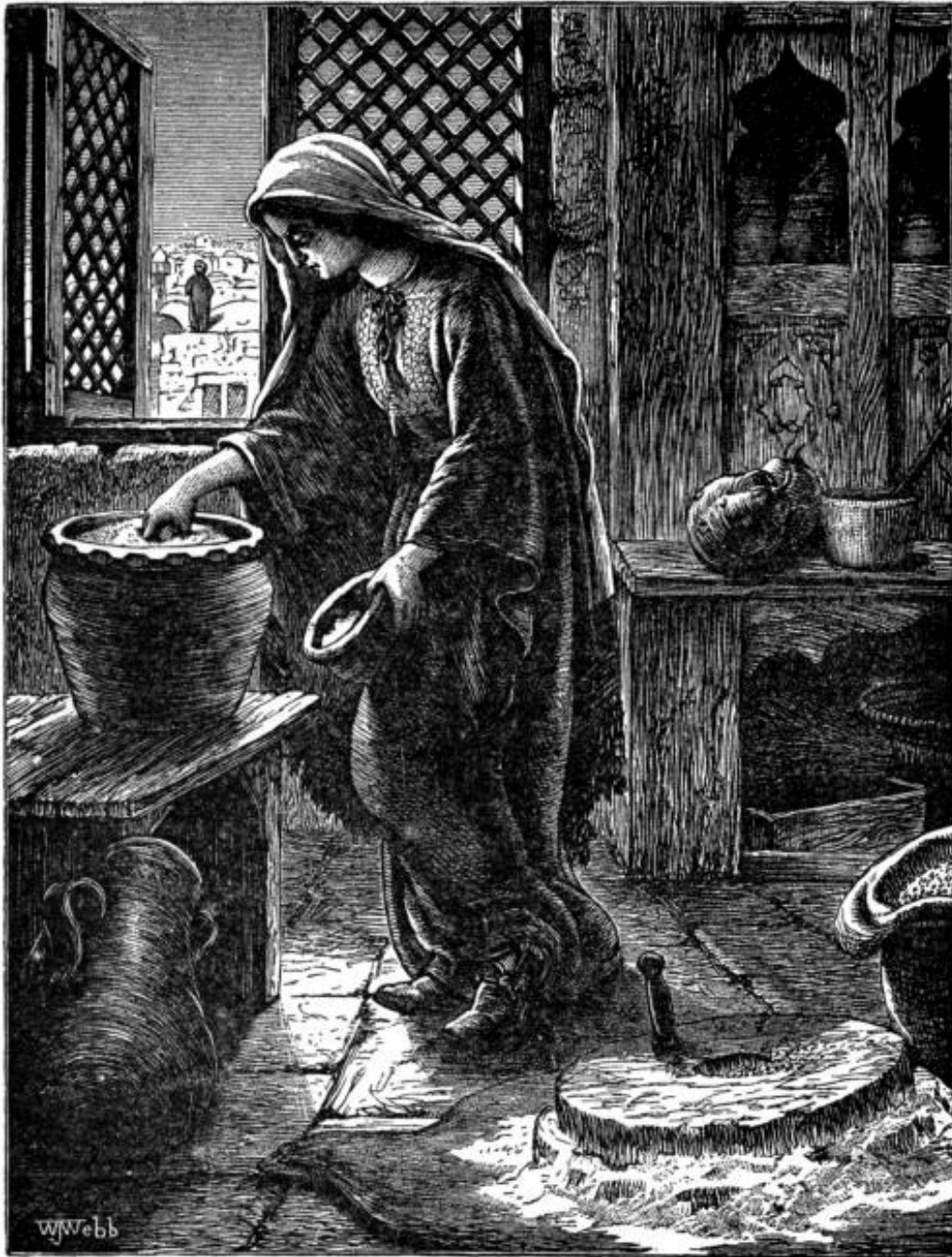


THE PARABLE OF THE LEAVEN.

Christ said that the kingdom of heaven could be likened unto leaven (or yeast), which a woman took and hid in three measures of flour, till the whole was leavened.

Now, this leaven, or yeast, is composed of tiny little plants, each one so small that it cannot possibly be seen by the sharpest eye except through a very powerful microscope. So small are they that it would require three thousand of them, placed close together, side by side, to make up the length of one inch. Like all other plants they require food, and they find this in the dough they are placed in. You know that all things are made up of atoms of chemical substances so wonderfully blended together that only the chemist can separate them, and when he has separated them they appear very different. Well, in flour there are certain things so blended, and the yeast-plant takes one kind of substance as food, and in doing so sets free another substance called carbonic acid gas. This gas bubbles up and makes the heavy dough spongy and light. If it were not for these tiny bubbles of gas your bread would be as heavy and close as suet pudding. This is the reason why yeast is put into dough for making bread or cake. One of the most remarkable things about this yeast is, that when it gets into any substance that contains its food, it at once begins to give off buds, which, in a few moments, become full-sized and break away. So rapid is this increase, that if a single yeast-plant were to be put into a great mass of dough it would very quickly leaven the whole mass.

And so it is with the love of God. When once it gets into our hearts it will keep on growing until all our life is filled with it, and we try in all things to please Him.



THE PARABLE OF THE LEAVEN.

SEEKING FOR HIDDEN TREASURE.

The people of Canaan, both in ancient and modern days, have made a practice of hiding their treasures. This they have done to secure them in times of danger. When invaders flocked into the land, the people buried their gold and jewels, and fled. And often they died, or were overtaken by their enemies and killed, so that they were unable to return and regain their buried riches.

Earthquakes also have taken place, destroying towns and villages, and burying all the riches in them beneath their ruins. Thus there is much hidden treasure in Canaan, and numbers of the inhabitants spend their time seeking diligently and anxiously for it.

Our artist shows us a man who is thus seeking. He has heard that in old times a great treasure was hidden in a particular field. So he digs away patiently in various places until, at last, he finds out that what he heard is quite true. He is sure the treasure is there; and his desire is to become possessed of the field, so that he may obtain the buried riches. He is willing to sell all that he has if by so doing he may buy that field. So he hastens home, and gathers together the whole of his property and sells it. Then he takes his money to the man who has the land for sale, and buys the field of him. Thus he becomes possessed of the treasure he has sought after. Jesus says that the Kingdom of Heaven is like that treasure. It is so precious, that when a man finds out its value, and knows how it can be obtained, he will be willing to give up everything he has for it—all his companions, pleasures, sins, riches—indeed everything he possesses, in order to gain this great treasure.



THE TREASURE HID IN A FIELD.