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The Shepherd Boy.

THE

SHEPHERD BOY OF MINNESOTA:

A NARRATIVE OF THE LIFE OF GEORGE
MELVIN KELSEY.

BY REV. NOAH LATHROP.

“Of such is the kingdom of heaven.”

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SHEPHERD BOY OF MINNESOTA.

CHAPTER I.

BIRTH.

GEORGE MELVIN was the son of George and Lydia Kelsey. He was born in Crawford county, in the state of Pennsylvania, on the twentieth day of December, in the year 1854.

When he was between two and three years of age his parents moved to the far north-west, and settled in the territory of Minnesota. At that time there were few white people in that new and wild country. If you had lived where Melvin did, you

might have seen the wild Indians of the forest roaming over the country almost daily. You might also have seen the deer and other wild animals near the house quite often.

Perhaps you say to yourself, you think it would be hard for a little boy to be happy in so wild a place as that, and you do not see how he could do any good or learn any good there. Of course there were but few schools, Sunday-schools, or religious meetings for a little boy to attend in so new a country ; but Melvin had God's best gift, a pious Christian mother. This good woman taught him to pray, and to read the word of God, and tried to lead him in early life to Jesus Christ the blessed Saviour.

When Melvin was about four years old there was a Sunday-school held

in the village of Anoka, a few miles away from where he lived. To this school he was sent by his parents, as often as he could go, for about a year; after which they moved into the village, and he went every Sunday. He soon learned to love the Sunday-school very much indeed, and showed a great desire to learn all the lessons that were given him. He was not like some boys I have known, who learn only the words of their lessons, and do not try to find out the meaning of them. He always tried hard to learn all about his lessons. He was also a very pleasant child, having a smile of kindness for all who met him. He was very regular in going to school.

Mrs. S., a pious lady who was his teacher in this Sunday-school when

he was about six years of age, and whom he greatly loved, says the following of him :

“ Little Melvin was a child whom it was always pleasant to meet in Sabbath-school. He was never absent from his class for any cause except sickness. He almost always had a perfect lesson, and seemed eager to learn all that his teacher could tell him about it. I looked upon him as a child of much promise, and hoped that he would grow up to be a useful Christian man. Alas for human hopes ! his mission on earth was done while he was yet a child. The Lord had need of him, and in an hour when we thought not, he sent his angel to conduct his bright young spirit to his eternal home. Parents and sisters deeply mourn his loss. The Sabbath-

school misses one of its loveliest members; but we trust Melvin rejoices evermore, and will welcome at heaven's gate all of us who shall faithfully follow in the footsteps of our blessed Saviour."

Here is the first song that little Melvin learned to sing. I wish you would learn it by heart, and think of it as you read the rest of this book.

"I want to be an angel,
 And with the angels stand;
 A crown upon my forehead,
 A harp within my hand.
 There, right before my Saviour,
 So glorious and so bright,
 I'd wake the sweetest music,
 And praise him day and night.

"I never should be weary,
 Nor ever shed a tear;
 Nor ever know a sorrow,
 Nor ever feel a fear.

But blessed, pure, and holy,
I'd dwell in Jesus' sight,
And with ten thousand thousands
Praise him both day and night.

"I know I'm weak and sinful,
But Jesus will forgive ;
For many little children
Have gone to heaven to live.
Dear Saviour, when I languish,
And lay me down to die,
O send a shining angel
To bear me to the sky.

"O! there I'll be an angel,
And with the angels stand,
A crown upon my forehead,
A harp within my hand.
And there before my Saviour,
So glorious and so bright,
I'll join the heavenly music,
And praise him day and night."

CHAPTER II.

CONVERSION.

It is a sad, sad thing to be sick. But to be very sick, and feel that we are sinners against God, and not ready to die, is dreadful indeed. No one has so good reason to be quiet and happy in sickness as the true Christian.

