

**RAGGED SCHOLAR'S HOME
MADE HAPPY.**

**RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY ;
56, Paternoster-row ; 164, Piccadilly,
LONDON.**



THE RAGGED SCHOLAR'S HOME MADE HAPPY.



ONE day a boy came to a ragged school, and asked the kind teachers to show him how to read. His dress was a very old coat, which had been made, a good many years before, for a man. Now-

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when worn by a boy it dragged along the ground as he walked. He had on him no shirt, no shoes, and no stockings.

The parents of this poor boy sold fruit in the streets. They were very careless and sinful people, and left their children to get their food as they could. You may be sure that their home was not a very clean or happy place. A few shavings and rags served for a bed; a basket, turned upside down, was the only table; and two old tin pans, with boards laid across, served for seats.

It was hard work for the teachers to make the son of such parents pay any attention to the rules of the school, or to take any delight in learning a lesson

But care and kindness will do much with the worst kind of people. The pious teachers took pains with the poor boy, and after a long time they taught him to read. As a reward they gave him a New Testament; and he was told to take it home, and to ask his parents to let him read it to them. He was to begin by reading the third chapter of the Gospel by St. John.

The poor boy did as he was told. He showed his reward, and read from its pages. And then, how his parents looked upon him! In their eyes he was quite a scholar. They sat quietly as he read to them these words:—

“There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler

of the Jews: the same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, (Master,) we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him. Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

Now, neither the father nor mother could read, and most likely they had never before heard this chapter read to them. When the third verse was read, his father stopped him, and said, "You are surely reading wrong. 'Except a man be born again!'—that must be quite wrong." The young reader, however, was sure

that these were the very words. But this did not satisfy the father, who said he should like to see the teacher, that he might ask him about this matter.

When the teacher heard of this wish, he was truly glad to go to the house. It was not long before he made his visit. As there was no seat for him, he stood up in the room, and read the same chapter. When he came to the words, 'Except a man be born again,' the man saw that his son was quite right, and he thought more highly of his learning than he did before.

The teacher told the father that the new birth spoken of meant a new heart, or a great change in the life and conduct of a man.

He said that those who felt this change, instead of the love of sin, had new desires, and there was in the heart a holy fear of doing wrong. He said, that a man would then love that which is good, and become honest and sober. Also, that a man would repent of his sins, and seek for mercy through the Lord Jesus Christ; that he would believe the great truths that Jesus died for sinners, even the chief, and that he is willing and able to save. Lastly, he told him that such a change could only be made by the Holy Spirit of God, and that he must pray for the Spirit to give him this new heart.

When the man heard these words, he cried aloud, "We are

all wrong." The light of the gospel had now entered into his dark mind, and touched his hard heart. He saw his danger and ruin while living in sin, and began to feel his need of a Saviour.

Several years passed away, and this family was again met with by the teacher. It was then found that the father was an altered man, and the mother, too, was changed, and both were now Christians. The money they earned they once spent in drink; now it was laid out to make their home clean and happy. There were tables and chairs, beds and bedsteads, and other comforts around them. The children were well clothed and fed. And they were now no longer "all wrong," but

