



WILLIE HARPER'S
TWO LIVES



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- I. HIS EARTH-LIFE
- II. HIS HEAVEN-LIFE

SECOND EDITION, ILLUSTRATED

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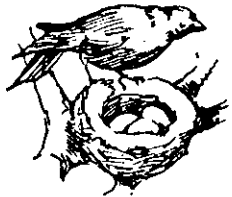
I WANT to tell you about a little boy I once knew, who, after living a short time on this earth, was taken away by the Lord to live in heaven. I shall call him Willie Harper, though that was not his real name, because his papa and mamma do not want to see his real name in print. First, I will tell you about his life on the earth, and then about his life in heaven. All I shall say about his earthly life I know to be true, and what I shall say about his heavenly life will also be the truth, so far as I can find out what happens to little children after they go to heaven.

Willie was born in the summer-time. His papa and mamma lived in New York, but they had two little children, Willie's elder brothers, and, for the sake of getting them





away from the heat and bad air of the city, they had gone to pass the summer in Newport, Rhode Island. They had a small house in a quiet side street in Newport, with a big cherry-tree, which bore red cherries, right by the front door. Across the way was a garden full of all kinds of fruit-trees, and among the branches of these trees great flocks of birds had built their nests, and, in the early part of the summer, used to keep up a constant chirping and singing all day long, from daylight until dark. Behind the house were open fields, and beyond the fields could be seen the blue ocean, from which there always came a cool breeze.



It was while his papa and mamma were living in this house that Willie was born; so, you see, his first knowledge of this earth was of a very pleasant spot in it, though, like other babies, it was a good while before he took much notice of the things around him. He slept most of the time, only waking up when he was hungry, and then, when he was fed, going to sleep again; but the sweet, soft air of the country kept him very well, and he



grew stronger and stronger every day, until at last he began to enjoy the bright sunshine and the singing of the birds, and the nice smells that floated into his room from the fields and flowers and from the ocean, and liked to watch his little brothers playing on the floor.

When Willie was a few weeks old, there came a good New Church minister to Newport to visit his mamma and papa, and this minister baptized Willie. His papa and mamma and some friends went together into the little parlour of the house, and there the minister, after reading what the Lord says in the Word about baptism, took Willie in his arms and wet his forehead with water, repeating his name, and saying the words the Lord has commanded to be said in baptizing people. This was done to show that Willie was the Lord's child as well as his papa and mamma's child, and that he should be taught, as he grew up, to love the Lord as his Father in heaven, and obey His commandments. Besides, the angels, who are always with little children, like to have them thus marked as





the Lord's children, because it helps them to keep away evil from their minds.

Willie stayed at Newport till the cool autumn weather began, and his papa and mamma thought it best to go back to New York. There he came into a new house. It was a house that stood opposite a pretty little church, which had a large yard in front of it full of grass and flowers and trees, and Willie's nursery windows looked out on this churchyard. It was not so pretty a place to live in as the Newport house, but it did very well for the city. At all events, Willie never knew the difference. He had his dear papa and mamma, and his nurse, and his little brothers, and all he wanted to eat and drink, and was as happy as the day is long. He very soon got to know the persons he saw around him, and would laugh and crow for each one, as they took him up and hugged and kissed him. When summer came again, all the family went to Newport, as they had gone the summer before, and by the time they were ready to come back to New York, Willie had learned to toddle about on his feet, and was very



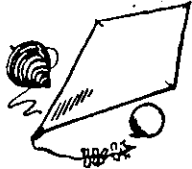
proud of it. Then another winter and another summer went by, and Willie could talk a good deal, and, when he got old enough, he learned his letters and how to read, and by and by he was sent to school. As soon as he could understand the words, too, his mamma taught him the Lord's Prayer, which he used to repeat every night at his bedside before going to bed; and about the same time he went to the other school he began to go to Sunday-school, where he learned the Ten Commandments, and to read the Word, and repeat verses out of it. His papa, too, on Sunday afternoons, used to read to him and to his little brothers all the nice stories in the Word: about Joseph and his brethren; about David's fight with Goliath; about Daniel in the lions' den, and the wonderful things the Lord did when He walked on this earth. He used to tell him, too, about heaven and the angels, and how, when people die, as we say, that is, when their bodies die, they come into the spiritual world, into heaven if they have been good, and into hell if they have been wicked. So Willie's mind was filled with knowledges of



all kinds, and he became quite an intelligent boy.

He had good fun, too, playing like other boys. In New York he had his sled, and skates, and waggons, and tops, and kites, and balls, and marbles, and he could use them pretty well. Every summer he went somewhere in the country: either to the seashore, where he sailed and bathed and fished; or to the mountains, where he rambled in the woods, or rode about in a carriage, or boated on the water. Besides the two brothers who were born before he was, he had another little brother who was born after him, so that there were four of them together; and what with them and the other children he knew, he had plenty of company and very happy times.