When Melvin was about six years of age he was taken sick with the scarlet fever. He became so sick that his friends were afraid that he never would get well again. At this time he was very much afraid of death, for, though he was a Sunday-school scholar, and a kind and gentle little boy, he did not feel that he was a Christian. He said that he did not

think the Lord would take him to heaven if he should die then. He began to pray to God for the forgiveness of his sins and a clean heart, and he prayed much.

Though the mercy of God and the kind care of his friends, he after a while got quite well again; but he did not then, like some I have known, cease to pray. He kept on praying, and was often in great distress, because he did not feel that his prayers were heard, and that he was made a Christian. During this time his mother was his chief adviser, though he often talked with his Sunday-school teacher. He was very anxious to be a Christian. Like one we read of in the Bible, he seemed to be saying, "O that I knew where I might find" the Lord! that "I might come

even to his seat! I would order my cause before him, and fill my mouth with arguments."

One day he came to his mother and said, "Ma, I do not know why it is that God does not answer my prayers. I have prayed that he would forgive my sins and give me a clean heart, but I feel no change." His mother told him that nothing he could do would make him any better; for that God saves us only for the sake of Jesus Christ, who died to save sinners." She told him, also, that he "must be willing to give up all things for Christ, and believe that God would cleanse his heart, and make him a Christian for Jesus's sake."

He still prayed on, striving to enter in at the strait gate, and did

all his duties, and in a short time after this was made happy in a Saviour's love. He told his mother that "he knew now that God had forgiven his sins for Christ's sake, for he loved to pray, and felt that God blessed him, and that it was easy now to do right, and that he was very happy." After this he loved to go to church, and to the class meetings, where he heard good people talk together of the love and mercy of God.

It was some two years after his sickness that he felt sure that God heard his prayer and made him a Christian. But perhaps you ask if every one must be so long in seeking before the pearl of great price is found. I answer, No, my dear child. God is willing just now to hear your

prayer and make you his child. If you are fully determined to serve him all your days, and now put your trust in God's dear Son alone for salvation, he will now bless you for Jesus's sake.

Here is one of Melvin's favorite hymns after he became a Christian.

“ Who was in a manger laid ?

Jesus, blessed Jesus.

Who for money was betrayed ?

Jesus, blessed Jesus.

Who up Calvary was led ?

Who for us his life-blood shed ?

Jesus Christ, creation's head,

Jesus, blessed Jesus.

“ Who can hear us when we call ?

Jesus, blessed Jesus.

Who's the dearest friend of all ?

Jesus, blessed Jesus.

Who alone can do us good

When we're tossed on Jordan's flood ?

Jesus Christ, our risen Lord,

Jesus, blessed Jesus.

“ Who can rob the grave of gloom ?

Jesus, blessed Jesus.

Who can raise us from the tomb ?

Jesus, blessed Jesus.

When before the Judge we wait,

Who will open heaven's gate ?

Jesus Christ our Advocate ;

Jesus, blessed Jesus.

“ Who will give the sweetest rest ?

Jesus, blessed Jesus.

Who in heaven shall we love best ?

Jesus, blessed Jesus.

At his feet our crowns we'll fling,

While with rapturous songs we sing,

Jesus Christ our Saviour King,

Jesus, blessed Jesus.”

CHAPTER III.

MELVIN IN DAY-SCHOOL.

Not only in Sunday-school did Melvin show a desire to learn, but in the day-school also. It would be hard to find a better student than he was. Eager to master all those studies that would make him wise, and prepare him for the business of life, he applied himself closely. On the playground he was as active and cheerful as any boy you would find. Hard study made him relish play. Melvin was agreeable in his play, as he also was to his teachers, showing them that respect and obedience that is due them.

Perhaps I could not do better than

to give you a copy of a letter written by Mrs. B., who was his teacher when he was eight years of age. The letter was written to Melvin's mother after his death.

She says, "Tears of sorrow fell on your letter as I read of Melvin's death, for I had loved him, and had marked out for him a career of honor and usefulness. He was a boy of no ordinary ability.