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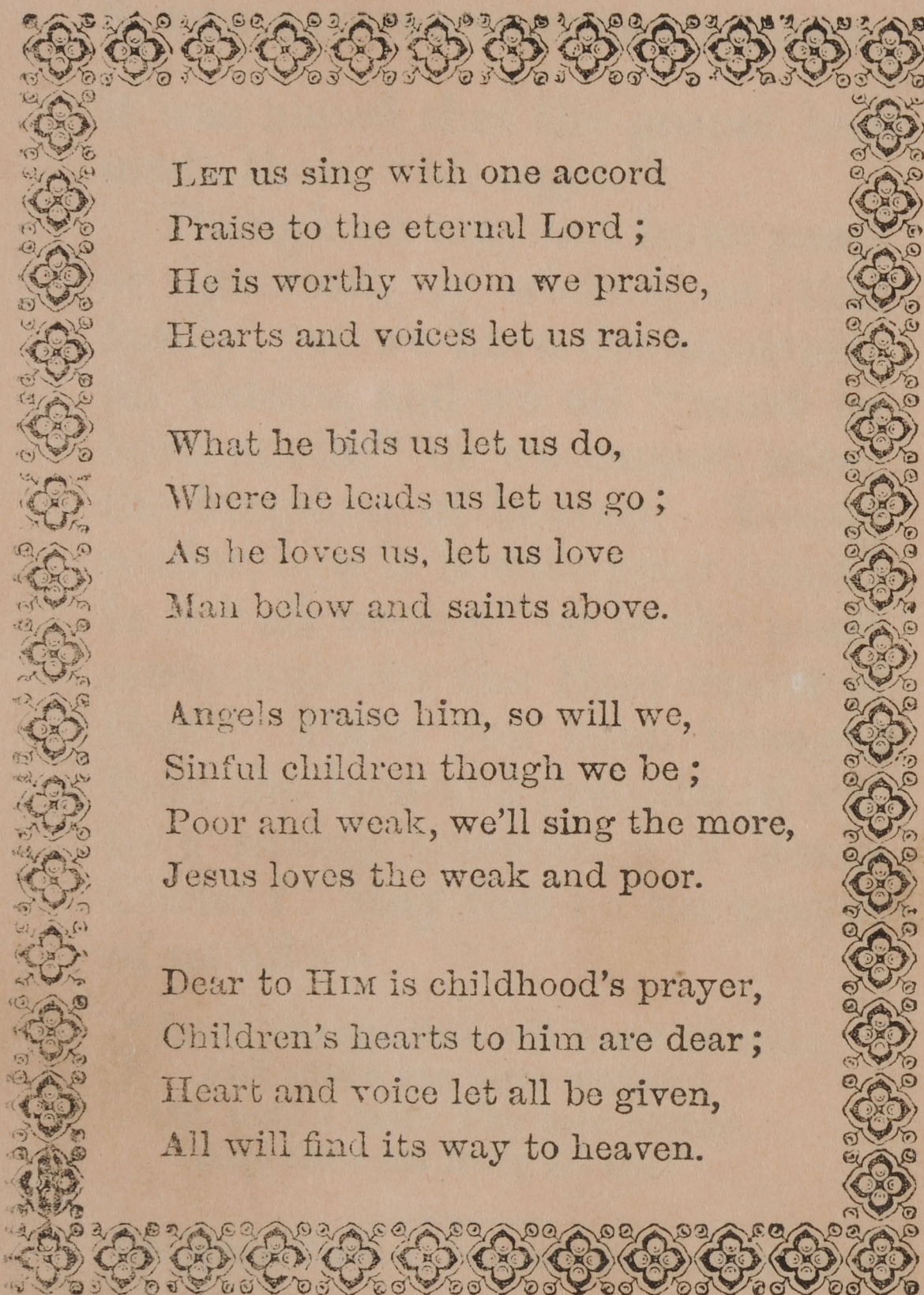
it was hoped that the gospel had made them "all right."

Though we may not be so poor, or ignorant, or wicked, as this family, yet we have the same sinful nature, and we all "must be born again," or we cannot enter the kingdom of heaven. Young reader, how is it with your heart? Is it "all wrong," or is the heart made right by the Holy Spirit of God? Have you been brought from the love and practice of sin, to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ? May this be the prayer of us all:—

"Lord, change this evil heart of mine,
And make me pure within;
Oh, may I taste Thy love divine,
And save me from all sin!"

Benjamin Pardou, Printer, Paternoster Row.

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A decorative border of repeating floral motifs, possibly four-petaled flowers or clovers, arranged in a rectangular frame around the text.

LET us sing with one accord
Praise to the eternal Lord ;
He is worthy whom we praise,
Hearts and voices let us raise.

What he bids us let us do,
Where he leads us let us go ;
As he loves us, let us love
Man below and saints above.

Angels praise him, so will we,
Sinful children though we be ;
Poor and weak, we'll sing the more,
Jesus loves the weak and poor.

Dear to HIM is childhood's prayer,
Children's hearts to him are dear ;
Heart and voice let all be given,
All will find its way to heaven.