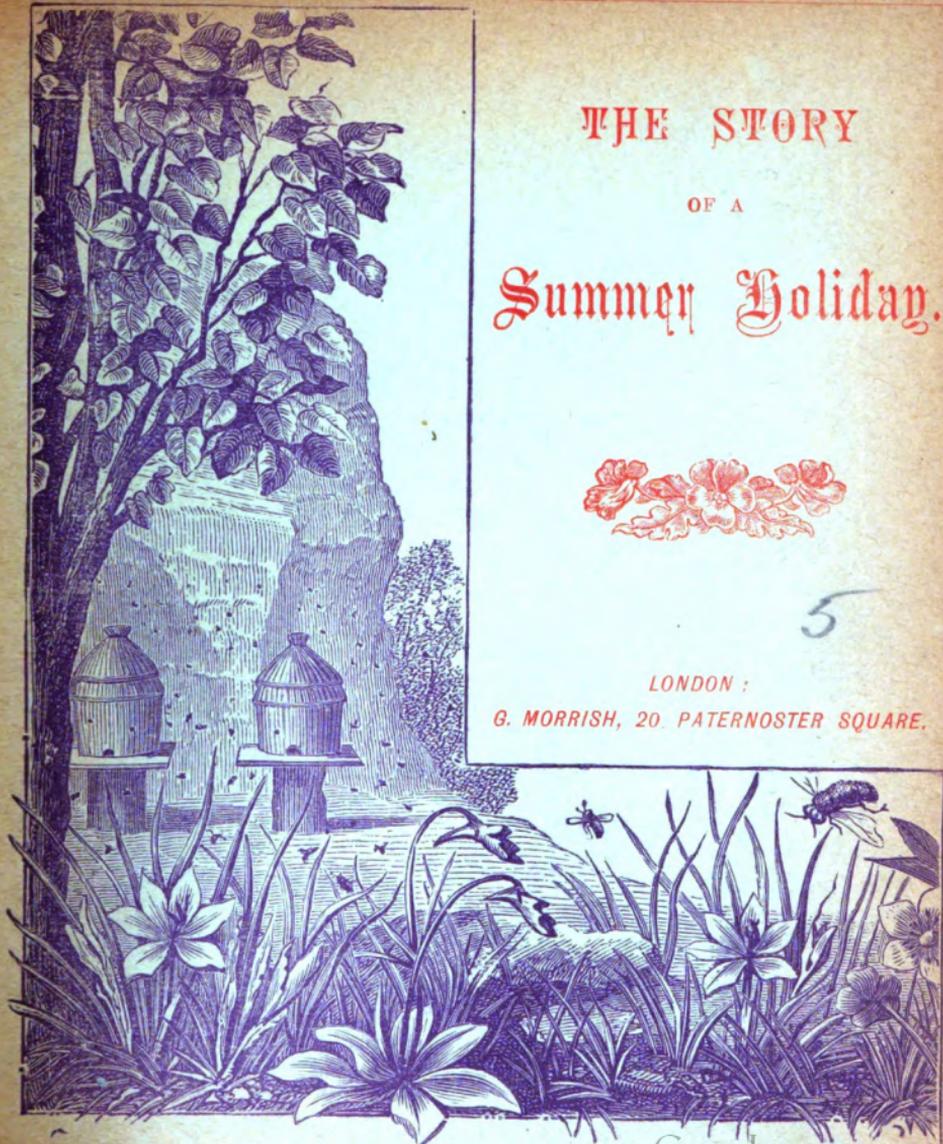


THE STORY
OF A
Summer Holiday.



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LONDON :
G. MORRISH, 20. PATERNOSTER SQUARE.





All were glad to rest and enjoy dinner.



THE STORY

OF A

SUMMER HOLIDAY.

By C. J. L.



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THE STORY
OF
A SUMMER HOLIDAY.