"Thoughtful and studious beyond his years, he never complained of a difficult task, and was always eager to master every lesson given him. He was always at school in good time, with his lessons well learned. I felt that he was destined to fill some eminent position in life. He was gentle and kind, always ready to grant a favor to his schoolmates; he

never sought to revenge an injury. He won the love of all who knew him."

Melvin was a great lover of reading; he would read all the good books and papers he could get. When he came into the house, if he had even five or ten minutes to spare, he had some good book or paper in his hand. He was employed during one summer by a man in the village to watch over his sheep. I have seen him sometimes, when the sheep were feeding near a small church at the edge of the village, sitting on the step of the church reading a good book.

He was a constant reader of the Sunday-School Advocate and the library books, and later in life of the Northwestern Christian Advo-

cate, a religious paper published at Chicago, Illinois, and also of the *Missionary Advocate*, as well as of some other papers. He used sometimes to visit me, to read in my library.

One day, in company with some of his playmates, Melvin was skating on the mill-pond in the village. While they were at play, one of the little boys was heard to swear. This pained Melvin very much, and he kindly reproved him, telling him "that he ought not to do so, and that if he was about to die and go before God, he would not like to swear so." I am sorry to say that the little boy was so wicked that he did not seem afraid to swear. His mother had not taught him to fear the Lord, and to honor his name. I hope you will remember

the words of the Lord Jesus, how that he says, "Swear not at all." Of course the children who read this Sunday-school book, and have such kind teachers in the Sunday-school, will never swear! I hope you will do as Melvin did. If any of your playmates should so far forget God's word as to swear, kindly reprove them, and if they will not stop the sinful practice, you must not play with them, lest you learn their evil ways, and at last come to a bad end.

"Why should I join with those in play
In whom I've no delight;
Who curse and swear, but never pray;
Who call ill names and fight.

"Away from fools I'll turn mine eyes,
Nor with the scoffers go;
I would be walking with the wise,
That wiser I may grow."

CHAPTER IV.

BRINGING OTHERS INTO SUNDAY-
SCHOOL.

AFTER his conversion his love for the Sunday-school was greater than ever, and he tried to persuade all the children he knew, who did not go to Sunday-school, to go with him. In this he was quite successful, and brought in many new scholars, that they might learn about Jesus and the way to heaven. This is always the way with those, whether old or young, who love our Lord Jesus Christ; they are very happy themselves, and wish all others to be as happy as they are.

Melvin was still very diligent in getting his lessons and storing his

mind with such things as would help him to live a Christian life. Mrs. W., a pious Christian lady, was his teacher when he was about nine years of age. This lady removed to the East when he was about ten years of age. After Melvin died I wrote to her, telling her of his death, and in answer she sent me the following letter. You may see by it how much she loved him, and how diligent and faithful he was.

“So death has taken one of my boys—one of the most promising. I am pained, I am sad; yet I thank God that he had learned to love him. Melvin was a bright, active boy, and bade fair to make a useful man. I cannot realize yet that he is gone. He was constant and punctual at Sabbath-school; nothing but

sickness ever kept him away; and he was attentive while there. Any questions proposed to the class were quickly responded to by him, and he often came to me with questions on some points he did not understand. I think I can safely say that he *never* recited a set of words that to him meant nothing. He was honorable in all his actions, so far as they came under my observation. He was always kind and respectful. He came to me with his photograph a day or two before I left Anoka. The picture gratified me very much at the time, and I prize it highly now. How such trifling testimonials help to lighten and cheer our dark hours! It is pleasant to feel that those for whom you have felt a deep interest, and for whom you have

labored and prayed, love and respect you. It may be a selfish feeling, but it is cheering. Do you not find it so, Bro. L.?"