Now, as I have promised to tell you the truth, I must confess that Willie was sometimes naughty. He would get angry and quarrel with his brothers once in a while, or he would not mind his papa and mamma and nurse, or would behave badly in some other way. Whenever this happened his papa and mamma used to talk to him, and tell him how



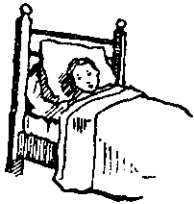
wicked it was to do so, and how it was a sin against the Lord. And, to make him remember to try and not do it again, they used to punish him. But I am glad to be able to say that Willie always, after he had been naughty, would be sorry for it, and would kiss his brothers and his papa and mamma and nurse, and promise to be a good boy. And when he was sorry, not only did his papa and mamma forgive him, but the Lord forgave him too, for the Lord always forgives people when they are really sorry for having done wrong. Still, his papa and mamma had to watch him very carefully, and had to take great pains to teach him to behave as the Lord wants His children to behave.

✓ So Willie went on, playing and studying and growing bigger and bigger, till he was about seven and a half years old. Most of the time he had been perfectly well, and was active and strong. He used to hug the people he loved so hard, that one of his aunts gave him the nickname of *Ursa Minor*, which is the Latin for "little bear." But he was an affectionate bear, and did not mean to hurt those





he hugged, like a real bear, only he felt so loving and was so strong, that he could not help squeezing them with all his might. He had a manly little face and a solid, sturdy figure, and every one who saw him thought he would grow up to be a big, stout man, when unexpectedly he became ill. He did not feel at all well when he awoke in the morning, and when he got up he became very soon tired, and wanted to go to bed again. Of course a doctor was sent for, but when he came he said Willie only had a little cold and fever, and that he would soon get well. But he did not get well, and then he was taken to another doctor who knew more about little children's illnesses. This doctor, as soon as he saw Willie, asked him to open his jacket that he might listen to the beating of his heart; and when Willie had done so, he put his ear down to his heart, and listened to it for some time quite carefully. When he got through, he looked very grave, and said something was the matter with Willie's heart, and that, unless the greatest pains were taken, he would not live to grow up a man on this earth.



As you may suppose, his papa and mamma went to work at once to do what they could to cure their little sick boy. Summer was coming on, and they sent him up into the mountains, because the doctor said the mountain air would be better for him. This did not do any good, so they took him to another place in the country, where he did get a little better; and in the course of the following winter and summer, by great pains, he improved so that they really thought he would be sure to get well. But he had to stop running and jumping, and part of the time was not even allowed to go up and down stairs himself, but must let his papa carry him. Then, instead of going to school, he had his lessons at home with a governess, and did not even go to Sunday-school unless the weather was dry and pleasant. All this was a great trial to Willie; but he bore it patiently, and his papa and mamma did everything they could to make up to him what he had to go without. They bought him books and games and toys, and once in a while sent him with his nurse to the circus, and to see pantomimes,





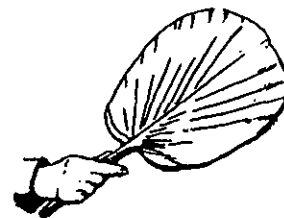
and all sorts of things of that kind. Still, Willie used to feel pretty bad as he looked out of the window and saw the other boys playing and romping, and thought that he could not do as they did.

After Willie had lived about two years in this way, and was nine and a half years old, his health became much worse. He could not get up out of bed at all, he felt so sick and weak. The doctor came and gave him medicine, but it did him no good. He had a bad cough, and it was so hard for him to breathe, that he had to be propped up by pillows, as if he were sitting in a chair, to sleep. The disorder of his heart had spread to his lungs, so that every time he drew his breath it hurt him like little pin-pricks. All the rest of the wonderful machinery inside his body became affected too, and he had constant pains in his limbs. He grew worse and worse, and although at one time it seemed as though he were getting better, he soon got as bad as before.