REST after hard work of any kind is always sweet, and I am sure that every reader of this book will agree with me in saying that a holiday, when it has been fairly earned, is and ought to be a very pleasant time.

And now I am going to tell you about a very happy holiday I spent with some dear friends not long ago. Indeed every memory of it is so bright and precious that I enjoy thinking of it as a gift from the hand of my loving God, from whom comes every good and perfect gift.

But I must not forget to tell you our

names, and where we were going. There were just six of us; Frances, Annie, two Marys, Harriet, and Charlotte. Almost all of us lived in a busy city, and so were glad and thankful to have even one day far away from all the noise and bustle of crowded streets, one day to spend wandering through green fields or resting under shady trees.

Two of our party were deaf and dumb, but as we all could talk with our fingers, they were able to enjoy not only the pleasant resting-time, but much that was said, and I may as well tell you a little secret. Our holiday was all the happier for having those dear silent ones to love and care for. The words of the Lord Jesus, "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts xx. 35), are quite true, are they not? And some of my young readers, those who love Christ, will be interested in knowing that all our party could say of Him, He is my Saviour, "He loved me and gave himself

for me." So all of us were learners in the school of God. And our lessons (just like yours, dear children) often seemed hard and long.

If you have answered "Yes, Lord Jesus," to the loving voice of the One who said, when a man on earth, "Come unto me and I will give you rest" (Matt. xi. 28), you too are in the same school; and the Master's word to you is, "Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart." (Matt. xi. 29.)

And sometimes tears will also fall fast, so that we can hardly see to read the bright words, "God is love," that we know stand at the head of every page in the lesson book from which we are learning; it is only because we do not always understand just what the Lord wants to say to us. But our Teacher is so wise and patient that we cannot help trusting Him, even when we cannot quite understand.

A short ride by train, and we found ourselves at a railway station about two

miles from the place where we hoped to spend some hours, so we set out on our walk with light hearts and bright faces, though the provision baskets some of us carried were just a little in the way when we wanted to say anything on our fingers; by passing them from one to another we got on very well.

The first event of our journey worth telling you about was our call at a roadside cottage. We could not help stopping to examine the pretty garden, bright with roses, pinks, lilies, and other sweet-scented flowers. Then one of our party said: We will knock at the door and ask for a drink of water, for I know nothing will give greater pleasure to Mrs. L—— than to have the opportunity of doing a kindness in the name of Christ. So we called, and quite enjoyed reading the wall texts in Mrs. L——'s pleasant little parlour, and watching her bright face as she brought us the cool water we were so glad to get. And we

thought and spoke of another scene. Of how (long ago) the Lord Jesus, after a very trying journey across the burning sand of a desert where there was no shade of any kind, very tired and thirsty we may be sure, sat down to rest by an old well.

It was not long before a poor woman, one, the story of whose life had been very sad and dark, came very near Him. She wanted to draw some water for household use. The Lord in grace asked her to give Him a drink of water.

He asked of her that she might learn the need of salvation. That He Himself, the giving God, might satisfy her deep soul-thirst by giving to her living waters. But if you get your bibles and turn to John iv., you can read this beautiful story for yourselves.

But as the day, though very fine, was hot and dusty, and rather trying, we noticed that one or two of our number began to look tired, though of course nobody would

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confess to being so ; we turned from the high road and after a little climbing over some rough ground, we reached a shady grassy spot where all were glad to rest and enjoy dinner, and from which we were not in a hurry to go, for taking out our bibles we had quite a nice long talk about the Saviour in whose bright presence some whom we had known and loved were already resting.

There is a verse in the Book of Revelation that tells us, that "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them." (Chap. xiv. 13.) And so when our loved ones fall asleep in Jesus, though we feel the parting very much, we do not sorrow as those who have no hope, but look forward to that bright day when the Lord at His coming will bring them with Him. "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even

so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." (1 Thess. iv. 14, 17.)