Melvin also greatly loved to hear the gospel preached. The good man who preached in the school-house where he went to meeting (for there was no beautiful church there at that time) did not forget to preach to the children. When there was a minister there who did not preach much to the children it was a great trial to him. About the time of the conference, when it was expected that a new preacher would be sent to the place, he was very anxious that one should be sent who would preach to the children. While I knew Melvin, which was during the two last years of his life, he was very orderly and

attentive in the house of worship. Indeed, I have seen but few older persons who seemed to enjoy hearing the word of God preached more than he did. Often during the last year of his life I have seen him sitting in the house of worship giving most careful attention to the preaching. He would often go home to his mother, who was not able to go to church much at that time, and tell her all about the sermon, and say, "I wish you could have been there, ma, it was so good, and I enjoyed it so much." He was at this time between ten and eleven years of age, yet he understood and enjoyed most of the preaching he heard, and treasured it up in his heart.

HYMN.

“To thy temple I repair ;
Lord, I love to worship there.
Heavenly Father, give me grace,
In thy courts to seek thy face.

“While thy servant shall proclaim
Peace and pardon in thy name,
Through his voice, by faith may I
Hear thee speaking from the sky.

“From thy house when I return,
May my heart within me burn ;
And at evening let me say,
I have walked with God to-day.”

CHAPTER V.

DILIGENT IN BUSINESS.

No one should idle away time. One of the great good men we read of in the Bible says, that if any would not work, neither should he eat. How would you like such a rule as that? I am afraid a good many people would go hungry a great deal of the time. Here is one of the proverbs of the wise man: "He becometh poor that dealeth with a slack hand: but the hand of the diligent maketh rich." I hope you will learn this proverb and always be diligent.

Melvin was a very industrious boy, almost always doing some useful

work. I told you in another chapter that he was hired by a man in the village to tend his sheep; he was a good shepherd boy, watchful and kind to the sheep, and faithful to his employer.

He seemed to be asking himself, as many of you often do, How can I be useful? I will tell you of some other of his ways of being useful. Each year he would plant a little garden for himself. His father gave him the ground, and all that grew upon it was to be his own. He took great care to keep down the weeds and loosen the ground, so that what he planted would grow well. But perhaps some little boy is saying to himself as he reads this story, "What does a little boy like me want with a garden? My pa raises all that I need to eat."

I will tell you what Melvin did with what grew in his garden. He carried it to market and sold it, and gave most of the money for the support of Sunday-schools, and to help send missionaries to preach the gospel to the poor heathen. His last garden had in it some watermelons, popcorn, tomatoes, onions, and some other things. He did not live to see these things get ripe, but he gave directions that they should be sold, and the money given for the benefit of Sunday-schools and missions. When the things were gathered and sold it was found that they brought five dollars in money. This five dollars has been sent to Dr. Wise, the editor of the Sunday-school Advocate, to aid in establishing a Mission Sunday-school library in some destitute place.

Melvin had also five fine young sheep that he had bought with his own money. So you see he was the owner as well as the keeper of sheep. The interest that these sheep will bring is also to be used for the cause of Sunday-schools and missions. He was careful of his money, and did not spend it for foolish things, but was always ready to use it to do good.

Like all true Christians, he felt that he ought to "work while it is day;" and also, that he ought to deny himself of useless things, that he might have money to do good with. At one of the monthly concerts of the Sunday-school and Missionary Society of the Anoka Sunday-school, we sung the hymn that has this verse in it:

"The mites have the blessing,
 The millions have naught;
 Our faith thus expressing,
 Our gifts we have brought.
 Had we followed love's promptings,
 It might have been such
 As to forfeit the promise,
 By giving too much."

A day or two after this he sent me word that he did not like the song.

When I wished to know the reason he said it did not seem to him to be true.

He thought that if we have only mites to give, then only mites are required of us; but if we have millions, we ought to bring these as an offering to Jesus. In his own words, "If any one has a good deal, he ought to give a good deal."

And this, my dear children, is the true doctrine. The Bible says, "To

whom much is given, of him shall much be required."