This illness had lasted about two weeks, when Willie was brought down in his papa's arms from the nursery, where he had slept ever



since he was a baby, into a cheerful, pleasant room on the sunny side of the house. As his old nurse and his mamma were both quite worn out with watching by him, another nurse was sent for to help them. And what was very nice, the Lord provided that the new nurse was a kind, good woman, and that she should seem to Willie not a bit like a stranger. Indeed, he loved her directly, as if he had known her all his life. She knew how to do many little things which made him more comfortable than he had been. She rubbed his poor, sore limbs and body with her soft, warm hand to take away the pain in them, fanned him to make his breathing easier, and arranged his pillows in the pleasantest possible way. She taught his mamma and nurse, too, to do as she did, and even his brother Fred, who has a very gentle way with him, and loved Willie dearly, learned to rub him and to fan him, and Willie liked very much to have him do it, which pleased Fred greatly. In spite of all that was done for him, however, Willie suffered a great deal. His cough was very troublesome, and he could only sleep five minutes at





a time. It was pitiful to see his poor thin face and neck as he rolled his head from one side to the other on his pillow, trying to find an easy position. His papa would go in to see him, but Willie was in so much pain that he could only look at him without speaking. All night long his cough was heard, and the sound of it went to his papa's and mamma's heart as if a knife had pierced them. Children do not know how badly their parents feel when they are ill and suffer pain, and they never will know it till they grow up and have children of their own. Every one else, too, in the house felt sad and anxious, for they feared they would soon lose little Willie's company on earth. X



But all this time the Lord and the angels were watching over Willie too, and getting him ready to come away to them. They made him remember everything he had been taught about heaven, and little by little they made him feel that he was not going to get well of his sickness. As his brother Fred was rubbing him, a few days before the end of his earthly life, he said to him,

"Fred, do you miss me much downstairs?"

"Yes, to be sure," said Fred.

"You will miss me more when I die," replied Willie.

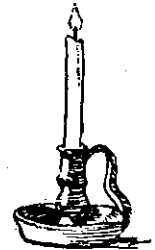
Another time, in the evening, as his nurse was sitting by him, he said to her,

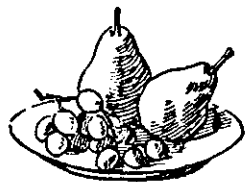
"Nurse, pray to God for me to give me some relief."

The nurse did so, and in a few minutes Willie exclaimed,

"God has heard your prayer, and I feel easier."

And all through that night, whenever he felt a little worse than usual, he would turn his eyes on his nurse, as if asking her to repeat the prayer, for it was hard for him to speak. So you see that his thoughts were being directed to the other world and the possibility of his soon going there, and to the Lord, that he might not be frightened when the time came for him to go. For the Lord, who loves every one, particularly little children, always takes pains to prepare them in this way for leaving the earth.





Willie's papa and mamma found out at last that there was no hope of keeping him with them on earth. His sickness was of such a kind that is not often cured, and he had become so weak that he could no longer struggle against it. He could not eat anything, even the strawberries, and pears, and jellies, and biscuits, and other good things which were procured for him. He could not even play with the new toys which one of his kind aunts had bought for him, but only looked at them and laid them aside. As for reading or being read to, he was in too much pain for that. So that his papa and mamma, sorry as they were to lose him, were not sorry to think he would soon suffer no more, but be a happy little boy among the angels.



Willie's last day on earth was a Sunday—the first Sunday in April. It was Communion day, and while his mamma stayed at home to help in taking care of him, his papa went to church. The morning was cold and bleak, and part of the time snow and rain fell from black clouds that covered the sky; but about noon it cleared off, and the sun shone out

warm and bright. When his papa came back from church, he did not notice that Willie looked any worse than usual, and so, after dinner, he went up to teach in a new Sunday-school which was to be opened that afternoon for little children who had no Sunday-school to go to. But while he was away, Willie began to feel very strangely, and the angels let him know that the time for him to come away was near at hand. His body was so worn out with sickness that it could not serve the spirit any longer. It was harder for him to breathe than ever, and in his efforts to do so he went into a kind of spasm, so that he bit his lips with his teeth till they bled. Even then, however, he tried to mind his nurse, and not to bite his lips when she told him not to. His mamma immediately sent for his papa and the doctor and the good minister who baptized him, that everything might be done for him that could be done. The doctor came first, and gave him some powders which helped his breathing for a little time, so that he could speak, and then the first thing Willie said was,





"I am going to die, mamma; God wants my spirit. Don't be worried, mamma, I die happy."

Then he lay thinking a little while, and said,

"I hope God will forgive my sins."

His mamma reminded him how good and loving the Lord is, and how ready He is to forgive everybody who asks His forgiveness, and knelt down and said the Lord's Prayer aloud, to which Willie listened attentively.

Next he thought of his younger brother and his governess, and said,

"Tommy will miss me. Miss Carter will miss me."

Just then his papa got home, and as soon as he came into the room Willie spoke up very cheerfully. "Papa, I am going to heaven; God wants my spirit." And then, after a little while, he said again, "I hope God will forgive my sins."

You see, the angels always try to make people sorry for their sins, and so they wanted Willie to be sorry for all the naughty things he had ever done, and to ask the Lord's



forgiveness, and they put these thoughts into his mind.

