

A FOOLISH WISH
CORRECTED.



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SOLD ALSO BY J. NISBET, BERNERS-STREET.

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LITTLE Sally was sent by her mother with a basket of eggs and some greens, to sell at a neighbouring market. Nancy, a neighbour's child, who went to a little school in the same town, soon joined her, and they trudged on together. It was a winter's

morning: the pond was frozen over, and men were skating and boys sliding on the ice. Sally's burden was heavy; and by the time they reached the gate at the end of the lane, they were both of them pretty well tired. "Oh, dear," said Sally, with a deep sigh, as she rested her burden against the gate, "I wish it would never come winter!" "And so do I, with all my heart," said Nancy. As they leaned with their backs to the gate, they did not notice a lady, their teacher at the Sunday-school, who was walking in the path of the turnpike-road, and came up just in time to hear their talk. "Well, little girls," said she, "and so you wish that winter would not come. Do not you like winter?"

Nancy. No, teacher; it is such tiresome walking, and so dark and cold of a morning.

Sally. And we are so much worse off in winter than in summer; there is no work to be got out of doors, and scarcely any daylight for lace-making.

Lady. Winter certainly has its inconveniences, yet it would be easy to convince you that it has its uses also. I am now returning to the town, so if you are rested we will walk together, and talk the matter over.

S. Yes, if you please, teacher.

L. You were speaking of winter as being one of your troubles : can you tell me what is the cause of its coming?

S. The great God pleases to send it. I do not know any other reason.

L. That is indeed the great first cause ; and whenever we are sure this is the case, we may be sure also that there is some wise and good end to be answered by all He does. You did not think of this when you wished that winter would never come.

S. No, teacher, that I did not ; but I do not see what use winter is of.

L. In the 8th chapter of Genesis, which you read last Sunday week, we are informed that after the flood God was pleased to promise to Noah, that while the earth remained, cold and heat, and summer and winter, should not cease. The earth, you must know, is round, like an orange, and it turns round every day towards the sun, for light and heat ; this is the cause of night and day : that part of the earth which is towards the sun is enlightened, and that which is away from it is in darkness : it also, in the course of a year, moves round the sun ; and this, in the same manner, occasions summer and winter. So when it is day with us, it is night at the other side of the world and

when it is winter with us, it is summer with them. Now here is one reason for the change, as well as a cause of it. You would not wish, I think, that the poor inhabitants of another country should always be exposed to cold and darkness.

N. No, teacher, that would be very hard.

L. Besides, it would be as bad for us as for them : we should suffer as much from continued heat as they from excessive cold.

S. Certainly ; then it is best as it is.

L. There are other respects in which winter is advantageous and necessary ; it prepares the ground for the crop of another year ; the sap of the trees, also, in winter is struck downwards to strengthen the roots, that in spring it may push forward again with new life and vigour. Winter affords the gardener an opportunity of pruning and training his trees, in order to their vigour and fruitfulness ; without this they would grow wild, feeble, and useless. Winter is just as necessary to the earth and trees, as night is necessary to us for rest and sleep. Winter also tends to destroy the seeds of some diseases. The frosts purify the air, and carry off unhealthy damps : and the snow is like a warm woolly garment to the springing corn it preserves the young shoots

from being nipped and injured by the keen air ; and it also nourishes and enriches the earth like manure. Winter, too, destroys the insects that were so destructive in the gardens and fields ; it prevents the growth of weeds, and gives an opportunity to clear the ground of them. Thus you see with what wise and kind designs the great Creator ordains the change of seasons.

S. Thank you for telling us this. I hope I shall never more grumble at winter.

L. We have great reason for thankfulness also, that our country is favoured with moderation of climate : we have not the excess of either heat or cold to which some other climates are subject. And although I am sure the poor must suffer greatly during the winter season, yet I believe there is no country where their sufferings are so much cared for as in our own. Persons who have it in their power must find it a great pleasure to assist the honest and industrious poor.

S. Oh, teacher, this makes me think how ungrateful it was of me to complain ; for madam Wilson, at the great house, has given my mother a nice warm blanket, and the squire has ordered us coals at half-price through the severe weather.

L. Be thankful, then, not only to your kind friends, but to the great God who put it in their hearts to be thus kind to you ; and think of many who want the comforts you enjoy. But I am thinking also whether I cannot put you in some way of making the best of the season : you say you have no out-of-doors work, and that it is too dark for you to do much at lace-making : can you net ?

S. No, teacher, I am sorry to say, I never was put to anything but field-work and lace-making.

N. I can do the stitch a little, teacher ; for I have seen my governess's daughter netting some blinds.

L. Well, if you have a mind to try, you shall both of you come to me one afternoon, and I will put you in the way of doing it ; it is work that when you are once used to, may be done almost in the dark. And I know a gentleman who takes pleasure in employing industrious children, and who wants some nets for his cherry-trees.

N. Oh yes, teacher, I shall like it very much. I will be sure to come.

S. So will I, teacher, and be very much obliged to you.

L. I think, Nancy, you read pretty well.

N. Yes, teacher.

L. Then I will also lend you some instructive and entertaining books, which you can read in the evenings to your mother ; and your companion, who cannot read so well, will be glad to join you.

N. Oh yes, teacher ; we shall not be dull any more this winter.

S. Dear me ! how soon we are come to the town. This piece of road has not seemed half so long as the lane ; and my load does not seem half so heavy as it was.

L. Troubles are never lightened by groaning under them with discontent and impatience ; but cheerful conversation and mutual kindness have helped to lighten many a burden. Remember this, my children, as you grow up you will probably meet with real trials and afflictions ; they, like winter, are sent for a wise and good purpose, to humble and improve your character, and kill the weeds of pride and selfishness. When they come, endeavour to understand their meaning and design, and pray for grace to bear up under them, and reap advantage from them ; and do not forget, in the journey of life, to bear one another's burdens, and be kindly affectioned one to another ; so fulfilling the law of Christ.

Above all things, do not forget that the journey of life tends to a most important end. The way of sin, however pleasant it may seem, will surely end in misery. The only safe and right way is the way of repentance, prayer, faith, and holiness. Read the Bible, and you will see how plainly Jesus Christ has marked this way, and how he died to open a new and living way in which sinners may draw near to God and heaven. He has promised to help all those who feel their weakness and ask his help, and to give them strength and grace to bear their burdens, and to press on till they reach everlasting life.

See how rude Winter's icy hand
Has stripp'd the trees, and seal'd the ground ;
But Spring shall soon his rage withstand,
And spread new beauties all around.

My soul a sharper winter mourns,
Barren and fruitless I remain ;
When will the gentle Spring return,
And bid my graces grow again ?

Jesus, my glorious Sun, arise !
'Tis thine the frozen heart to move ;
Oh hush these storms, and clear my skies,
And let me feel thy vital love !

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REMEMBER thy Creator now,
In these thy youthful days;
He will accept thine earliest vow,
And listen to thy praise.

Remember thy Creator now,
Seek him while he is near:
For evil days will come, when
thou

Shalt find no comfort here.
Almighty God, our hearts
incline

Thy heavenly voice to hear;
Let all our future days be thine.
Devoted to thy fear.