Kindness to the poor is one of the best proofs of a good heart. During the late terrible war, many of the poor people who had been slaves in the southern states of our country ran away from their masters. One of these found her way to Anoka. She was called Aunt Betty. She had a little boy about five years old and a baby. The baby died soon after she came to the place, and she was left with none but her little Willie. She was then very poor, and lived in a little old house. When thanksgiving day came, and the people of the village were going to hold meetings and enjoy good dinners, as most of you do on thanksgiving day, Melvin thought of Aunt Betty and Willie,

and wished to do something to make them happy. He asked his mother to let him carry them a chicken for a thanksgiving dinner. His mother gladly consented, for she was always pleased to see him trying to do good.

With a happy heart and nimble feet he skipped over the ground until he reached the place where they lived, and made them the present in a kind and polite manner. Aunt Betty and Willie were glad indeed, and thanked him heartily. I dare say he was a happier boy that day because of the good deed he had done, than he was in eating his own good thanksgiving dinner. The Bible tells us, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." It also says, "He that giveth to the poor lendeth to the Lord, and he will repay him again."

HYMN.

“How doth the little busy bee,
Improve each shining hour,
And gather honey all the day,
From every opening flower.

“How skillfully she builds her nest,
How neat she spreads her wax ;
She labors hard to store it well
With the sweet food she makes.

“In works of kindness or of skill,
We must be busy too ;
For Satan finds some mischief still
For idle hands to do.

“With books or work or healthful play
Let our first years be past,
That we may give for every day
Some good account at last.”

CHAPTER VI.

FILIAL LOVE.

MELVIN was loving and kind to all his friends. His father shared very largely in his affections, and he was careful to try and please him by strict obedience. His sisters rejoiced in the love of a most affectionate brother, who tried to make them happy by kind deeds, and to set them a good example. His baby brother was very fond of him, because he always watched over him so kindly, and took care of him so tenderly. But I think he seemed more perfectly devoted to his mother than to any one else. I always have great love for a boy who is loving, kind,

and obedient to his mother, and I expect that he will be a good and useful man if he lives to grow up. But if a boy is rude and unkind to his mother, I feel almost sure that he will grow up to be a bad man, and perhaps come to some bad end.

Melvin made a confidant of his mother: he would talk freely to her on all matters that interested him, especially when he was in doubt about right and wrong, and also about the religion of the blessed Jesus.

This was the true course. There is no other earthly friend who can feel so much for us, and instruct us so well, as a mother. Think how much your mother loves you, and how hard she works to clothe you and teach you! When you was a little infant in the cradle, and could not take

care of yourself, who was it that watched over you so tenderly? When you was sick, and slept so little through long and weary nights, who was it that gave up her own sleep to sit beside your bed? Whose soft hand was it that soothed your aching head? I well know whose it was, for I too have a mother. Take notice of your own mother for a few days; see how many cares she has, and how watchful she is over you and your little brothers and sisters. If you will do this I think you will feel like trying to do what you can to help her.

Melvin tried to do what he could to help his mother, and to lighten her cares. His father told me, "His quick eye would often see what was needed to be done, and his willing

hand would perform it, long before his mother would think of calling upon him for help." How much better such a course is than that of some boys I have seen, who, instead of doing so, would even complain, or cry, when their mothers would call upon them for help in some small matter. Shame! shame on the boy who is unkind and rude to his mother! I hope all such boys will repent, and pray for forgiveness, and try to do better after this. I wish all my little readers would commit to memory this proverb of the wise man: "My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother: for they shall be an ornament of grace unto thy head, and chains about thy neck."

Not far from the village of Anoka there is a beautiful lake. Around the winding shore there are beautiful shade trees, and sweet smelling flowers, and blue-berries growing. Out in the lake the water-lily may be seen, the large flat leaves lie upon the surface, and the beautiful flowers hold their white heads an inch or two out of the water. In the clear cool waters the fish sport and play, and in the branches of the shade trees the birds build their nests, and sing their songs. It is a splendid place at which to spend a few pleasant hours. One day several of Melvin's young friends were going to this lake on a fishing excursion, and he wished to go with them. His parents told him they would be glad to have him go and have a pleasant time, and

catch some fish for the family to eat if he could, but they did not wish him to go out on the lake in a boat, even if the other boys should. They were fearful some harm might befall him. He told them he would do as they wished.