His papa could hardly speak for thinking how long it would be before he would see Willie again, although he knew that it was best he should go to heaven, but he went round to the farther side of the bed, and sat down and talked to Willie as his mamma had done, telling him how much the Lord loved him, and how much kinder and more forgiving He was than any earthly father could be. He then went on to say to him that he would soon be out of his pain and with the angels. Willie seemed to understand all he said perfectly, and was quite peaceful and happy.

"Yes," said he, "there is no pain nor sorrow there."

His little brothers then came in and kissed him for good-bye, and he kissed them, just as if he had been going away only for a few days. Then he said,

"I want all my books and toys given to poor children."

His voice was weak and broken from his long sickness and the soreness of his lungs,





but it was perfectly clear and distinct, and he did not seem to be in the least afraid of what was going to happen. The angels who were with him came nearer to him, so that he felt they were there, and was cheered by their presence. Pretty soon he could not speak at all, and his papa got a Bible and began to read to him that beautiful 103rd Psalm, about the mercy and loving-kindness of the Lord. Willie listened at first, but his hearing, too, was failing, and he soon evidently did not take in the meaning of the words. His papa put down the book and took his left hand, while the nurse held his right hand and his head, and said,



"Willie, if you feel sleepy, shut your eyes and go to sleep. You will soon wake again in heaven among the angels."

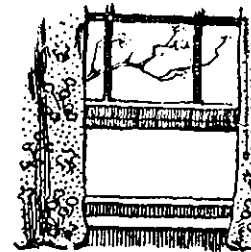
Willie shut his eyes, but his mamma asked him to give her one last look, and he opened them to do so. Then he closed them again, and his papa thought that he was asleep. But the nurse called his name, and he looked at her, showing that he was not yet quite gone. Then his breathing grew quicker and quicker.



Suddenly he raised himself up, opened his eyes wide, and struggled for a moment, as if to get one last breath. His heart gave a tremendous beat, sending a torrent of purple blood up into his face and neck, and Willie fell back and breathed no more. The minister asked all present to kneel down with him and say the Lord's Prayer, and it was done, but Willie did not hear it. He was asleep in death.

The bright sunshine streamed into the room, and through the window, which had been opened to give Willie as much air as possible, came in a fresh, cool breeze. All around was hushed and quiet, for it was Sunday, as I have said, and the streets were still. Poor little tired, sick Willie lay quietly on his bed, and suffered no more pain. His earthly life, with all its trials and sorrows, was ended.

A few days after the body was placed in a coffin, and everybody who had known Willie came to his funeral. The parlours of the house were filled with plants and flowers, and quantities of wreaths covered the coffin. The minister read verses from the Word, said the





Lord's Prayer, and talked to the people about what had happened to Willie. Then the body was carried away in its coffin and placed in a vault underground, where it will one of these days crumble into dust.

But Willie, in the meanwhile, was beginning his second life—his life in heaven; and you shall hear what happened to him there.



When Willie fell back, as I told you, and ceased to breathe, he became unconscious, and remained so for a long time—for more than a day, I should think. He knew nothing about the preparations for his funeral, nor of what was said and done at it, nor of what took place after it. He was like a person sound asleep, who, you know, neither hears, sees, nor takes any notice of anything going on around him. But at last he woke up, not in this world, because the body in which he had lived in this world was no longer of any use to him, but in the spiritual world, because now only his spiritual body remained to him. At first it seemed to him that he was still lying on the same bed that he had been lying on through his sickness,



and he began to think about heaven and the angels and the Lord, as he did during his last few hours on earth. He felt no pain, and could draw long, deep breaths without its hurting him; but he could not see. He was not in the least afraid, however, for he felt that there was somebody sitting close by him who loved him very much, and was watching him carefully. There were really two of the best of the angels sitting near his head, and guarding him from evil spirits, who might otherwise have come and frightened him, or done him some harm. The Lord always sends such angels to people when they die, as we say, to watch over them, and even when we are sleeping in this world, He sends angels to guard us and prevent evil spirits doing us mischief. It was these angels who had put into Willie's mind the thoughts he had before his death about heaven and the Lord, and when they saw that these thoughts were again received by him, it showed them that he was awake, and ready to be brought into heaven.