The word of God does not tell us very much about heaven, the home where all who belong to Christ are going. But we are told much about the Lord Jesus, "Who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him." (1 Thess. v. 10.)

Our little bible reading over, rested and refreshed we set out again on our walk. The dusty road lay behind us, for our onward way lay across a broad breezy common, and as we walked we told each other just a few of the secrets that we knew were hidden in leaves and flowers—secrets of the wisdom and power of God.

The afternoon passed very quickly, but though we all agreed in saying, "What a

delightful walk," I do not think we were sorry to be told it was time to make the best of our way to the house of a friend, whose loving thoughtfulness had called us together, where tea was waiting for us. I need hardly tell you that all of us were quite ready for tea. Tea over, we went out for a little while into the garden, where we made good use of the permission to gather flowers.

Half-an-hour later, we were all in the drawing-room, some round the piano, where, while skilful fingers moved lightly over its keys, glad voices joined in singing hymns.

But, perhaps, dear young reader, you would have been still more interested in seeing how the deaf and dumb were occupied. I wish you could have seen their bright faces as they followed the rapid finger movements of a friend, who, without one spoken word, was telling them a true story.

I wonder if any of my young readers

have a deaf and dumb friend. Those who have will understand quite well what I mean by finger-talking, but perhaps just a few may need to be told that quick light touches on the fingers of the right hand mean the different letters of the alphabet; and of course letters spell words. Shall I read it?

It was that of a poor boy, a deaf mute, who lived in the south of Ireland some years ago. His father and mother were very poor people, and Frank, for that was the boy's name, had never been sent to school, or even taught at home.

I do not think that at the time my story begins, Frank even knew that he had a soul. But the Lord, who knew all about and loved the poor neglected boy, put a desire into the heart of a christian lady, whose home was not very far from the cabin where Frank lived, to teach

THE DEAF AND DUMB BOY

not only to read and write, but in some way

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to tell him about the love of God in giving His Son to die for sinners. (John iii. 16.)

It was very slow work, though Frank was not at all a stupid boy, but learning was quite new work to him. He had been used to run about all day without shoes or stockings, and I do not think that at first Frank at all liked sitting still.

But his teacher was very kind and patient, and in time Frank could talk (on his fingers) quite well, and made fair progress in reading and writing.

One day Frank was having a bible lesson. His teacher was explaining to him about the death of Christ for sinners. But poor Frank did not quite understand; he looked very unhappy, and when asked to tell why his face had such a sad troubled look, said (on his fingers), "Christ is one, we are many; I could understand how one could die for one, but I want to know how could one die for many?"

Not a very easy question to answer, but

Frank's teacher knew that the Lord was able to give her just the right word to meet the boy's need, so simply looking to Him for wisdom, and telling Frank she would not keep him long waiting for an answer, she closed her bible, and sent Frank to work in the garden, making him understand that he was to sweep the paths. It was autumn, and the leaves were falling fast, so Frank had soon swept up quite a large heap of dry leaves. His friend went into the garden, and taking a valuable ring from her finger laid it upon the heap of leaves, then turning to Frank asked by signs, "Which would you rather have, The one ring or the many leaves?" It did not take Frank very long to make up his mind. He answered, "I would choose the ring, for it is very good. I know there are many leaves, but they are only fit to burn."

Then Frank understood when he was told that as the Lord Jesus was the Son of God, His death upon the cross was of such

value, that God can and will forgive every poor sinner who trusts only in His finished work, His precious blood.

So Frank believed the good news, and believed in the Lord Jesus as his own precious Saviour, and so became a very bright and happy christian boy.

Now, is not this a very interesting story? I thought so, I can tell you. But our holiday, though drawing to a close, was not quite over. After another happy helpful bible reading we returned to our city houses, tired, you may be sure, but bright and thankful to the Lord for our happy holiday, for His word tells us that "Every good gift, and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." (James i. 17.) C. J. L.

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