When the company reached the lake the other boys found a small boat, and were about to go out on the smooth waters, when one of them called out, "Come, Melvin, get in and we will row out to deep water, where there is good fishing."

"No," said he, "you know my pa and ma told me they did not wish me to go out on the lake in the boat."

"Well, but how will they know it; besides, they wont care if you don't get hurt, and there aint a bit of danger."

“But I promised them I would not go, and I cannot afford to break my promise.”

“Well, I advise you to go, for you can't catch any fish if you stay on shore.”

“Then I must do without them.”

Brave, true hearted boy! you can do without them better than you can afford to do wrong.

There did not, to be sure, seem to be any danger on the beautiful smooth lake. The little boy who rowed the boat was a skillful hand to row; he could cross the rapid current of the great Mississippi river in a boat by himself.

But the little shepherd boy did not ask the question, Is there danger? but, Is it right? He would not yield to the temptation to disobey his

parents, even if he lost the pleasure of catching the fish. But he did not even lose this pleasure, for in the evening he came home with a clear conscience, and as nice a string of fish as any boy in the company. He had more than the family needed to eat, and went out and sold enough to bring him twenty-five cents in cash, which he put into the collection at the very next monthly concert of the Sunday-school and Missionary Society.

CHAPTER VII.

PATRIOTISM.

MELVIN was a patriotic boy. I mean by this, one who loves our country; one who, in time of the great war against rebellion and slavery, was devoted to the welfare of our union soldiers. Many of my young readers perhaps know something of the hardships of that terrible war, that lasted for four long and dreary years. Perhaps you had a father, or brother, or some near friend, who was a soldier in the Union army. You have heard them tell of the hardships the soldiers had to endure. You know, too, that those at home enjoyed a great many comforts that the soldiers could not

have. It may be that you think of a grave somewhere in the sunny South that holds the manly body of one you loved most dearly. You have heard how some of our soldiers were placed in prisons, and some of them starved, by the wicked men who were fighting against our government. During this war Christian men and women held fairs, and collected money and other needful things for the soldiers, and the women and girls knit socks and gloves, and made other clothing for them. These things were carried to the soldiers by agents of the Sanitary and Christian Commissions, two societies that were kept up for the purpose of helping the sick and wounded soldiers. In this great and noble work Melvin took a deep interest, and as he read much,

he knew quite well what was going on in the army, and what the people were doing for the soldiers. One day he was reading in the Northwestern Christian Advocate, where he found a notice calling upon boys and girls to raise subscribers for the picture of the American Eagle. This eagle was a noble bird. He was caught when young by an Indian in Wisconsin and given to a farmer. A man in Eau Claire, Wisconsin, bought him, and gave him to a company of soldiers in a Wisconsin regiment. The captain named him Abe, and it is said he knew his name. He was carried on a perch a little above the heads of the soldiers near the flag of the company. When the regiment would cheer, Abe would spread his wings and take a small flag in his

mouth; but he would not notice the cheering of any other regiment of soldiers. He was in all the battles with the regiment, equally exposed to danger with the other soldiers.

At one of the battles the men were ordered to lie down, and the soldier bird also threw himself on the ground and stayed there till the men arose, and then he took his place again, and kept it during the rest of the battle. A rebel general once said to his men that he would rather take him than a brigade of soldiers.

The notice in the Advocate stated that the writer of it was about to organize what he called the army of the American Eagle, and that every person who would buy a picture should be a private in the

army, and that every boy or girl who would sell a certain number of pictures should be an officer. Any one who should sell one hundred was to be made a captain. The money raised was to be paid to the great Sanitary fair held in Chicago in June, 1865, for the benefit of sick and wounded soldiers.