Willie then felt himself gently pulled out of





his old, dead body, in which up to that time he had remained. It was like being undressed of a very tight-fitting suit of clothes, only the body fits the spirit a great deal more nicely than any clothes ever do, and covers every part of the spirit down to the very finger-tips and nails and hair. When he had thus been drawn out of the body, he began to want to get up and look around him, and find out what kind of a place he was in. He felt strong and well, and not a bit like the poor little weak sick boy who had to be lifted and carried about like a baby. When the angels who were with him perceived what his thoughts were, they went away, and gave place to other angels, who they knew would take him in charge, and tell him all he wanted to know. They did this, not because they wanted to leave him, but because Willie did not want them to stay any longer. As soon as this was done, he felt a soft, gentle hand roll something like a veil off from his eyes and face, and then the power of seeing was given to him. The first object that he saw was a beautiful woman bending right



over him, who immediately kissed him, and said,

"Good morning, Willie. Do you know where you are?"

"Not exactly," said Willie, "but I suppose I am in heaven."

"Yes," said the angel, "you are in heaven now, and I am very glad you have come. I have wanted just such a little boy as you to take care of for a long time."

She said this so sweetly, and with such a pleasant, loving voice and look, that Willie could not help throwing his arms around her neck, and hugging and kissing her in the same little bear fashion which I told you had gained for him on earth the nickname of *Ursa Minor*. He did not feel strange nor afraid with her any more than you would, if you had been carried away some night, when you were asleep, into another house, and there had found your dear mamma or aunt, or somebody else you loved very much, sitting by your bed when you woke up. Indeed, he was a great deal more at home than he had been with the nurse who took care of him during his sick-



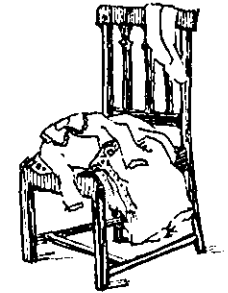
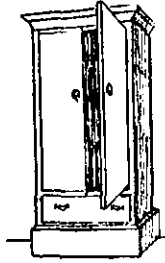


ness, and you remember how fond he was of her. For this angel was the one the Lord had appointed to take care of Willie in heaven, and He chose exactly the one whom Willie would like best and be happiest with.

After Willie had expressed his delight and thanks to the Lord for sending her to him, she told him to look around and see what a nice room he was in. The bed he lay on was very like the bed he used to have on earth, only a great deal handsomer. The wood it was made of was yellow and shining like polished oak, and the bedclothes were of soft, white stuff, like the softest and finest linen and woollen. The walls of the room were hung with flowered curtains, and upon the floor was a beautiful carpet of a kind of needlework. The room itself was large and airy, and at one end of it was a bay window, through which Willie saw grass, and trees, and flowers, and bright sunshine, and heard the song of birds, and smelt the warm, fragrant air of heaven. It was something like the house at Newport, where he had lived when he was a baby, only every way more delightful, because it was in heaven and not

on earth. And as Willie saw how pleasant everything was, he was very glad, and thanked the Lord for His goodness to him.

When he had finished looking about him, his nurse said that he had better get up and dress himself, and she would take him out with her, and let him see all that was to be seen outside. She showed him a nice clean suit of clothes, hanging up in a little wardrobe at one end of his room, and told him to observe that as long as he was good and kind in his behaviour to the other children he was going to be with, these clothes would keep clean, and even grow handsomer and handsomer; but that if he allowed himself to be cross and selfish, they would become soiled and spotted, and not be clean again till he repented, and begged the Lord to forgive him. So he put on the clothes, and he and his nurse kneeled down, and they both said the Lord's Prayer, and, as they said it, Willie understood many things in it that he had not understood on earth, and he resolved that he would do his best to be a good boy, and behave so as to please his Father in heaven.





"Now," said his nurse, "first of all, I will take you and make you acquainted with the other children in the house. They are all about your age, only some of them have been longer in heaven than you have, but you will find they will all love you and be kind to you."

Just then a door flew open, and a sweet girl about Willie's age, with blue eyes and golden hair that shone like sunlight, came rushing into the room, and crying out,

"Oh, nurse, let me see the little boy who has just come from earth."

When Willie saw the little girl, he ran to meet her half way, and caught her in his arms, and kissed her.

"What is your name?" said he.

"Edith," said she; "and yours?"

"Mine is Willie."

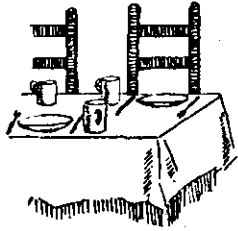
"Well, Willie, I am ever so glad you have come. Nurse told us yesterday that she was expecting you, and I know we shall love one another dearly."

