

"SHOW ME MYSELF;"

OR,

THE LITTLE KITCHEN MAID.



THERE was a good minister in Scotland, who used sometimes to travel about from place to place upon his little grey

pony; and he made this rule for himself, that, wherever he stayed for the night, he would, if possible, get the people of the house together for family prayers.

One night he arrived rather late at a little country inn, and one of his first questions was to ask the landlord if he would let him assemble his family and lodgers for prayers before they went to bed. The landlord made no objection, and the minister found quite a roomful when he went in to them. He expressed his pleasure in seeing them, and asked if all were there.

"All, sir," said the landlord, "except the little kitchen-maid; and she is too dirty and too ignorant to make one of us."

"Ah, my friend," said the clergyman, earnestly, "that poor girl has a soul to be saved, just as much as you or I have. Let

me beg for her that she should come in to-night."

But the master did not seem to wish it, and the gentleman said no more till prayers were over, when he laid his hand upon the landlord's shoulder. "I should like to say a word to that little girl, if you would kindly allow me to see her." The landlord looked surprised, as if he thought he had rather a strange visitor in the house; however, he did not like to make any further objection, and he led the way to the back place, where the little maid was very busy washing up her dishes.

The clergyman began to talk to her, and found that she was indeed as ignorant as she was dirty. She did not seem to know or to care anything about her soul. At last he said, "I am going to teach you a little prayer;

and if you will promise to learn it, and to use it every morning and every night, until I come again, I will bring you a fine new handkerchief." The girl's eyes brightened at this, and she promised.

Then the minister said, seriously, "You will never care to be saved until you know what danger you are in; and you will never know you are in danger until you see how full of sin your heart is. I want you to ask God every day, '*Lord, show me myself.*' It is a short prayer."

The girl repeated it after him, and very soon learned it, and promised to use it every day. Then the minister went away and left her.

The next time he came to the inn—it was some months after—he asked the landlord, when he had inquired after the rest of his

family, “And, pray, how is the little kitchen-maid?”

“Why, sir, to tell you the truth, she has been in a very poor way since you were here. She has fretted herself quite ill. We don’t know what to do with the girl at all.”

The minister asked to see her, and found the poor little maid on a bed of straw in a little nook under the stairs. She was indeed pale and thin: he would scarcely have known her again. When he asked what was the matter, she broke out afresh into tears:—“Oh, sir, I have scarcely known an easy moment since you were here last. I did pray God to show me myself; but I am ready to wish I never had. He has shown me the wickedness of my own heart, until I am a misery to myself. I think I am the worst sinner that ever lived; and, oh!

where must I be going to when I die? To the bad place, I know—I feel."

The minister tried to comfort her. He told her she had deserved to die, but that Jesus, the Son of God, had died instead of her, and that if she looked to Jesus she should be saved. The poor girl did not seem able to believe it.

"I don't think he can love me," she said. The minister was not able to remain very long, but he said he would teach her another little prayer, which she must use also every day. It was this:—
"Lord, show me thyself."

Many years passed on, and the minister had never been able to go again to the same inn on his pony. He had become too old for journeys, and remained chiefly at his own home. One day his servant knocked at his door, and

told him a stranger, a woman, wanted to see him.

"Let her come in," he said; and a respectable young woman came in, and dropped a curtsy.

"You do not know me, sir."

"No, my friend, I do not. Have I ever seen you before?"

She replied by asking, "Do you remember, sir, being so kind as to teach two little prayers to the kitchen-maid at the country inn?"

The minister passed his hand over his forehead. "I remember, oh, yes, I remember all about it now. I was very much interested in that child. Can you tell me anything about her?"

"Sir," said the young woman, with tears in her eyes, "I am that little maid: I was in great trouble about my sins when you saw me last, and you taught me to pray, 'Lord, show me thyself.' I did, and the Lord heard me. Oh, sir,

he showed me what a friend I have in Jesus, and how much he must have loved me to die upon the cross for me; and now I feel that I can never praise him and serve him enough. The Lord has blessed me, too, in my place and my work, so that I have all I want; and I determined, if possible, to find you out and thank you, for I feel I owe everything to you."

Will those who read this begin to pray, "Lord, show me myself; Lord, show me thyself"? God will hear and answer that prayer. He will send his Holy Spirit to show you your heart and its sinfulness, and then he will show you, that, for the sake of his dear Son, who died upon the cross for sinners, he will pardon and blot out all your sins.