Melvin thought this a good way to be useful, and also a very pleasant one. So he took his paper and went from house to house in village and country around, read the story of the soldier-bird, and asked persons to buy, until he had more than one hundred sold, for which he received ten dollars. This he sent to the commanding officer at Chicago, to be paid over to the fair. In a few days he received his commission as captain.

Here is a copy of the commission :

OFFICER'S COMMISSION.

HEAD QUARTERS ARMY OF THE AMERICAN EAGLE,
CHICAGO, APRIL 18, 1865.

This commission is to show that I, reposing special trust and confidence in the loyalty and patriotism of George M. Kelsey, have appointed him captain in the Army of the American Eagle, to rank from April 18, 1865.

ALFRED L. SEWELL,
*Officer in Command of the Army of the
American Eagle.*

MARY E. BRAGDON, *Adj. Gen.*

You see, my little readers, that if a boy is wide awake, and has a mind to work and do good, he can find plenty of ways. You will not need to go far from home to find some

good work to do. Indeed, you perhaps may find it even at home.

By little deeds of kindness, little words of love, you may make your home an Eden like the heaven above. Look around you, and pray the blessed Jesus to show you what you ought to do, and to help you to do it in the right spirit. He says to those who are not doing good, "Why stand ye here all the day idle?"

You can always find something or other to do, if not for yourself, for a neighbor.

"Do not, then, stand idly waiting
 For some *greater work to do*;
 Fortune is a lazy goddess,
 She will never come to you.
 Go and toil in any vineyard;
 Do not fear to do or dare;
 If you want a field for labor
 You can find it anywhere."

CHAPTER VIII.

MELVIN'S HAPPY DEATH.

It is a solemn thing to die, for after death we cannot change our character. Then he that is unjust shall be unjust still, and he that is filthy shall be filthy still, and he that is righteous shall be righteous still, and he that is holy shall be holy still.

We all must die; it may be very soon and very suddenly. You are in good health now, perhaps, your cheeks round and rosy, and you can run, and romp, and play throughout the whole long day, and hardly think of being tired. It seems to you that death is a long way off.

But how little do we know what even one day may bring to us. We may be well to-day, and feel that life will be long and happy, and even before to-morrow's sun rises we may die. I beg of you heed the words of the blessed Jesus, "Be ye also ready" to die.

The story of Melvin's death, which I will now tell you, will show you that what I have just said is true. It was Thursday morning, a bright and beautiful day in the month of August in the year 1865, that Melvin went out of the door of his home with the rose-flush on his full round cheek, with heart light and happy, and his step firm and quick. He went to play with some of his companions, and to watch the birds from the garden. He seemed to be as

well as ever; but before noon he felt a terrible pain in his head, and a weakness in his limbs, and he started for the house. His strength failed so fast that he had scarcely enough left to enable him to reach it. One of his little friends helped him along as kindly as he could. His mother met him at the door, helped him into the house, and laid him on his bed. The doctor was called in great haste, and did all that he could to save him, but nothing could check the terrible disease. It was now too plain that the little shepherd boy must die.

And how do you think he felt at this time? Was he afraid to die? By no means. The Lord, who had made him a Christian in answer to his prayer some years before, and

who had helped him to live aright and resist temptation, was with him to comfort and cheer him in this hour of sadness and gloom. Indeed, to him it was not an hour of sadness at all, but an hour of triumph and joy. He was not at all afraid of death, but felt that

“Death is the gate to endless joy.”

He was sick only a few hours, not long enough to see the sun rise on the next morning. He lay upon his dying bed with a beautiful smile upon his fair young face, and looking upward, seemed to see heaven opened, and the shining angels that had come to carry him away from earth to his heavenly home. All at once he spoke, and said, “O how beautiful! how beautiful!” And then he placed his arms around his father’s neck and

gave him a parting kiss, saying at the same time, in a sweet tone of voice, "Good night, pa; I am going home to die no more." He kissed all his friends and bade them farewell, and wished them to meet him in heaven.