She was going on to say a great deal more, but the angel stopped her, because it was



time for breakfast. So all three came out of Willie's room, and went through a wide hall into another large room, with windows at both ends, and opening out upon the same lawn that Willie had seen from his window. The same fresh, sweet air came in, and beautiful birds flew in and out through the windows, perfectly tame and fearless. The floor of the room was of polished wood, and in the middle of it stood a table set for breakfast. There was nobody in the room, but the nurse went to one of the windows and called out, and presently there came in ten other children, five boys and five girls, looking as rosy, and happy, and merry as possible. They came up to Willie, and shook hands with him, and kissed him, and then they sat down to the table. What is wonderful, there was nothing on the table when they sat down but the cloth and what seemed to be empty dishes, but as soon as they had taken their places, each child found before him just the kind of food he liked best, and enough of it and no more. So they ate and drank and talked, and were very merry, and Willie as merry as them all. Edith





sat by his side, and the tongues of both ran as fast as they could. Long before breakfast was over, Willie got to be well acquainted with her and the rest of his little companions, and felt quite at home with them.

When they were all done eating, they rose up and returned thanks to the Lord, and then the table and all that was on it disappeared. The nurse explained to Willie, who was, as you may suppose, very much surprised at this, that everything in heaven comes and goes as it is wanted, or is thought about. If you want to eat, the Lord sends the table and dishes and food, and when you have eaten enough, He takes them away. If you think of somebody you love very much, he or she is close to you at once. So, when you think or talk about other things, you see them all around you; and the reason why heaven is such a beautiful place is, that the angels are always thinking kind thoughts and loving everybody, and their thoughts and their love take on beautiful forms, and appear around them. But all this, she told him, he would learn more and more about every day at school.



"Why," said Willie, "are there schools in heaven?"

"You will see," said the nurse, "only, to-day you need not begin your studies, but may look on for a little while, and then I will take you around and show you what I know you will like to see."

While she had been talking, the rest of the children had gone out of the room into another, and Willie, with his nurse, now followed them. He found them seated in a circle, in front of a kind of picture frame, by which stood a man-angel teaching them. The lesson just then was about botany, and he was explaining to them how flowers grow, and, what was wonderful to Willie, as he talked about the different parts of the flowers, each one came within the picture frame, just as if it were alive, and all the changes he talked about took place in the picture, so that the children could see them a great deal plainer than we can see things here by the help of a microscope. Willie's nurse told him that many other things are taught in heaven in the same way, and that, besides, he would learn to read



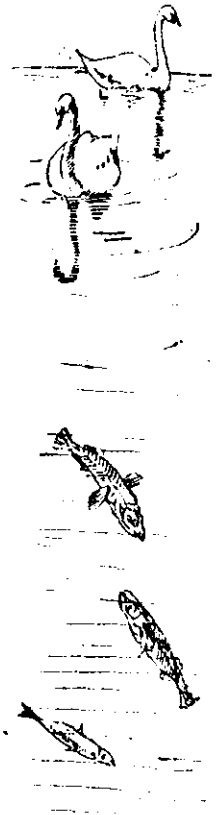
and write the heavenly language, and to understand heavenly arithmetic. Willie got so interested in what he saw, and in what his nurse told him, that he wanted to take his place in the school at once, but she said tomorrow would be soon enough, and he must come with her for that morning.

So Willie and she stepped out through the open windows upon the lawn, and found themselves in a smooth, wide path, which led down towards a crystal lake. He noticed that his nurse did not put on a bonnet, nor give him a hat to wear, and yet, as they came into the sunshine, it did not burn his skin nor dazzle his eyes. He spoke of this to the nurse, and she explained to him that the sun of heaven is the Lord Himself, and though they could not look at Him directly, the light and heat He sent were so mild and soft, that they loved to be in it as much as possible. And yet the light was a great deal brighter than daylight ever is on earth, and there was no chill in the air, even in the shade. His nurse told him that it was always so in heaven. There is neither hot summer nor cold winter there, but

it is spring all the while. She told him, too, that they never had any dark nights there, but that when the angels have been awake and employed for some time they get tired, and then the light of the sun seems to grow dim a little, like the light of early morning, and they know that it is time for them to sleep. But this is not because the Lord really does not shine just as bright then as He ever does, but because the angels are tired, and that makes it seem to them that He does not.

While they were talking about these things they had come down to the lake, and were walking along its edge. Willie looked into the water, and saw beautiful fishes darting about in it, and, at the bottom, pebbles of all kinds of bright colours. On the top of the water floated swans and other birds of that sort, some of which were such as Willie had never seen before. Presently they came to a wood surrounded by a thick hedge.

"Now," said Willie's nurse, "I am going to show you the place where we take care of the little babies that come here from the earth."





