a good representation to us of the vexatious and secret troubles which God sends to his children, to make them feel their faults. He withholdeth from them, for a short time, not his grace, since he is faithful and loves his church with an everlasting love; but the joy and the sweet confidence which the Holy Spirit inspires in the soul."

"This, then, is the reason, is it not, why Christians mourn before God, and humble themselves in prayer?"

“Have you learned this already, my daughter? Do you know what is that ‘broken and contrite heart’ of which the Saviour speaks, and which is an acceptable sacrifice to him?”

“I am sure that I have experienced it at times, when I have neglected to do my duty. It seemed to me then that God was angry with me, and I grieved as though I had experienced some heavy sorrow.”

“And then did you do as the poor dog did? Did you, at the same time that you mourned

and prayed, seek with care for even the slightest traces of the Saviour, in his good word and his faithful promises? For you must have seen that this sorrowing animal not only howled for grief, but at the same time employed all the sagacity of its instinct to discover the traces of its friend."

"Sometimes I have done nothing but weep; but at other times, blessed be God, I have sought his face by prayer, and his voice in his Word."

"It is thus that a Christian

ought to act. If he has wandered from his God, he should hasten to seek him again, and carefully follow his steps. And therefore, my dear, if you ever see a child of God in this state of affliction, do not forget to show the same compassion for him that you did for the dog which had lost itself, or perhaps gone astray. 'How I should like to tell him where his master is,' you said. Do the same for a soul which has wandered from its God, and is mourning in penitence. Tell it how it

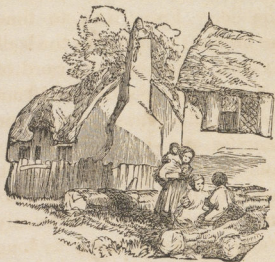
may find its God, and take pains to guide it, lovingly and patiently, to him. For you know that he who thus seeks his Saviour will surely find him; for he is not far from any who call upon him in truth."

"That is very true, dear papa. I have always found that God as it were came to meet me, and very soon restored to me the sense of his presence and his love."

"Ah! that faithful Saviour who first loved us, and has protected us from the dawn of

day by his mercies, does for us as we have seen in regard to the dog. From time to time he breaks the hedge or the wall of trial. He sends the word of his spirit of adoption and consolation, thus chasing away our languor and stupid ignorance, and discovering to us the footsteps of his beloved Son. No, my daughter, our Heavenly Father does not leave us long in trial; he assists us with his power, and with the temptation makes a way to escape."

"And what joy we feel, when



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17
The first of these is the
fact that the world is
not a uniform whole
but a collection of
many different parts
each of which has its
own special character
and its own special
value. This is the
principle of diversity
and it is the basis of
all life and all
progress. It is the
reason why we have
so many different
kinds of plants and
animals and why we
have so many different
languages and customs
and religions. It is the
reason why we have
so many different
kinds of art and
science and why we
have so many different
kinds of music and
poetry and drama and
novels and plays and
films and television
and radio and
teaching and learning
and all the other things
that make up the
world of man.

we have repented of sin, and are again at peace with God! Ah! I know no happiness like this; for when I have displeased him, I cannot enjoy any thing. I scarcely dare to look up, and seem to hear nothing but reproaches. But when, after earnest prayer, God tells me in my heart that he has pardoned me for Jesus' sake, I am quite happy, and scarcely any thing troubles me."

"Well, my daughter, since God has himself brought you to feel his love, trust in him

sincerely, in order that you may enjoy it. He has promised — and he is faithful — to be always near you, when you shall seek for him with all your heart, as you saw that dog seek for his master. Remember, then, this animal; and whenever you may unhappily have turned away from following the Saviour by going back to vanity, and shall be punished by his love, which shall send on your path the sorrows of gloom and bitterness, be not discouraged. The tracks, though invisible,

are still there, and soon will the Spirit, the Comforter, say to you, 'Your God is here, and he calls you; arise and rejoice. Hasten to him, for in his presence is fulness of joy.'"

Parents, who may read this simple incident, see in what a sweet, useful, and heavenly manner you may apply to the hearts of your children the daily events of life. A thoughtless or superstitious man would have said that the howlings of the dog foreboded evil: a Christian found in them a lesson of

wisdom and heavenly blessed-
ness.