His father asked him if he thought he was dying; to which he answered with great calmness that he thought he was. His lips moved in prayer to our heavenly Father for a short time, and then he seemed to think of his baby brother, and began to sing, "Brother, brother," as he used to in rocking the little fellow to sleep. In a few minutes he quietly fell asleep in Jesus, and was carried by angels to the paradise of God.

Melvin was not quite eleven years of age, but his love of Sunday-school, his faithfulness in doing good, his

obedience to his parents, his kindness to his mother and his little brother and sisters, had won for him many warm and devoted friends.

His missionary labors, by the blessing of God, may raise up some, perhaps, in heathen lands to call him blessed in the great day when all things shall be made known. The mission Sunday-school that the money his garden sold for will help to establish in some poor place may be the cause of leading some little boys and girls to the blessed Jesus. Let us hope and pray that it may.

I was not in the town when he died, nor at his funeral. But at the funeral the minister preached a sermon from Psalm xvii, 16: "I shall be satisfied when I awake in thy likeness."

He said the true Christian is like God: that this likeness is in holiness, or purity of heart; and righteousness of life, or living a true Christian: but that the likeness is not perfect here, but will be made so in the great eternity to which all are going.

He then spoke of the great triumph that religion gives us over death, in that our bodies will be raised out of the grave, and be made like the glorious body of the blessed Saviour, who came out of the grave, and went to heaven with a body more beautiful than any we have ever seen, or even been able to think of: a body that shall never die.

He then spoke of the perfect happiness all the good shall have, with the Saviour, in that blessed land

above. Though we want much here, and are seldom satisfied with what we have, there we shall have all we want, and shall be fully satisfied, forever satisfied.

In a little grove amid the vast prairies of the state of Minnesota, near the eastern bank of the great Mississippi river, at the village of Anoka, about twenty miles above the great falls of Saint Anthony, is a graveyard. In this graveyard you may find a little lot surrounded by a neat white paling; within it is a marble slab, set up by loving hands to mark the resting-place of the Minnesota shepherd boy.

Near the top of this stone there is cut in the marble a beautiful little lamb, the emblem of innocence, and under the lamb are these words:

“GEORGE M., son of GEORGE and L. KELSEY, died a Christian, Aug. 18, 1865, aged ten years and eight months.”

Under this stone, as the green grass grows and the wild flowers bloom over his grave, sleeps until the resurrection day all that was mortal of this young Christian and missionary worker, “THE MINNESOTA SHEPHERD BOY.”

But his bright young spirit sleeps not. No, no; but in the presence of the angels, before the throne of God, with the great Shepherd on high, he makes his home now. Let us imitate his good deeds, and “follow the footsteps of Jesus, which lead to the mansions above.” Like him we may then say, “Farewell, world! ‘I am going home to die no more.’”

Here are some lines written by
Melvin's father :

One bright and lovely morning,
When nature was serene,
The birds were singing sweetly,
The earth was robed in green,

My boy, in health and beauty,
The rose flush on his cheek,
Went out with cheerful countenance
His little friends to greet.

The sun had scarcely risen
To the noontide of the day,
Ere God had sent his angel
To take my boy away.

With pallid cheek and trembling limb,
With faithful step and tread,
He nerved his powers to reach his home,
Crying, "My head! my head!"

His mother met him at the door,
The tears were on his cheek ;
With falt'ring steps he crossed the floor
His dying couch to seek.

Human aid was quickly called,
Yet this could not control ;
The fell disease was conquering,
His limbs were growing cold.

Then, with his arms extended
To me, he sweetly said,
"How beautiful! how beautiful
Is the scene around my bed."

O! painful was the moment
When he gave the parting kiss,
And said, "Farewell, dear parents,
I'm going home to bliss."

The shades of night were passing,
The rays began to light,
When our dear one ceased to breathe,
And his spirit took its flight.

On the prairie's wide domain
A marble slab is found,
To mark the final resting-place,
Till Gabriel's trump shall sound.

THE END.