Curiously enough, just then there appeared an opening in the hedge right in front of them, though a moment before it had seemed to be completely closed up. The nurse explained to Willie that no one could see the opening but those who had a right to go in, and that thus the little babies were guarded from any one's coming to do them harm. They then went in through the hedge, and followed winding paths through the wood, till suddenly there appeared to Willie the most beautiful garden he had ever seen. He noticed that the very air in it was fuller of light than the air outside, and sparkled as if it had been made of little diamonds. The flowers and shrubs were of splendid colours, and gave out the most delightful perfumes, and even seemed to make music as their leaves waved to and fro in the gentle-breeze. Fountains were playing here and there, whose waters shone as if they had been pearls and rubies and emeralds, and after they fell ran away, tinkling like little bells over their shining beds, into the lake. But all this only attracted his attention a moment, for all about this

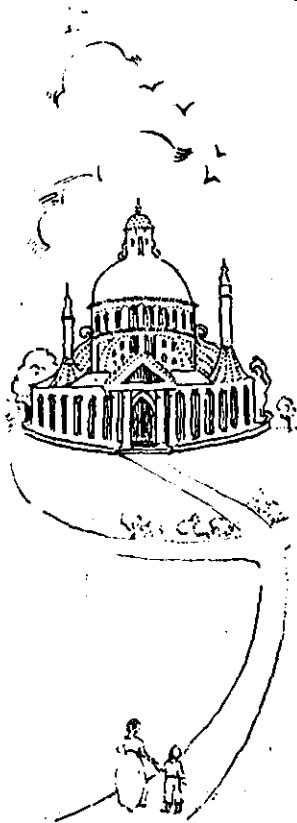
garden, in groups of two, three, and four, were beautiful babies with their angel nurses, rolling and frolicking on the grass, or looking at pretty picture-books, or playing with toys. Willie observed that whenever one of these babies came near a shrub or a flower, it bent down its leaves as if to kiss it, and that the toys they played with seemed to be alive, and to enjoy being used by their little owners. Everything was so peaceful and loving and happy in the garden, that Willie almost cried with delight. His nurse let him go all over the garden, and even take up some of the babies in his arms, which Willie was glad to do, because he loved babies very much. They were all sweet and clean, and showed that they were taken care of in the best possible manner; and as to their nurses, Willie thought he had never seen such nice, dear women.

Willie would have been glad to stay in this garden much longer, but his nurse said she would bring him there again every day, and now she had some more things to show him. So they went out by another path, and came among a number of houses like the one she



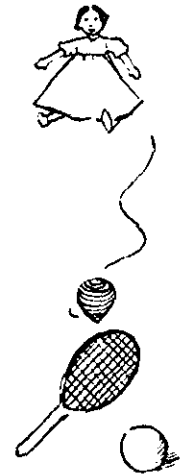
and Willie lived in, laid out with little lawns and gardens around them, with streets between. They saw nobody in the streets, however, and the nurse explained that it was because every one was at work just then, and would not come out till it was done. So she and Willie went through one street after another until they came to a large, open park, in the middle of which stood a building such as Willie had never dreamt of on earth. It was round in form, and built of shining white marble, with pillars all round it, and the most beautiful doors and windows, and so large and grand that he could not say a word for looking at it. His nurse told him that this was the temple, where the angels meet on the Sabbath to worship the Lord.

After this his nurse showed him the palaces in which lived the governor and other officers of the heaven to which she and Willie belonged. For you must know that the whole of heaven is laid out and arranged in smaller heavens, like towns and cities on earth, and over each one the Lord appoints officers to direct how things shall be done, so as to pre-



vent disorder and confusion; and these officers, according to their places, have larger and finer houses to live in, which are called palaces. Then she took him to the playground, and showed him where the people amused themselves after their work was done, of which I will tell you more presently. Then they returned home again, and by the time they had got there, they found that school was over, and they all had their dinner; just as they had had breakfast.

After dinner, Willie and his little companions spent some time in going over and examining their house and the garden around it. Everything was as neat and clean as possible, and Willie was told that he would have to learn to help to keep it tidy and orderly. Each child, he found, had his own wardrobe for his clothes, and a bookcase for his books, and a cupboard for his toys; and when they are done using anything, they put it back in its place, so that they never have to hunt for it. The little girls have dolls and baby-houses, and the boys have tops and balls and bats, and many other things which have not yet





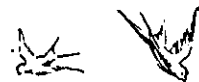
been made on earth, but which will be by and by. Neither girls nor boys had many books, because they had not yet learned to read the heavenly language, but their nurses told them that they would have more very soon, if they took pains with their lessons. Each boy and girl, too, had a garden plot, in which they raised all sorts of plants and flowers, and learned how they grew.



By and by it was time to go to the playground, and they all set out for it together. As they went through the streets, Willie saw plenty of people in them walking along, and children playing on the lawns or sitting in the doorways. A good many people were, like them, going to the playground, and when they got there, Willie saw that it was quite full. It was a large place outside the city, and something like the Central Park in New York or Hyde Park in London. There were bands of music on raised stands here and there, and people dancing around them. In one spot boys were playing ball, and the girls battledore and shuttlecock, and many other innocent games, which greatly amused them,

and from which they also learned something useful. Farther on, Willie saw men and women taking rides on horseback, and boats were floating gently about on a broad, clear lake. He walked about for awhile, and then came back to his companions, and joined them and some other boys in a game of ball, and then he danced with the little girls, and, in one way or another, kept busy till he was tired; and he noticed, as the nurse had told him, that it seemed to be darker than it was, and he was quite willing to go home and have his supper and go to bed.

In the morning he was waked up by the sweetest music he had ever heard. He listened, and found it was the children singing their morning hymn of praise to the Lord. He got up and dressed himself as quickly as he could, and ran out to them. He found them standing in a circle in front of the house looking to the east, towards the Lord, and he joined with them as well as he could. He had not learned the music of heaven yet, but he did his best, and all the children seemed pleased, and encouraged him to join them.



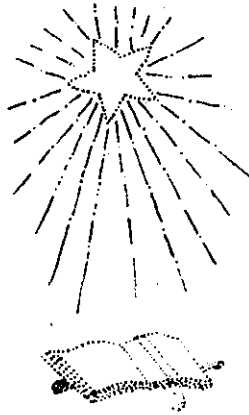
His nurse told him that they sang a hymn of this kind the first thing every morning, but not always the same one. They then had a little recess till breakfast-time, and after breakfast Willie went into school, where he spent the morning. He began to learn to read and write the heavenly language, for all that he had learned of earthly language was no longer of any use to him, though what he had learned by means of it was. He was taught not only to add and subtract and multiply numbers, but also what these numbers mean when they are mentioned in the Word. He had, too, a little lesson in botany, and one in chemistry, and he was told that as he went on he would learn many other wonderful things, as, for instance, all about his own body, and about the way heaven is arranged and governed, and how to help the Lord to take care of people on earth. He was so busy that the time slipped away very rapidly, and before he knew it school was over, and he had his dinner, and went out to play, as he had done the day before.

The next day and the next went on very



much in the same way, except that Willie did not wait to be waked up by the morning hymn, but got up himself in time to take part in singing it. After a few days more, however, his nurse told him, when he came out of his room in the morning, that that day was the Sabbath, and that, instead of his regular lessons, he would go to the temple, and be instructed in the Word. So, after breakfast, he and the other little boys and girls went with the rest of the people to the temple. There they were joined by a number of other children of about the same age, and went into a large room, where they were taught about the Word and its meaning, and about the Lord and all that He does for His children, and other like things, in such an interesting way, that Willie was not in the least tired of listening to it. Everything that the teacher said came out right before his eyes, so that he could see it, and understand it perfectly. While they were thus engaged, the older people were being taught in a similar way, only, of course, about things which children could not yet understand. Willie went and





looked in at them after he got through with his lesson. He found them in a great room of the shape of a half-circle, with seats rising one above another, as they do in a theatre. In the middle, where every one could see it, lay a book which shone like a bright star, and Willie knew at once that it was the Word. A little on one side, a man dressed in a long robe was standing and talking, and though Willie listened very hard, he could not understand any more than that he was talking about the Lord and His wisdom and goodness. So he went softly away towards home, to his own room, thinking of all he had seen and heard in the temple. He began to think, too, of his papa and mamma and little brothers, and to wish to do them good in some way, and as he thought of them it seemed as if he was close to them, and that they were thinking of him. He could not see their faces and forms, but he knew their thoughts, and he tried his best to make them think of him as being happy with the Lord's angels, and not to grieve for him. And, as he did this, it seemed to him that they did think as he

wanted them to do, and were made happier by it, and that his mamma, particularly, was comforted and glad that her little boy was now so well off. When he got home he told his nurse about it, and she explained to him that though, ordinarily, he did not remember anything about his life on earth, yet at times, when the Lord knew it was best, he would thus think of his papa and mamma and brothers, and be able to give them good and pleasant thoughts about him and his life in heaven. She also told him that, after he had learned enough and was old enough, he would be allowed to give other people on earth good and pure thoughts about heavenly things, and that this is one of the greatest pleasures the angels have. She and Willie spent the afternoon talking about these things, and he was made very happy by what she told him.

Willie is still going on in heaven in the same way, studying and learning and playing, and growing up to be a man-angel. Every day he gets more and more able to do good, and is made happier by it. He is gradually,





too, getting rid of the little faults which remained with him, and becoming what the Lord wants him, and all of us, to become. And when we leave this earth, if we want to see him and talk with him, the Lord will let us do so, and then we can hear from him a great deal more about his heavenly life than I am able to tell you.

